

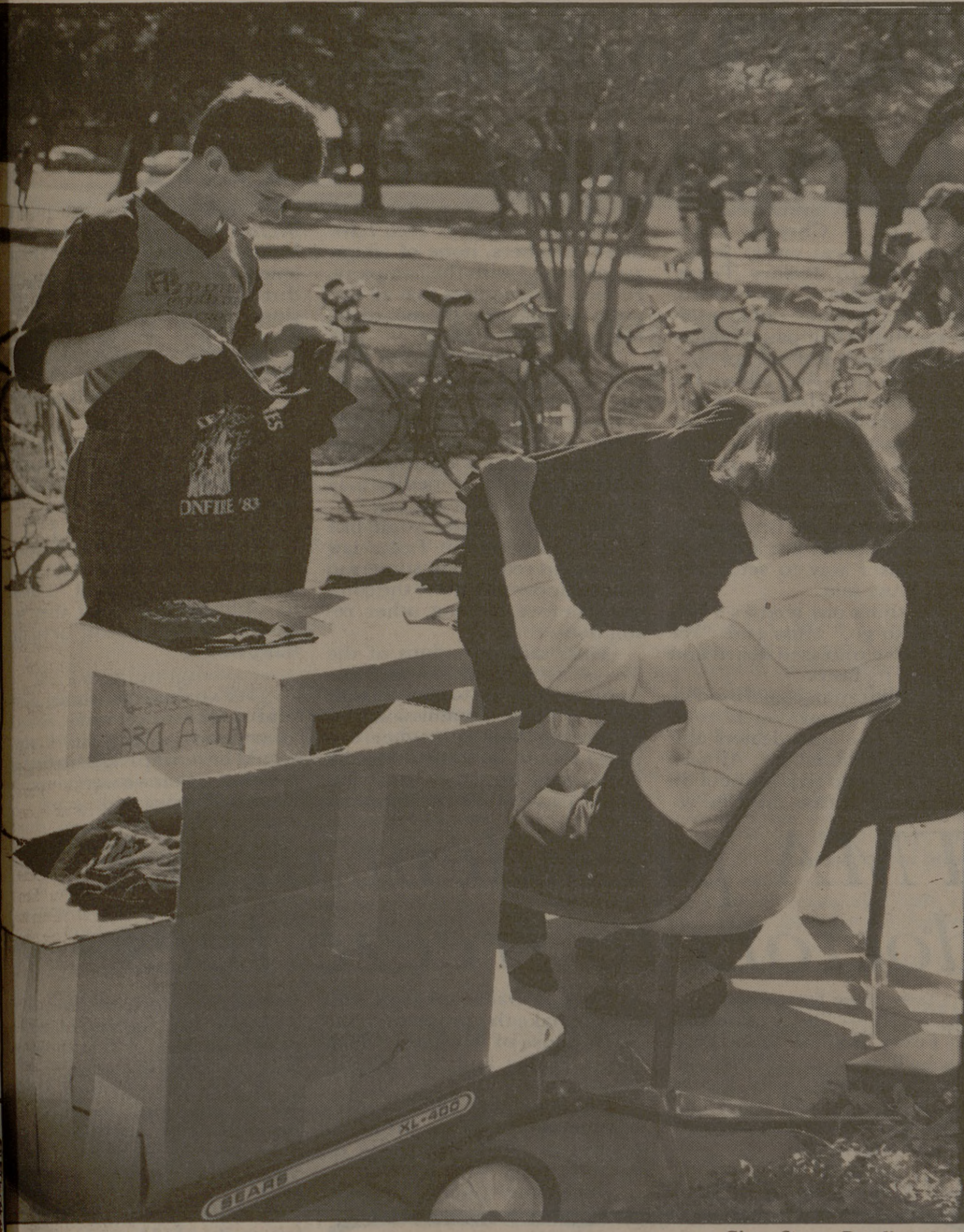
# Heirs to Padre Island demand state royalties

**United Press International**  
**EL PASO** — Members of the Balli family, heirs of the original owners of South Padre Island, announced Wednesday their plans to conduct a sit-in on the steps of the Texas land commissioner's office in Austin Nov. 26 to demand royalties on the land.  
 Jose Balli of El Paso said Balli family members from throughout the United States will gather to claim royalties on the island, a tourist mecca at the southern tip of Texas with condominiums priced at \$190,000 and up.  
 "The land is ours, but no royalties have been paid to us because they tell us the state of Texas is broke," said Balli. "I don't believe that."  
 Johnny Balli, of Corpus Christi, said relatives from

