Mardi Gras: World's largest party is cold and wild

NEW ORLEANS — Cloaked d shivering celebrants ormed a river of bodies tretching from stately St. charles Avenue to the raucous rench Quarter Tuesday for ne last big blowout before

Tens of thousands of people om across the United States warm to New Orleans each ear for Mardi Gras, the world's

ever been to," said Mary Parker, 37, of Miami. "I mean, the whole city shuts down so people can dress up and beg for junk. The Catholics in this town sure take their Lent seriously.'

Drizzle and bone-chilling temperatures in the 40s prompted many celebrants to forfeit Mardi Gras costumes for the warmth of coats and winter clothes. But others were not hampered by the cold, turning out to dance in skimpy g-strings "This is the craziest thing I've and flowing garments."

keep warm, screaming "Throw me something, mister" to mask-ers who pelted bystanders with aluminum doubloons and plastic trinkets from a stream of colorful and elaborate floats.

The crowds seemed relatively calm, but a policeman standing along the parade route warned, "It's still early yet." He said the crowd was considerably smaller than the estimated 1.1 million trip in psychology. I've never people who packed the downseen such a self-indulgent city."

Others jumped around to town area on Fat Tuesday last

"I came here to be crazy without anyone knowing," said 21-year-old Gretta Soniat, a student living in Dallas. She said she spent two weeks putting together her costume, which mimicked a pregnant Princess

"My parents think I'm studying for a psych test," Soniat said. "I'm looking at it as a field A California man and his are among the most sought-af-wife used a box on a stick with a ter Mardi Gras prizes. sign that read "Throw something for California" to entice maskers to toss them treasures.

We came all the way from California ... to freeze," said W.W. Wanamater of Van Nuys,

but we're having a good time. He said the plea painted on his box had netted him one of the treasured Zulu coconuts. The coconuts, hand painted by

Revelers crowd around the Zulu floats begging for the coconuts and sometimes scuffle with each other when a masker

groups with jazz

Visitors hung over railed bal-conies in the French Quarter Most of the crowd stayed along the parade routes but other celebrants drifted into the French Quarter where answering cries from below by French Quarter, where small painted in gay colors and bizarre designs.

Texas crime rate decreases for first time elin 22 years; increased awareness cited

AUSTIN — A decline in 100,000 people. exas' crime rate — the first in years — is being attributed to increased awareness of the growing number of citizens' cime-fighting groups.

Col. Jim Adams, director of

Texas Department of Public oulf spoke Safety, said Tuesday the overall the decrease crime rate for major and minor "We had almost come to accept a yearly increase in volume

percent with 5,907 crimes per

In addition, 766 Texas law enforcement agencies reported 928,827 major crimes during omsequences of crime and the rowing number of citizens' compared to the previous year. The DPS chief said the public's perception of crime may have been a contributing factor in

as being inevitable," Adams said. "A simple answer for these decreases is hard to come by, but I believe there's been greater awareness of the consequences of criminal acts, less tolerance of the criminal on the part of the law abiding citizen and increased participation in neighborhood watch groups, crimestoppers programs and

other anti-crime efforts. In the violent crime category,

At 11:01 p.m., about eight minutes after the first call, the

fire department sent an ambu-

Mrs. Boff was pronounced dead at 11:30 p.m. of heart dis-

lance to the Boff home.

robbery posted the greatest decrease — 11.4 percent. Murders were down by 9.1 percent, percent. rapes were down 7 percent, and aggravated assaults were down

egory, burglaries fell 8.2 per-cent and car thefts were down 5.2 percent. Theft, the only ma-

Other statistics reported by DPS included:

— Drunken driving arrests in 1983 totaled 149,621, an increase of 33 percent.

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Dispatcher's argument aired; incident stirs 300 complaints

DALLAS — An ambulance threatening emergency." said. "She is just out of it. In fact minutes with a man whose minutes with a man whose space with an officer." said. "She is just out of it. In fact the (Boff) is going in there now. He thinks she's dead." mother was dying has been signed to other duties.

