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Texas A&M

# The Battalion

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College Station, Texas

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## Cold snap keeping B-CS sweeps busy

By JAN PERRY

Reporter

Legend says that the touch of a chimney sweep will bring good luck — not to mention a sooty hand — to all who greet him.

With winter's freezing weather and the tendency for people to have fires in their home fireplaces, a lot of people around Bryan and College Station are shaking the sooty hands of Mark Loftus and Nick Pappas.

Loftus and Pappas are chimney sweeps who incorporate modern cleaning techniques with many of the traditions of chimney sweeping.

One such tradition that they carry on in their 1-year-old business — which they call Old London Chimney Sweeps — is the practice of wearing black top hats while cleaning chimneys.

Chimney sweeps wear the top hats "half out of superstition and half out of custom," Pappas said. "It's bad luck not to."

As full-time firefighters for the Bryan Fire Department, Loftus and Pappas, who are sweeps during their off-duty hours, said they have a considerable amount of experience in dealing with the hazards of unkept fireplaces.

The primary danger of dirty fireplaces is the buildup of creosote, a highly flammable, tarlike substance that coats the inside of the chimney and reduces the efficiency of the fireplace, Pappas said.

If creosote is allowed to build up too long, Pappas said, the chimney will become unsafe, and the fireplace should not be used because of the danger of a chimney fire.

"A chimney fire can be very frightening," Loftus said. "It looks and sounds like there is a rocket engine in your house."

A chimney fire burns at extremely high temperatures, about 3,000 degrees Fahrenheit, Pappas said. At that high temperature the mortar melts or flaming balls of creosote may be thrown onto the roof.

The damage to a fireplace after a chimney fire appears to be minimal;

however, the structure is weakened and can endanger the entire house if used again without the necessary repairs.

While on the job, Pappas and Loftus do make minor repairs to chimneys if needed. They do not, however, try to repair the more serious damage that may require a professional mason.

Pappas and Loftus, who clean about two or three chimneys a week, said they use the same cleaning techniques now as chimney sweeps used 100 years ago.

Pappas, the smaller sweep, said he usually works inside the fireplace. He wears an old Army gas mask to filter the ash and soot out of the air while scrubbing the walls of the chimney. Extended exposure to the soot — like coal dust — may cause cancer, he said.

Cleanliness is always their main priority. Pappas is careful to lay out tarps on the floor and to use a vacuum with 900 cubic feet of air to pull most of the soot out of the air.

While Pappas is scrubbing the lower portion of the chimney from below, Loftus usually is on the rooftop scrubbing from above.

Loftus uses brushes and fiberglass poles that come in 5-foot sections to clean the creosote, bird droppings and nests out of the chimneys. Occasionally, Loftus said, the two have been hired to remove dead raccoons or squirrels from chimneys.

The entire chimney-sweeping process, Pappas said, takes about 1-1/2 hours, depending on the size of the chimney and the degree of creosote buildup.

Harry Davis, College Station fire marshal, said one way to reduce the build-up of creosote and the risks of chimney fire is to burn well-seasoned wood. He said green wood smokes too much, and creosote is transported in the smoke.

Pappas also recommends a chimney be cleaned after about a cord and a half of wood has been burned to prevent severe creosote buildup. The



Photo by DEAN SAITO

Mark Loftus, of Old London Chimney Sweeps, prepares to clean out a chimney in his traditional attire, a top hat.

actual time may vary on the quality of the wood.

For example, Loftus said, pine burns poorly because of the large sap content.

If commercial paper logs are going to be used for color, Pappas said, a good, strong, hot fire should be built.

Davis said there are about one or two chimney fires each year in College Station. He said the amount may in-

crease soon because of the number of new apartment complexes with fireplaces.

There is some problem now, Davis said, in deciding who is responsible for the maintenance of the fireplaces. It has not been determined whether the apartment complex should be made responsible or if the tenant should be made responsible.

If the decision is not made in the near future, Pappas said, some severe chimney fires may result.

## Gemayel appeals for renewed talks

United Press International

BEIRUT — Prime Minister Cheikh Wazzan resigned along with his government Sunday, but fighting intensified as Shiite Moslem militiamen seized control of the main road leading to the airport and the U.S. Marine base.

Facing his greatest crisis, Christian President Amin Gemayel went on national radio and television to appeal to his Moslem opponents to meet with him in renewed peace talks aimed at averting all-out civil war.

"Everything is open to discussion with the opposition," said Gemayel, appearing composed as he sat in a television studio with a green, red and white Lebanese flag in the background.

He dismissed calls for his own resignation but pledged to work to improve ties with Syria, which supports the Moslem militias fighting the government and has demanded abrogation of a May 17 Lebanese-Israeli accord.