Texas have been fighting the state since 1941, to no avail.  
 "The state of Texas is sitting on more than \$485 million in royalty fees from oil and natural gas developers," said Johnny Balli. "That money belongs to the Balli family because we are the original heirs to Padre Nicolas Balli, the man who first owned that property."  
 The Ballis are now challenging the state of Texas as well as the federal government to prove that part of the island does not belong to the family.  
 Garry Mauro, Texas land commissioner, said he knows of no money sitting in escrow.  
 "In 1941, the heirs of South Padre Island sued the state and got title to significant portions of Padre Island," Mauro said. "The

Ballis originally owned 50,000 acres, but the Texas Supreme Court granted them an additional 30,000 acres."  
 Mauro said South Padre Island is owned by private developers who bought the property from other members of the Balli family.  
 South Padre Island is about 110 miles long and more than three miles wide. Its beaches draw tourists from all over the southern United States.  
 "I don't think there's any question that the land belongs to us," said Johnny Balli. "But the question is, why haven't we received any money from the developers who have made millions off our island?"  
 In 1800, Padre Balli applied

for and was granted part of what is now Padre Island by King Carlos of Spain. The priest then started the first settlement on the island, Rancho Santa Cruz, where he set out to convert the Karankawa Indians to Christianity.  
 In 1941, the state of Texas tried to claim the island as its own, but the Texas Supreme Court ruled that the island belonged to the Balli heirs because of a deed issued in 1836.  
 Johnny Balli said developers on Padre Island are still not issued "clear title" to purchased property because the state does not own the land.  
 "The state sells the land with an insurance policy attached," he said.



Ginny Stover, Battalion photo

## Supporting Aggie Bonfire

Susan Tulinski, a sophomore from Conroe, and Jana Hellier, a junior from Arlington, help Tony George, a sophomore, decide what size

T-shirt to buy. Texas Aggie Bonfire '83 t-shirts will be on sale in front of Sbisa and the Memorial Student Center until Nov. 23.

## Wrecked plane loaded with pot

**United Press International**  
**CHILDRESS** — The pilot of a single-engine plane loaded with marijuana told airport control he was having problems shortly before the plane crashed through a power line Monday, officials said Wednesday.

The plane was running badly and he planned an emergency landing, Hill said.

He said the only reason the plane didn't explode was that it was out of fuel.

Bill Hoffman of Independence, Mo., was pronounced dead at the scene, Childress County sheriff's deputy Jack Hill said.

When the plane struck the power line four miles southwest of Childress, power to the 5,800 residents of the city was temporarily disrupted.

A second passenger, who has not been identified, is in critical condition at Childress Hospital. He has been placed under arrest on a drug charge.

Officials estimated the plane, which is registered in Missouri, had between 175 and 300 pounds of marijuana aboard. Hill said he believed the cargo came from Mexico.

Before the Cessna 210 crashed, the pilot informed the Childress Airport control tower that he was out of fuel, his en-

The crash site has been restricted by the National Transportation Safety Board.

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## Prison officer fired; attorney predicts reform

**United Press International**  
**HUNTSVILLE** — The firing Monday of an officer who handled inmates' brutality complaints shows the Texas Department of Corrections board is making an effort to improve conditions, a prisoners' attorney says.

Paul Haymes, 56, was hired in September 1982 to oversee compliance with prison reform orders issued by U.S. District Judge William Wayne Justice of Tyler. Haymes was abruptly fired by interim TDC Director Dan McKaskle at the request of the TDC board.

William Bennett Turner, an attorney for prisoners in a reform lawsuit pending before Justice, said it appeared the board was making a real effort to stop brutality since a court monitor issued a report critical of Haymes and McKaskle.

"The board members realize that TDC has not been policing itself and it looks like they are

making an effort in that direction," Turner said.

In a recent report to Justice, court monitor Paul Belazis said Haymes and McKaskle refused to cooperate with investigators.

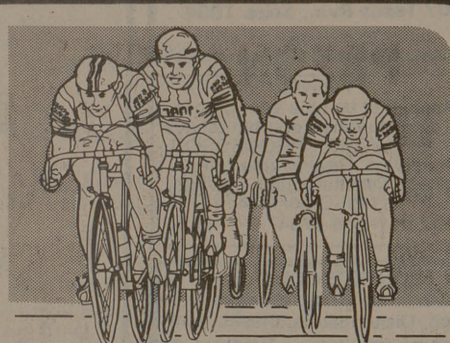
Belazis said he looked into and confirmed 14 cases of brutality in the past two years and concluded that physical abuse of prisoners by guards "continues unabated."

Though prison officials refused comment on the firing, a TDC board member said Haymes was fired because the board was "not satisfied with the performance of that office."

Haymes, a retired FBI agent and Rice University graduate who holds a master's degree in criminal justice from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, was paid \$34,000 a year in the job. He was not available for comment about his firing.

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