

THE BATTALION

Vol. 72 No. 72
Pages

Wednesday, January 3, 1979
College Station, Texas

News Dept. 845-2611
Business Dept. 845-2611

Pre-season showing

The Battalion, like the hoary groundhog, will poke its nose out with another edition on Wednesday, Jan. 10. Shadow or no shadow,

it will be out of the hole on a regular basis starting the 15th, the first day of spring semester classes.

Texas-size freeze curtails gas, power

By EDWARD FULTON
United Press International

Massed natural gas companies, including the giant LoVaca Gathering Co. of Texas, Tuesday cut or curtailed supplies of natural gas at spots in every part of Texas in their struggle to keep the state warm following a bitter polar front.

The immediate result was that public utility companies, some operating with natural gas to fuel their generators, experienced power drains. The Texas Public Utility Commission appealed to businesses and the public to use only necessary electricity to prevent blackouts or brownouts.

The National Weather Service predicted lows in the teens in most areas of the state early Wednesday, following lows in the 20s and 30s Tuesday in all areas of the state. A gradual warming trend was expected late today.

LoVaca, which supplies about one-third of Texas' total natural gas needs, cut supplies by 50 percent to electric power companies and by 100 percent to commercial and other industrial users. LoVaca supplies gas directly to most of south and central Texas, and sells its surplus to other companies.

LoVaca cut its sales to Lone Star Gas in North and east Texas from a high of 10 million cubic feet a day to the contracted minimum of 220 mcf.

Simon Barker-Benfield, public affairs director, said the curtailment did not affect heating for homes, schools and hospitals.

"This morning's (Tuesday) demand was extremely high, a rate of about 3 billion cubic feet per day," Barker-Benfield said. "The company anticipated this surge with a procedure called line packing. However, that pack has depleted and it has to be replaced by more gas. The only way to replace the pack is by curtailment."

He said the freezing weather also affected several areas of LoVaca's operation, including compressors, treating plants and gas wells themselves.

"Gas contains moisture as it comes out of the ground and it is freezing at the wellhead and causing delivery problems," Barker-Benfield said. "For example, offshore platforms in the Gulf off of Matagorda Bay have been delivering 15 million thousand cubic feet, instead of (the normal) 50 mmcf."

The curtailment was severe in Dallas and Fort Worth, where natural gas supplies were cut to industrial and commercial users, leaving Dallas Power & Light Co. and some Texas Power & Light Co. generating plants without natural gas.

DP&L Vice President Bill Aston Tuesday said a telephone campaign early Tuesday to major business customers asking for voluntary cutbacks helped considerably,

and that the danger of brownouts or blackouts was receding.

"If they (businesses) had not responded we still probably would have gotten along," he said. "But we were on the fringe where if we lost a generator, or had some other machinery malfunction along with a heavy output which we had then, we might have had one."

Alan Erwin, member of the Public Utility Commission in Austin, said the threat of brownouts or blackouts existed statewide.

"Due to the unusual weather conditions and the resulting curtailment of natural gas throughout the state, a critical condition has developed in which natural gas electric generating units are not capable of operating to their maximum extent," he said.

"Unless the weather improves a potential for additional brownouts throughout the state exists. The Public Utility Commission asks that all industrial and commercial enterprises in every sector of Texas take whatever steps possible to minimize their use of electricity. The residential sector is also asked to curtail usage to the maximum extent possible."

Natural gas companies supply fuel based on priorities established by the state. Top priority goes to residential users, followed by hospitals, nursing homes, industrial users (including electrical generating companies) and then to commercial users.

Most schools in Dallas-Fort Worth closed, and numerous businesses either closed or opened late in the day Tuesday. Texas Instruments, one of the largest employers in north Texas, did not open until the second shift in its Dallas, Lewisville, Plano and Sherman plants.

By midday Tuesday, there still were 10,000 customers in Dallas without power, but that was due to the New Year's holiday ice storm, and most were in areas where falling trees not only broke power lines but also pulled wires out of the houses.

Alton Hafter, spokesman for Entex Inc. of Weimar, 80 miles southwest of Houston, said the city lost its natural gas flow completely at 8:30 a.m. because of a mechanical problem in the pipeline. The Weimar City Hall, heated by electricity, was one of the few warm buildings in town until Entex corrected the problem later in the day.

Corpus Christi Tuesday reported a blackout. Bob Noster, spokesman for Central Power and Light, said the outage affected 2,500 people on the city's southwest side, and was caused by the heavy customer demand.

John Poerner, chairman of the Railroad Commission which regulates utilities in Texas, said distribution was the problem.

"There is no shortage of natural gas," he said. "The system of distributing the gas itself is just not sufficient to handle the quantity of gas that is in demand for these low degree mornings."

Ben Schoal, spokesman for San Antonio's City Public Service, said it was converting to fuel oil in its generators.

"There's only so much natural gas that can be packed into the transmission lines into the city," he said. "This is not new. This happens every winter when you have a severe cold snap."



Chillier than Anchorage

One of the harshest cold fronts ever to hit Texas left much of the state looking like a crystal fairy land. With temperatures in Bryan-College Station barely

higher than freezing yesterday, ice can still be found on roads, cars and trees.

