

# Passenger, son help foil Cuban hijack attempt

**United Press International**  
HOUSTON — A man laid off last month by Pan American and his teenage son broke up a hijacking aboard one of the airline's flights by overpowering a Cuban national and buckling him into a seat.

With Spicer Lung, 45, an 18-year veteran of Pan Am, and his son, Spicer Jr., watching over the suspect, Flight 925 landed safely in Houston Tuesday with 121 passengers and eight crew

members. Officials identified the Cuban as Alfredo Ayala, 30, and took him into custody when the Miami-to-Houston flight landed at 7:37 p.m. CDT, about an hour behind schedule.

Ayala, who had demanded the flight be diverted to Havana, was to appear before a U.S. magistrate Wednesday.

Miami resident Ralph Symons, 52, said he joined the Lungs in their struggle with Ayala.

"The heroes of this are Spicer Lung and his son," Symons said. "I saw Spicer Lung take off after the guy. Spicer had his hands behind his back, and the kid had him around the throat. Then I grabbed him and suddenly the guy is looking at three virile American men, and he wasn't going anywhere."

Symons said Lung's son was holding Ayala by the throat so tightly that he lifted him off the floor.

Officials said Lung had been laid off about three weeks ago as head of Pan Am's catering in Houston but was held in high regard.

Lung declined to talk to the media and left through a back door of the airport.

The flight was about one hour out of Miami when Ayala attempted to take over the plane, said FBI agent John Guido.

Guido said the captain radioed the Federal Aviation Administration control center in Miami at 6:10 p.m. CDT to say the plane was being hijacked.

"Then he radioed back the individual had been subdued and everything was under control," he said. "The jet was never diverted from Houston."

The hijacker neither indicated he had a weapon nor was one found on him, Guido said. He spoke only in Spanish and was interpreted by a passenger.

Frank Ward, assistant director of the aviation department for the city of Houston, said he spoke at length with Lung about the incident.

"He was very proud of the fact he did something positive for the passengers and for the company," Ward said.

Theresa Negret of Mexico City said she was feeding her son when the scuffle with the hijacking began.

"The guy (Spicer Lung) that helped us was really nice. Without him, I don't know what would have happened. It was wonderful for him to help us that way," she said.

She said the suspect sat in the seat in front of her for the rest of the flight to Houston.



Snakes alive!

Shannon Friel, a seventh grader from Huntsville, gives Spot, a boa constrictor, a tickle under the chin in front of the

Academic building. Friel's mother is a student at Texas A&M. Spot is owned by some biology graduate students.

photo by Carol G...

## Program aids special trips

# Committee votes on leave

by Brigette Crossland  
Battalion Reporter

The Texas A&M Developmental Leave Committee Wednesday recommended three staff members for special leaves.

The three applicants who received the most votes will be notified Monday.

The recommendations were made after the committee heard five proposals Tuesday afternoon. Recommendations were forwarded to Dr. John J. Koldus, vice president for student services, who will make the final approval.

Approval should be given in about three weeks.

Dr. J. Malon Southerland, assistant vice president for student services, said the Developmental Leave Committee is unique.

"We are unaware of any committee exactly like this one at any other university in the country," Southerland said.

The committee provides an opportunity for staff members to take trips not normally covered under their department budgets.

"The special leaves provided by the committee allow staff members to learn about unique policies and to grow personally in ways that will benefit Texas A&M students," Southerland

said. The committee awards a maximum of \$800 each to two staff members a year to take special leaves. This year, three awards will be given because an applicant awarded a leave last year cancelled. The extra money was added to this year's funds.

This year's applicants are: •Karen Miller Barnes, International Student Services, who applied to attend the 12th International Convention of Partners of the Americas in Merida, Mexico.

•Kerry Hope, Student Counseling Service, who applied to attend a conference entitled "Psychotherapeutic Approaches

to Bulimia and Anorexia Nervosa: Views of Treatment" in New York City.

•Tina Watkins, International Student Services, who applied to attend the 26th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association in Boston.

•Donald J. Johnson, Jr., Corps commandant, who applied to visit the Virginia Institute in Lexington and the Citadel in Charleston, S.C.

•James M. Welford, Jr., director of intramural and recreational sports, who applied to attend the 1983 Athletic Chasing and Facilities Conference in Chicago.

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**Arsenic detected in 3 water wells**

United Press International  
HOUSTON — Tests show more than three times the permitted level of arsenic in wells of two businesses near a now-dismantled herbicide plant, officials said Wednesday.

The Texas Department of Water Resources said the findings have prompted a request to the Environmental Protection Agency for more sampling money and for new EPA emergency work to halt continuing leaks of arsenic from old Crystal Chemical Co. wells.

The high arsenic levels were found in a well serving Alloys Inc. and two wells at Houston Shell and Concrete southwest Houston. Only the wells at Houston Shell and Concrete were being used for drinking water.

Rod Kimbro, abandoned response chief for the state water agency, said the other wells supplied industrial water. Kimbro said the high arsenic levels were found in the well at a depth of 200 to 300 feet. "We did not expect that ground water would be contaminated as it is, or that contamination would extend far out as it does," Kimbro said.

Crystal Chemical, which opened in 1968 and made insect-based herbicides, had had trouble with pollution control agencies before it went bankrupt in October 1981.

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