

# What's up

**Tuesday**

**WELLNESS NETWORK:** Wellness workshop and dinner at the Farmers Market Barbecue.

**MSC MADRIGAL DINNERS:** accepting applications for sub-chairmen through Friday. Applications are available from the secretary in room 216 MSC.

**Thursday**

**CHI ALPHA:** weekly meeting at 7 p.m. in room 402 Rudder. The teaching will be "Slothfulness: How to Cure It."

**SAILING CLUB:** will meet at 7 p.m. in room 321 Physics to discuss this weekend's outing at Lake Somerville and to view a yacht-racing video.

# Today's Almanac

United Press International

On this date in history:  
 In 1900, Dr. Walter Reed and his medical team began what would be a successful campaign to wipe out yellow fever in the Panama Canal Zone.  
 In 1917, first troops of the American Expeditionary Force reached France for action in World War I.  
 In 1959, Queen Elizabeth the 2nd formally opened the St. Lawrence Seaway in Canada.

300 million barrels found

## Oil struck in Alaskan sea

United Press International

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Oil has been discovered in the Beaufort Sea north of Prudhoe Bay, the first find in an area rated as having the highest exploration value in North America, officials said Monday.

The exploration arm of Shell Oil Co. announced the find of a recoverable pool of 300 million barrels of oil in an area 12 miles north of Prudhoe Bay near Seal Island.

While the recoverable pool is dwarfed by the size of Prudhoe Bay, which held 9.6 billion barrels when discovered in 1968, the state of Alaska stands to benefit from the discovery through a lucrative lease arrangement.

"The discovery appears large enough to warrant commercial development," said Shell spokesman Billy Vehnekamp, who added the oil was a high-grade "light" crude comparable to premium grades produced in Saudi Arabia.

"It's the highest quality discovered up there to date," he said.

In January, Shell Western Exploration and Production Inc. announced a tentative strike at Seal Island and it has now confirmed the commercial nature of the find with a second well, Vehnekamp said.

A third well will be drilled to further delineate the field, he added. The state of Alaska stands to reap 91.2 percent of the net profits from the first well as it hit on a state lease in addition to 20 percent of the gross, said Kay Brown, director of the Division of Oil and Gas.

The second well was hit on a tract claimed by the federal government, but ownership of the tract is disputed and a lawsuit stemming from the fight is before the U.S. Supreme Court, she said.

By comparison, the state receives a 12.5 percent royalty on the gross of Prudhoe Bay.

"It's good news for sure, but it is

## Bids solicited for offshore rigs

United Press International

HOUSTON — Although utilization rates for offshore mobile exploratory rigs declined the past week, oil companies are soliciting bids for drilling rigs at a "brisk pace," Offshore Data Services reported Monday.

The statistical firm said, "more rig operators are betting on the possibility of increased charter rates for rigs as evidenced by an increase in the number of term contracts being signed."

"Term charges (one year or more) lock in a rate for the duration of the contract and would benefit the oil company if market rates should rise during the term."

In the Gulf of Mexico in particular a substantial increase in the number of exploration plans oil companies have filed with the Interior Department's Minerals Management Service "points to more drilling activity," Offshore Data Services said.

The number of Plans of Exploration filed through May of this year have increased 137 percent over the comparable 1983 period, ODS reported.

Total rigs in the Gulf of Mexico remained at 245, compared to 245 the week before, 241 the month before and 209 at on June 27, 1983.

not (the size of) Prudhoe Bay and it will take a lot more fields of this size to make up (for the expected decline of Prudhoe Bay in the late 1980s)," Ms. Brown said.

"It's a step in the right direction and the timing is good — that is to say it should come on when Prudhoe Bay starts to decline," Ms. Brown added.

Shell said it would be at least 1992 before the well could be put into production.

The discovery also is expected to offset earlier disappointments in exploration of the Beaufort, which the National Petroleum Council has estimated holds the equivalent in oil and gas of 15 billion barrels of crude.

Earlier this year, Sohio abandoned its Beaufort Mukluk Well after a total cost including drilling and leasing estimated at \$1.8 billion — which made the well the costliest dry hole in the history of U.S. exploration.

"I think the Mukluk experience tended to dampen things, but the apparent prospects of the Shell experience will replace some of the optimism in the picture (of the Beaufort)," said Bill Hopkins, executive director of the Alaska Oil and Gas Association.

The Seal Island discovery was made in the same general formation that supplies Prudhoe Bay, although the two pools are not connected, Vehnekamp said.

"It's a big formation but a lot of faults break it up," he said. "We're not pulling off of Prudhoe Bay."

Initial tests showed both wells could produce about 5,000 barrels a day, he added.

Partners in the well include its operator SWEPI; Amerada Hess Corp.; Amoco Production Co.; Texas Eastern Exploration Co.; and Murphy Oil USA Inc., Shell said.

Each participant's interest will depend on final size and shape of the field that will be determined by future drilling, Shell said.

## Texan's heirs claim billions

United Press International

LENOIR, N.C. — Pelham Humphries was born out of wedlock in Caldwell County, stabbed a man in Tennessee, slipped off to Old Mexico and died during a Nacagdoches barroom brawl in 1835.

But the trouble was just beginning.

Before he died, Humphries obtained a 3,900-acre land grant in present-day Beaumont, Texas. When the Spindletop oil gusher blew there in 1901, Texaco and Gulf Oil were born.

Now Humphries' descendants, including some 500 from Caldwell and Watauga counties, want a piece of the action. They figure the oil companies have up to \$100 billion in royalty payments and interest — equal to about half last year's federal budget deficit — stashed in hidden escrow accounts.

"I think they really think it's there," said Robert "Buck" Greer of Lenoir, who believes he is related to Humphries on his mother's side. "I really think it's there. This is not no fantasy we dreamed up."

The money, which Texas and oil company officials say does not exist, has lured many since the oil first gushed. The tale of Humphries and his lost Texas oil fortune has become a fable of riches, duplicity, family intrigue and dreams waiting to come true.

About 1,000 people who formed a group in Tennessee last March claim to be Humphries' kin. An Ohio group seeking up to \$20 billion filed a federal suit against five oil companies last month.

The lawsuits — up to 20 — and the claims appear periodically as the story revives itself every few years, members of the Beaumont Histori-

cal Society say. None have been known to pay off.

Humphries' kin claim the deed to his land was misappropriated after his death. Descendants of James Medders claim an eighth of the mineral rights to the property. Five descendants from Cleveland sued to recover that portion in May.

The North Carolina group believes Humphries was born out of wedlock in the Globe community to Nancy Humphries and James Gragg. Its members, who are Gragg-related, have hired a genealogist and are talking to attorneys about a legal claim.

The clan is encouraged by a 1948 federal court ruling in Texas they say designated them tenants in common with the oil companies on the oil fields. Greer said a technicality prevented a settlement in that cases.



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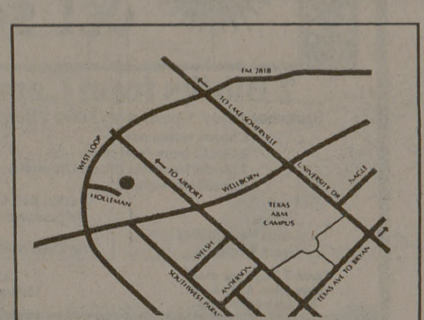


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FRI. JULY 6	6:30 7:45	11.00	12.00
SAT. JULY 7	6:30 7:45	11.00	12.00
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