

# Texas A&M The Battalion

Serving the University community

Vol. 82 No. 162 USPS 045360 8 pages

College Station, Texas

Wednesday, June 18, 1986

## Reagan nominates Rehnquist for top spot

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Reagan on Tuesday announced the retirement of Warren E. Burger as chief justice of the United States and said he will nominate Justice William Rehnquist to succeed him and become the 16th man to head the Supreme Court.

Upon Rehnquist's confirmation by the Senate, Reagan said, he will nominate federal appeals court Judge Antonin Scalia to the Supreme Court, thus preserving a conservative majority on the high court.

If confirmed, Scalia, 50, would be the first American of Italian descent to serve on the court. He also would be the youngest member of the present court, which in November would have become, without 78-year-old Burger's retirement, the oldest Supreme Court in history.

With Burger's departure and Sc-

lia's arrival, the court's average age would drop from 74 to 71.

Scalia's presence is not expected to alter the court's ideological balance, but his youth and his recognized intellect could give the court a powerful conservative voice for decades to come.

If anything, Scalia is regarded as even more conservative than Burger, who is regarded as second only to Rehnquist in his politically conservative views.

Burger's retirement will not change the court's position on the issue of abortion, since he was one of four court members who last week voiced reservations about the court's landmark 1973 decision. His departure still leaves five solid votes behind that ruling, which legalized abortion.

Scalia is a Roman Catholic and the father of nine children. A White

House official who participated in the review of candidates for the post said that, although he was familiar with a number of Scalia's decisions, he did not know whether he ever participated in an abortion case.

Burger's retirement could produce one significant change in life at the Supreme Court — television cameras and other electronic coverage might be allowed. Burger is vehemently opposed to such coverage.

Rehnquist refused to say Tuesday whether he would like to change that, but electronic news coverage of the judicial process has spread through many state and local courts in recent years.

Reagan made his surprise announcement to a packed White House press room, where reporters had been told only to expect an important announcement.

The president said Burger in-

formed him three weeks ago that he had decided to retire — effective July 10 — after 17 years as chief justice to devote full time to his work as chairman of the commission that will lead the nation's celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Constitution in 1989.

A senior White House official, speaking on condition he not be identified, said Reagan picked Rehnquist from a list of about a dozen potential candidates — all jurists — which was prepared for him. Reagan met with the justice about two weeks ago and offered him the job.

The president then selected Scalia from among others on the list, the official said.

The official, who is familiar with the selection process and briefed reporters at the White House after the announcement, said Scalia was cho-

sen largely because he is "one of the principal exponents of the president's philosophy of judicial restraint."

He described that philosophy as an approach to law in which "the courts do not assert their own authority to change or to modify or to strike down those laws that are adopted by the democratic branches, by the Congress or executed by the president, unless the Constitution specifically so requires."

The official insisted, however, that "there was no litmus test" for picking a justice on the basis of his specific beliefs and that Scalia was not subjected to any screening of his opinions on abortion or school prayer.