Earlier, Gemayel immediately accepted the resignations of Wazzan and his Cabinet, which came in response to appeals from Syrian-backed Moslem rebels. But they appeared to have little effect on the escalating battles.

"We are aware of the situation and are reviewing it very carefully," said Marine Maj. Dennis Brooks. "We are on a very high state of alert, close to our bunkers and ready for anything."

Members of the 1,200-man Marine peace-keeping contingent fought a brief small-arms clash in the afternoon with Moslem militiamen, Brooks said. There were no reports of American casualties.

The Lebanese army fought a fourth straight day of clashes in south Beirut with Shiite Moslem militiamen, who were backed by the artillery of allied Druze Moslem rebels based in the mountains overlooking the capital.

An estimated 150 people have died and 561 wounded in the fighting since Thursday, according to figures compiled from the Red Cross, hospitals and other sources. No official gov-

ernment figures were available.

The Lebanese army announced 20 soldiers and two officers have been killed and 197 others wounded. An official said 20 army soldiers were taken prisoner.

"Some efforts should be made to end these bloody events where innocent people are killed and homes are destroyed while all hope is lost," Wazzan said in his resignation statement.

Nabih Berri's Shiite Moslem militia, Amal, seized positions on the main coastal road, controlling civilian access to Lebanon's only international airport and the American military compound there.

Echoing a demand by the Druze Moslem militia leader Walid Jumblatt, Berri called for Gemayel's resignation, saying there was "no solution until the downfall of Nero" — a reference to Gemayel.

Former Moslem Prime Minister Rashid Karami, of the northern port of Tripoli, announced that he was calling on the 5,000 Lebanese soldiers based in north Lebanon to follow his command.

Troops in the south appeared to be following the call as well since Lebanese soldiers gave up positions along the airport road without a fight. The army is commanded by Christians although a majority of its soldiers are Moslem.

Adding to the tension in the country, an army official said Syrian troops began a siege of the central Christian town of Zahle, with 25,000 inhabitants. The Syrians apparently plan to invade the town, he said.

Wazzan submitted his decision in a meeting with Gemayel at the presidential palace, on a bluff overlooking south Beirut's Shiite Moslem slums where the army and Moslem militiamen began an intense battle Thursday.

Wazzan said illegal militias, right-wing Christians as well as Moslems, must join in negotiations to resolve the crisis.

The 10-member Cabinet will apparently stay on until Gemayel appoints a new government.

## Astronauts find missing Westar 6 satellite '84 football ticket prices to go up

United Press International

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Tracking teams Sunday finally found the errant Westar 6 satellite missing since its launch from Challenger two days ago and its first reports transmitted from space boosted confidence for Monday's deployment of a similar relay station.

That was good news for the astronauts whose plans for a 17,500-mph game of space tag were spoiled by the explosion of their 6 1/2-foot target balloon.

The bursting balloon meant spacemen Vance Brand, Robert "Hoot" Gibson, Bruce McCandless, Robert Stewart and Ronald McNair had to forgo rehearsing the maneuvers for an important April rendezvous with a malfunctioning solar satellite.

But the astronauts and ground teams were optimistic things would go smoothly for Monday's launch of the Indonesian Palapa satellite.

A California tracking station con-

tacted Westar 6 Sunday afternoon and was able to command the satellite to recharge its batteries.

Although the satellite can never be raised to its proper stationary orbit 22,300 miles above Earth, the first reports rai hopes for a successful post-mortem on its \$75 million fai. "We have a spacecraft that's in the wrong orbit that's completely healthy," said Bill Ziegler, the project manager for Western Union, the owner of the satellite.

Ziegler said the satellite might be nudged into an orbit high enough where it would have some limited use.

He said his best guess to explain the satellite's predicament was that Westar's rocket motor misfired and flamed out, leaving the satellite in the wrong orbit.

The Westar 6 failure was the first of two disappointments for the astronauts in the first three days of an eight-day mission.

The shiny white ball that was to

have been used as the bulls-eye to rehearse a satellite repair mission burst soon after it was ejected from the shuttle's cargo bay Sunday morning.

Stewart told mission control the balloon popped with "a fairly violent explosion."

"It was just like somebody stuck a stick of dynamite in it and blew it up," said Stewart.

The balloon was launched in a canister containing a nitrogen gas bottle for inflation. An explosive device failed to break the canister apart and the swelling balloon burst in the container.

Ground controllers canceled the rehearsal maneuvers because of the lack of a suitable target and concern about a collision with the balloon's 200-pound ballast that was drifting on its own in orbit, too small to be tracked by radar.