A Dallas television station that broadcast tapes Monday of the January incident reported sme 300 calls from people omplaining of similar treat-

's office on paid administrative leave shals Twone month after the incident, up the? but was returned to duty after were namtwodays' leave. ments reto Jones said Myrick was reas-

s and propressure.

e Mercal Dallas television station ar tourists KDFW aired fire department n San An upes of the incident during its

It was not determined if Myrck was involved in any of the ther instances, but KDFW said food \$ for less state open records law to obtain tapes of other such conversa-

-tribution Larry Boff, whose 60-yearold stepmother died Jan. 5, filed a \$300,000 damage claim of food s gainst the city in the incident.

cos, teles officials said a full investigation open, cigs should be completed this week.

he said. Boff said he called the fire ment shortly before 11 m. on Jan. 5, after his stepther, Lillian Boff, began

having trouble breathing. Mrs. Boff was ill. Myrick asked to speak to the woman.
The tape continued:

te from the seems like she's incoherent."

Myrick: "Why is she incoher-

Boff: "How the hell do I with acc

tems oth

those cipients

e \$4 mi

Myrick: "Sir, don't curse me."
Boff: "Well, I don't care. These stupid questions you're asking me ... Give me someone who knows what they are doing. Why don't you just send an ambulance out here?" distribut

Myrick: "Sir, we only come t on life-threatening emer-

On the tape, supervisor Don again asked to speak to the woman. Boff's response contained the word "hell," and Greene threatened to hang up

Myrick came back on the line said their Fire department section chief a year Mike Jones said Tuesday the stigation dispatcher, 17-year veteran dispatcher, 17-year veteran dispatcher, 18-year veteran dispatcher, 18-year veteran dispatcher, 19-year veteran the woman the telephone.

Boff hung up, saying he would call a hospital. A few minutes later, Boff's roommate ments rel Jones said Myrick was reas-djury signed to other duties Tuesday and again Myrick insisted on this include ecause of stress and media talking to Mrs. Boff.



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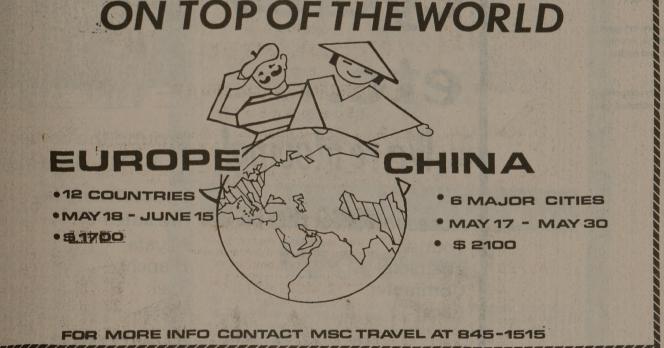
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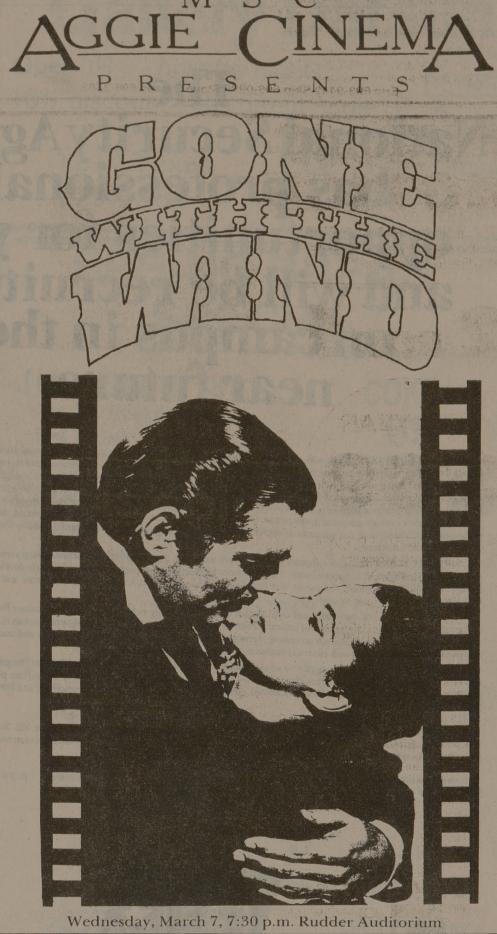
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