Battalion photo by Karen Cornelison

Poor driving blamed for holiday death rate

United Press International

The Department of Public Safety Tuesday attributed many of the state's 39 New Year's holiday deaths to poor driving conditions caused by a weekend winter storm, and the greater fault lay with drivers refused to slow down even on ice.

DPS traffic figures indicated 39 people died on state highways from 6 p.m. Monday through midnight Monday. Eleven deaths during that 78-hour period occurred on city streets, an unusually large number for a holiday period when most accidents occur on the highways.

"It was the icy roads," said a DPS spokesman who earlier had issued warnings for Texans to stay home during the holiday.

The icy roads kept some people off the roads, but not enough. For those who were on the road, the ice just made it that much more dangerous.

Last year 30 persons died during the holiday period. The DPS considered that an exceptionally high death toll.

During the 1978 Christmas traffic fatalities, 57 persons were killed in 78 hours of dry, warm weather. The DPS pessimistically predicted at least 35 deaths for New Year, but no one had foreseen the severity of the weather.

A polar front trailing snow, sleet and driving rain struck Texas early Sunday

and made roads extremely hazardous across the Texas Panhandle, where snow fell, to the pine thickets of East Texas and as far south as Austin. Freezing temperatures glazed over highways even in the generally tropical Rio Grande Valley Monday night.

The worst of the holiday wrecks occurred Monday when a car carrying three persons in New Caney in Montgomery County was smashed by a train. All three persons in the car, Daniel Thomas Parker, 30, Sharon Rose Geary, 26, and Brian Raymond Jr., 6, were killed in the accident. Four others were injured.

The first reported fatality of 1979 was Danaso Anthony Olivares, 21, of San Antonio who skidded his motorcycle off a city street and was killed. The DPS said his death occurred one minute after midnight New Year's Day, and on an ice glazed street.

He was quickly followed by Candelario Martinez Blanco, 52, of Raymondville who was struck by a car about 1:23 a.m. Monday a mile north of Lyford on U.S. 77. A few minutes later Charles Bohner of Perryton ran off an icy road in Dallas and was killed.

The DPS said the 39 deaths occurred in 35 accidents. Six were pedestrians, four died in auto-train crashes and there was one motorcycle crash.

Airline flights interrupted; renewed violence hits Iran

By SAJID RIZVI
United Press International

TEHRAN, Iran — Hundreds of Americans and other foreigners fled Iran's upheaval in U.S. Air Force transports and commercial airliners Tuesday while more anti-shah demonstrators fell under the gunfire of soldiers.

State Department officials in Washington described the air traffic situation around Tehran as "confused" and they said they have received reports that two airlines — one British, the other Irish — were intercepted by Iranian Air Force planes and forced to return to Tehran's International airport. The officials said both planes were permitted to take off again.

In addition the American Broadcasting Co. reported a chartered plane flying out of its television film had been intercepted and ordered back to the airport.

Officials in Dublin reported a plane leased by the Guinness Peat Brokerage firm, bringing out 37 British and Irish women who worked as cabin crew members for Iran air plus eight passengers and a crew of nine, apparently was intercepted by an Iranian air force jet near Tabriz and told to return to Tehran. It complied and left again several hours later without incident the officials said.

Washington State Department officials said that in the light of the incidents, one of the American military flights was sent in to Tehran with the specific purpose of finding out if U.S. flights would be forced down. The plane was not impeded, the officials said, and other military flights followed to take out U.S. government dependents.

Premier-designate Shahpour Bakhtiar in an emotional broadcast vowed:

"I shall not let this country be destroyed even if I have to die." He promised to free all political prisoners, allow political opposition and end martial law "gradually."

But demonstrators who earlier shouted "Death to the shah" took up a new slogan, "Death to Shahpour Bakhtiar, henchman of American imperialists."

Plainclothes men who demonstrators said were Savak secret policemen attacked opponents of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi and even passersby in Mashad, the industrial city of Ghazvin west of Tehran and the west Iranian city of Kermanshah.

The opposition claimed an estimated 700 died. Other sources claimed the death toll might be even higher.

In Rafsanjan, in southern Iran, unidentified gunmen fatally shot the mayor of the town, Radio Iran reported.

Doctors' homes were set on fire and physicians were beaten in Mashad and Ghazvin in the worst backlash to the opposition movement. One doctor was killed in Mashad, witnesses said, and several

were wounded in Ghazvin.

At least 24 people were killed Monday by plainclothes men who drove around Mashad in private cars firing into the air and at street crowds, witnesses said.

In Firouzabad in south Iran, anti-shah demonstrators attacked the Savak secret police headquarters and freed people imprisoned in an underground jail.

Several Savak officers laid their weapons down, reports reaching Tehran said.

Military Premier Gen. Gholam Reza Azhari resigned officially Monday. He was told by the shah to stay on until Bakhtiar forms a cabinet.

Parliament was expected to meet before the Iranian weekend starts Thursday. It will vote on his premiership and his cabinet, which Bakhtiar said Monday was "complete."