The radio contact with Westar 6 confirmed the satellite is among a pack of space debris circling the Earth

in an orbit ranging up to several hundred miles higher than Challenger.

"There's no hope of saving it, but it is exciting that we will be able to piece together the story of what happened," said a spokesman for Hughes Aircraft, the firm that built the satellite.

Hartadi Asturi, project manager for the Indonesian Palapa satellite, said the first reports from Westar made him confident that the launch of his country's relay station would succeed.

The Palapa launch originally was scheduled for Saturday but was delayed because of the Westar 6 problem.

Asturi said engineers believed Westar's failure was caused by a problem with the satellite's rocket motor that was to have fired 45 minutes after deployment Friday to start the satellite on its climb to orbit.

The Palapa is equipped with the same sort of rocket motor, called a payload assist module. The rockets have worked correctly on four nearly identical satellites launched on previous missions.

"They think the failure on Westar was a random failure," said Asturi. "There is no indication that there is a design problem."

Despite the rehearsal cancellation, the astronauts and ground crews still were able to use a large balloon fragment to successfully test the navigation equipment that will be needed for the exacting maneuvers on the next flight to bring the shuttle within 100 yards of the broken Solar Max satellite.

The astronauts also checked out the ship's 50-foot mechanical arm that will be used during the free-flying "Buck Rogers" spacewalks scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday.

## Services held today for Schiwetz

By Ed Alanis

Staff writer

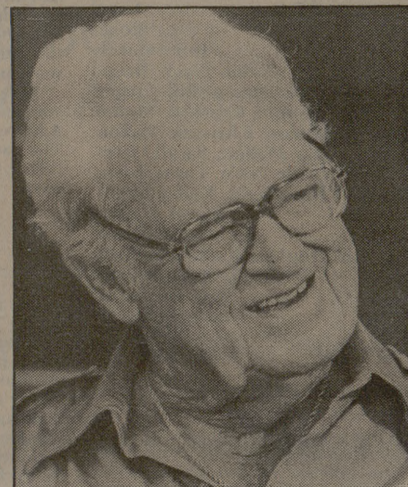
Funeral services will be held today at 3 p.m. in Austin for Distinguished Alumnus E.M. "Buck" Schiwetz, one of the state's best-known and best-loved artists.

Schiwetz, 85, died Thursday in his hometown of Cuero following a long illness.

Credited with capturing Texas scenes as no other artist has, Schiwetz painted with a distinct style, all his own.

Schiwetz graduated from Texas A&M in 1921 with a bachelor's degree in architecture. However, he never practiced that trade. Instead, he devoted much of his life to drawing and painting Texas scenes.

Schiwetz has worked with many people at Texas A&M, including environmental design graphics profes-



E.M. "Buck" Schiwetz

sor Jim Earle. Earle is the creator of comic strip character "Slouch," who has appeared in the Battalion for more than 40 years.

Schiwetz was the first recipient of the Texas Artist of the Year Award, established in 1977. Many of his works have been published in book form, including scenes from the Texas A&M campus drawn during the 1976 centennial celebration. Schiwetz served as artist-in-residence for Texas A&M in 1976 and *Buck Schiwetz' Aggeland — A Portfolio of Eight Scenes from Texas A&M University* was published by the University press.

Schiwetz came to A&M to study electrical engineering, but it was soon discovered that his talents did not lie in this field. He then began studying architecture, and won awards for his designs and sketches. He also served

two years as art editor of the yearbook, then called *The Longhorn*.

Jerry Cooper, editor of the Texas Aggie, says Schiwetz was quite a character during his days as a student. He lived in the attic of Gathwright Hall. Gathwright Hall is no longer standing today, but it was located near Heaton Hall. Schiwetz had his illustrations printed in several campus publications, and many of his works are presently on display in the MSC.

Services will be at St. David's Episcopal Church in Austin today. Texas A&M President Frank Vandiver will deliver a eulogy. The Ross Volunteer Company will serve as pall-bearers and Aggie Band buglers will play taps.

Schiwetz is survived by his wife, Ruby Lee Schiwetz, a daughter, Mrs. Frank Nelson of San Antonio, a brother, David Schiwetz, and a granddaughter.

## In Today's Battalion

### Local

- Funeral services were held Sunday for a 22-year-old TAMU student killed in a Cessna plane crash. See story page 3.
- The debate over whether seniors will take finals probably won't be settled for two or three months. See story page 3.
- The Texas A&M women's basketball team beat Rice Saturday 71-69. See story page 11.

### World

- Secretary of State George Schultz talks with Brazilian leaders about debt, trade and nuclear energy. See story page 5.