

It starts when?

staff photo by Eric Evan Lee

Rodney Morris, a graduate microbiology major from San Diego, registers for a biology class during registration Monday. He is having his card packet checked by Dr. Elenor Cox, of the biology department. Morris was one of many students fighting for classes.

Bataan Death March POWs try to sue Japan

United Press International
ALBUQUERQUE — A Bataan Death March survivor says if Japanese people placed in detention camps in World War II have the right to seek damages from the U.S. government, he should be able to sue the Japanese government.

Leo Padilla, who observed his 18th birthday in a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp, said he has talked to other survivors of the 1942 march and subsequent forced labor and said "I imagine every one of them" would be interested in seeking damages.

Rep. Manuel Lujan, R-N.M., will introduce legislation Wednesday designed to circumvent the 1951 peace treaty with Japan, which specified that neither member of the newly-forged alliance would sue the other for wartime damages.

Padilla said he started talking to other survivors about the prohibition about three years ago but had never done anything about it until recently.

He said his interest was re-

vived after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Japanese nationals interned in detention camps in the United States during the war could sue the U.S. government for damages.

"When we saw the Japanese nationals could do it, we thought maybe we had the same right," Padilla said Friday.

Now 60, Padilla was 17 years old when he and other members of the 200th Coast Artillery were ordered to the Philippines in 1941. The Japanese invaded the islands in December of that year.

When Manila fell Jan. 2, 1942, Gen. Douglas MacArthur ordered his troops to fall back to Bataan so they would not be divided by the Japanese.

They fought a delaying action down the 30-mile-long, 15-mile-wide peninsula, which military historians later said disrupted the Japanese timetable for conquest in the Pacific.

President Roosevelt ordered MacArthur off Corregidor Island — at the southern tip of Bataan — March 11, 1942, to go

to Australia and assume command of all allied forces in the western Pacific.

Lt. Gen. Jonathan Wainwright continued the fight on Bataan until April 9, 1942, when he retreated to Corregidor, and surrendered April 18.

The Death March followed, with the Japanese force marching 70,000 captured U.S. and Philippine troops 55 miles back up the mountainous, jungle-covered peninsula.

Only 54,000 reached Camp O'Donnell. Of that group, the ones that survived hunger, thirst and disease in the camp were sent to various plants producing material for the Japanese war effort.

Padilla said he and others of his artillery unit had been serving as infantrymen at the southern end of Bataan when "about 100 Japanese infantry came over a hill and took us. We were in foxholes."

Padilla spent 42 months as a prisoner, and was released in October 1945.

Suspect sought in aggravated robbery charge, lost in woods

United Press International
IREDELL — A man armed with a pistol held half a dozen bank employees at gunpoint while he rummaged through cash drawers and the vault at the Iredell State Bank Saturday and escaped with an undetermined amount of cash, a witness reported.

Tommy Joe Williamson, 47, of Bosque County, was being

sought on an aggravated robbery charge following Saturday's robbery.

The gunman, whom bank officials said they knew, entered the bank at about 12:45 p.m. with a pistol pointed at a teller who had just left for lunch, said one employee.

"He said, 'I'm crazy. I'm going to rob the bank, and I'm

going to kill you,'" the witness said.

"He had everybody lay on the floor and he proceeded to rob us," the witness said. He went through the bank's cash drawers and vault. No one was injured, but the gun did go off in the vault, the witness said.

The robber took one of the employees hostage and fled in her car. She was released un-

harmed about two miles east of town, the Department of Public Safety reported.

Bosque County officials, the DPS and the Texas Rangers gave up their search for the suspect after dark. They sought him in a wooded area north of Iredell, but the search was complicated by heavy thunderstorms that stymied helicopters and dogs.

Escaped lioness suffocates

United Press International
A weakened 8-month-old African lioness named Cuervo, who escaped from her owners May 16, apparently choked to death while onlookers tried to untangle a chain around her neck, authorities said.

Brazos County Deputy Sheriff Lorenzo Alonzo said the body of the 100-pound lioness was taken to veterinarians at Texas A&M University Friday for an autopsy.

The normally docile pet escaped from her owners, Butch and Debbie Lovell, by breaking her restraining chain while the couple moved from a trailer home near Bryan to the Lake Somerville area.

Lovell said a link on the restraining line snapped and Cuervo, dragging an eight-foot length of chain behind her, fled into the woods.

Alonzo said Cuervo's chain was caught in some shrubs near the Lovell's former home. When people approached her, she began "growling and trying to bite."

The sheriff said some men tried to use a restraining device to hold Cuervo's neck while others tried to untangle her chain.

"Then all of a sudden she quit fighting and got quiet. I'm not sure, but I think she choked to death," he said.

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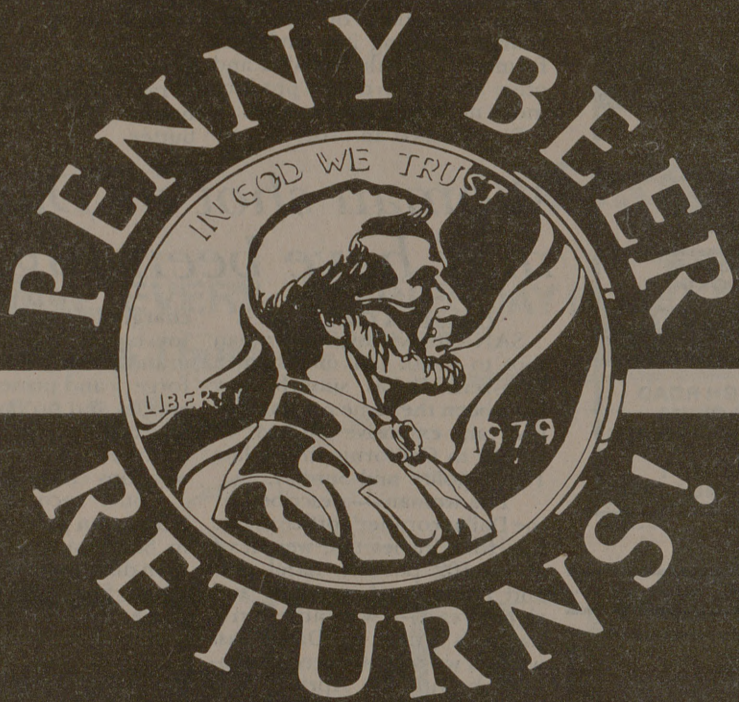


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