The relative optimism on the political scene failed to calm public feelings. Nearly half of the people queuing up at Tehran's Mehrabad airport Tuesday were Iranians anxious to get out of the country.

Several Western airlines were expected to cancel flights. Air India, PIA and the Iraqi Airways canceled operations in Iran Monday, denying the frantic passengers any connections to nearby Middle East airports.

An estimated 700 American and British expatriates and their dependents were evacuated to Bahrain, in the Persian gulf, in airplanes provided by oil firms Monday.



Bonnie Walton puts the finishing touches on one of her stained glass windows. Walton teaches people how to make their own stained glass windows and other things at her studio in College Station.

Creative glasswork Hobby brings profits

By RUSTY McDONALD
Battalion Reporter

The sound of breaking glass fills the air. But, this sound doesn't mean bad luck to Bonnie Walton, just money in the bank.

The 29-year-old Walton owns and runs Walton Stained Glass Studio at 3810 Texas Ave., and the sounds of breaking glass mean that she and her students are at work making stained glass windows.

"It sounds like Santa's workshop in here," Walton said.

Walton was in Houston working on her medical technology degree from Herman Hospital when she got interested in stained glass art.

"I worked in the hospital at night and had the days off," Walton said, "so to kill time I enrolled in a class at Bolton's Stained Glass Studio. After doing one window, I was hooked."

Walton said she taught at Bolton's for five months and then she and her pharmacist husband, Tommy, moved to College Station. She said that Bolton's helped her set up a studio in College Station and she bought the Houston company out, when she "got on her feet."

Walton said she has taught about 800 people how to make stained glass windows and lamps. She said about half have come back to make more.

"People start out wanting a stained glass window and then find the price prohibitive. Then I show them how to make it themselves at a much cheaper price," Walton said.

Walton charges from \$30 to \$40 per square foot to make a window, but says it costs about half that to have a person do it themselves.

"they use their time, not mine," Walton said. "People like doing things with their hands, and I get a feeling of accomplishment when I see my students finish their projects and see how proud they are."

Walton said that this is a somewhat expensive hobby to get started in. Her class fee is \$20 and she said the supplies, not including glass, run from \$35 to \$40. The cost of the glass depends on the quantity and type, Walton said.

Besides teaching classes, Walton also does commercial or custom work and repair work on stained glass windows and lamps. She said she has done work for Danver's, Serendipity, McDonald's, Taco Villa, French Royal Tot and French's Care-A-Lot.

Walton said her favorite windows are the two she did for French's Care-A-Lot which were of Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy.

Walton said that stained glass adds color and gives character to a room.

"It gives the room pizzazz," Walton said.

"We are not just limited to windows and lamps, either," Walton said. "We can also do front doors, room dividers, anything you can think of to put stained glass into, we can probably find a way to do."

Davis retracts testimony; prosecutor voices doubts

By STEVEN R. REED
United Press International

HOUSTON — The retraction of a portion of the testimony of T. Cullen Davis has muddled his position on the critical topic of conversations he claimed he had with a Fort Worth lawyer while seeking advice about the propriety of discussing several slayings.

Davis last week testified he acted to protect himself last summer when he feared an employee was trying to lure him into incriminating conversations about arranging the murders of five persons.

Davis said he felt compelled to join in the talks with David McCrory but feared he was being trapped and could be prosecuted. He participated in the potentially dangerous discussions, he said, because he believed that was what the FBI wanted him to do in order to abort an extortion scheme in which McCrory was a suspect.

But Tuesday Davis deleted his divorce judge from the list of names he said he supplied Hershel Payne when checking with the attorney to see if he was breaking the law by "talking about" killing people.

"As I remember it now, I didn't mention District Judge Joe H. Eidson," Davis testified of his inquiries with Payne.

"Did you have conversations with Mr. Hershel Payne in which you talked about killing people?" asked defense lawyer Richard "Racehorse" Haynes.

"I don't think so, if I did I didn't mean to," Davis replied.

"Did you have conversations with Mr.

Hershel Payne in which you talked about talking about killing people?" Haynes asked.

"Yes," Davis said.

Prosecutor Tolly Wilson noted Davis had contradicted his earlier testimony and read from Davis' explanations of last week when he listed Eidson and four other persons as having been mentioned in conversations with McCrory.

"And it's your testimony now that you never did tell Hershel Payne that you were having conversations with David McCrory concerning killing Judge Joe Eidson, is that correct?" Wilson asked.

"Yes," Davis replied.

Prosecutor Jack Strickland said he interpreted Davis' most recent testimony, ending his four-day appearance as a witness in his own defense, as recanting all five names but said it would be up to jurors to make their own conclusions.

Strickland said Davis was "stuck" with his testimony.

"I don't see how he could reasonably be expected to recant everything he said," Strickland said.

Davis was arrested Aug. 20 after meeting with McCrory on a restaurant parking lot. McCrory testified Davis gave him \$25,000 in exchange for evidence Eidson had been killed, although the judge actually had not been harmed.

Davis denied the money was his, claims he was returning it to McCrory and never believed anyone would be killed as a result of his encounters with McCrory.