

Students to twiddle for funds

United Press International
DALLAS — After today, this will be a pet rock, the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders and \$1 airline fares to Las Vegas as stories to be only reluctantly written about, but:

On today and Saturday, three students at Dallas Baptist College will twiddle their thumbs for 26 hours.

"We're going to start at 4 o'clock on Friday and go until 6 o'clock Saturday," said Ben Sheeran, who founded serious. "We're going to twiddle our thumbs — you know, twiddle our thumbs — for 26 hours."

"We're raising money for our pledge class, Sigma Chi Delta," Sheeran, 19, from Palacios, Texas; Layton Hein, 21, of Great Bend, Kan., and Bryan Fewell, 19, of Las Vegas think they can rotate their thumbs into the Guinness Book of Records.

"No, there isn't a Guinness record on thumb twiddling — yet," said Sheeran. "We've talked with them and they said if we can provide newspaper clippings and film, they'll put us in."

Sheeran, the spokesman for the other two, said they had been practicing thumb twiddling in preparation for the big event.

"Certainly we've been practicing," he said, "in some boring classes, but we've never done it professionally."

Sheeran still isn't going to do it professionally.

The three students have been collecting sponsors who will pay 5 cents each hour they last. The proceeds will go to their fraternity.

"They are giving us a nickel for every hour we can go," said Sheeran. "And we'll have a fish bowl there for contributions."

The event takes place at the Dallas Baptist College student union.

Since there are no current rules for thumb twiddling, Sheeran and the others have made their own.

"We'll twiddle for one hour and then have a five minute break," Sheeran said. "No, it doesn't matter how fast we twiddle, as long as our thumbs are in constant motion."

Sheeran said he and the others expect sore hands after what could be a modern form of self-sacrifice, but that's the price they bear for fame.

"The thumb muscles get a little tight, but that's expected," he said. "Fopping them helps. Writing helps a lot, and believe me we've been doing a good deal of that."

Valium suit filed against government

United Press International
NEW ORLEANS — A military doctor failed to make an adequate case study prior to prescribing tranquilizers for an airman and can be blamed for his patient's car wreck. The federal government is liable for damages, a federal court ruled.

A three-court panel of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said a staff doctor at the Redstone Arsenal Psychiatric Clinic in Huntsville, Ala., failed to follow standard medical procedure in prescribing Valium for Airman James Richardson.

Richardson was involved in a car accident while under the influence of the drug.

The doctor had prescribed 100 5-milligram tablets of Valium for Richardson for what psychiatrists diagnosed as "an acute and chronic situational reaction manifested by hysteria, anxiety and depression."

Two men injured in the wreck, Earl Watkins and Herbert Lester Davis, blamed the military doctor, identified by the court as "Dr. Wald," and wanted to sue the government for damages. A federal district court in Huntsville awarded them \$285,790 and the 5th Circuit decision, handed down Wednesday, upholds the award.

The Justice Department now must decide whether to accept the judgment or appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

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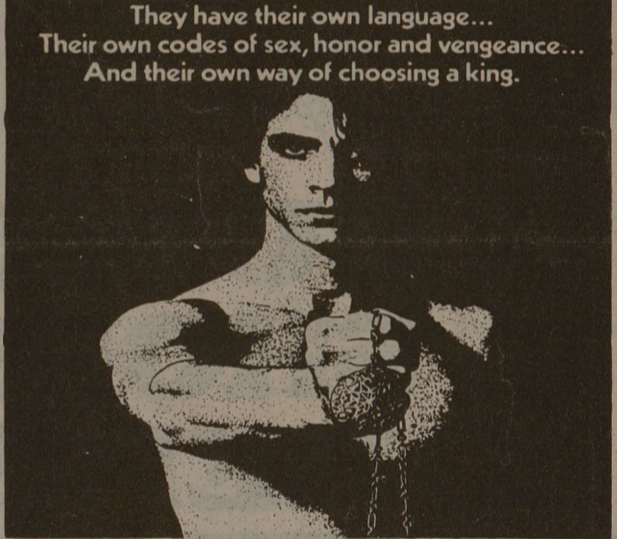


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