



staff photo by Irene Mees

**What goes up must come down**

These students, from bottom to top, John Waskow, Greg Loewe, Lynn Reitzammer and Julie Hornun, skillfully created a human tower but had a harder time getting back down. Hornun took the safest route via a nearby tree and crawled down. The others relied on gravity.

**Shootout held self defense**

United Press International  
SIERRA BLANCA — Defense attorneys Thursday said former Hudspeth County Commissioner L. Talley Davis acted in self defense when he shot oilworker David Copeland in an argument over his girlfriend's bar stool.

Davis, who resigned earlier this month, is charged with attempted murder in the Dec. 8, 1982 shooting at Dell City, a small farming community near the New Mexico state line.

Constable Pat Shea, 42, told the jury Wednesday he saw a shiny pistol in the back seat of a patrol car about 13 hours after Davis, 50, shot Copeland, 43.

The former commissioner testified he shot Copeland only in self defense in a gun battle on a lonely two-lane highway south of Dell City.

The dispute began, according to testimony, when Copeland and a companion, Paul Moore, 19, were drinking at the Shepherd Bar in Dell City on Dec. 7.

Moore testified Copeland grabbed a bar stool a few feet from where he was standing and sat down, not realizing the stool had been used by Corine Magby, 45, a friend of Davis. An argument followed when Davis and his girlfriend returned from the dance floor, Moore said, but there was no violence.

Copeland testified he and Moore left the bar after the incident and went around the corner to the Longhorn Saloon. Davis and Magby soon joined them, and Moore apologized twice to the then commissioner, according to testimony.

Both Moore and Copeland testified they were on their way home when they were stopped by a pickup truck with flashing lights.

Copeland said he got out of the car, saw Davis raise his arm "and the next thing I knew, I was on the ground."

Moore and Copeland had been working on a flood control project for Austin's Trinity Engineering Inc., taking core sam-

ples from the area south of Dell City.

Davis and Magby gave conflicting testimony Wednesday. Shepherd bartender Virginia Hill testified Davis had threatened to revoke the license of the Copeland's drilling company.

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**Escape attempt fails, SWAT shooting fatal**

United Press International  
HOUSTON — A police sharpshooter shot and killed a man Thursday who apparently beat his ex-wife and then tried to escape through police lines by threatening to shoot two of his children.

The fatal shooting by the Houston Police Department's Special Weapons and Tactics team was the second in two days.

SWAT team members went to the house before dawn where neighbors said Michael George, 32, held his ex-wife, Irma George, and three small children hostage.

While inside the house, George called a newspaper newsroom and claimed he was thinking about killing himself, a police spokesman said.

At 6 a.m., George walked from the house carrying a pistol and two of the children. Police said he yelled he would shoot one of them if stopped from escaping.

During his escape on foot, a SWAT member fired one shot and hit George in the back. He died an hour later in a hospital.

Ms. George, who escaped with the third child from the

house, was hospitalized in serious condition with severe cuts and bruises. She told police her ex-husband beat her up when he came to the house where she was staying at about 3 a.m.

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