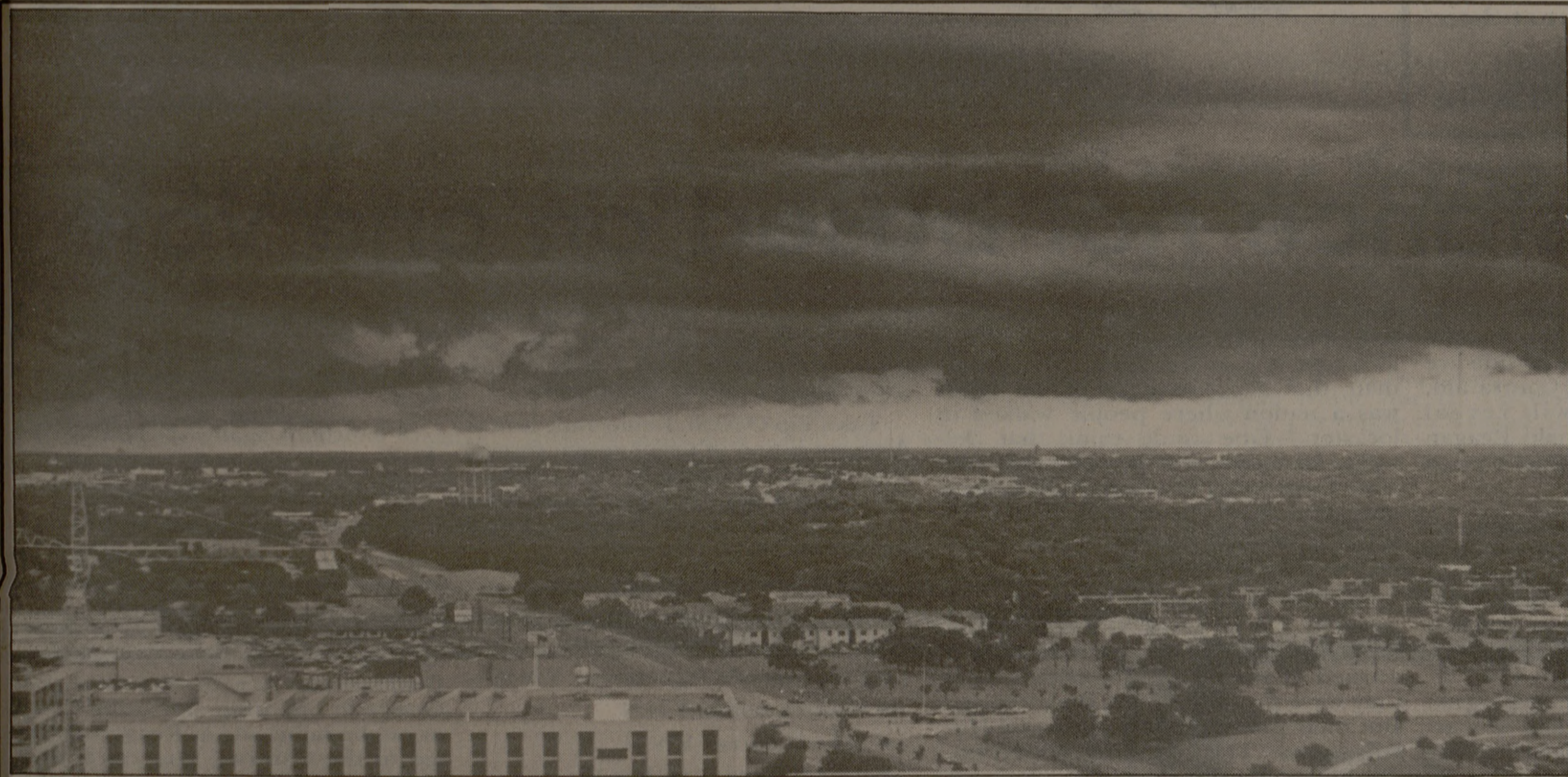
Scalia was named by Reagan to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Washington in 1982. He was chief of the three-judge special court panel



Warren Burger

that ruled unconstitutional the Gramm-Rudman deficit reduction law. An appeal has been heard by the Supreme Court and a decision is pending.

Scalia would be Reagan's second appointee to the Supreme Court. The first was Sandra Day O'Connor, a law school classmate of Rehnquist.



### Where's The Silver Lining?

Rain hit the Bryan-College Station area again Tuesday, making the view of South College Avenue from the Oceanography and Meteorology Building's observation floor a cloudy one. A 60 percent chance of rain is forecast for today.

Photo by Anthony S. Casper

## Excedrin capsules tampered with in Washington

AUBURN, Wash. (AP) — The maker of Extra-Strength Excedrin capsules asked stores nationwide to stop selling them Tuesday after authorities here confirmed there was cyanide in capsules found in the home of a woman who died of cyanide poisoning.

A relative found Sue Snow, 40, a bank manager, collapsed in her home June 11, said Police Officer James Monnett. She died later that day at a hospital.

There were 56 capsules left inside a 60-capsule Excedrin bottle found near where Snow collapsed, said Christopher Rezendes, assistant director of investigations for the Seattle office of the federal Food and Drug Administration.

Several of the remaining capsules contained significant amounts of cyanide, Rezendes said.

The bottle of poisoned capsules was discovered Monday at the woman's home as about 150 people attended a wake at the house, said Jerry Christin, evidence and identification technician for the Auburn police.

Christin said police had uncovered no evidence yet to indicate the death was a suicide.

"We're treating it as a homicide," he said. "That way we don't overlook anything."

The King County medical examiner's office confirmed Monday that Snow died of acute cyanide poisoning.

All Extra-Strength Excedrin capsules were pulled from about 50 stores in the Auburn area south of Seattle after Mayor Bob Roegner declared a public emergency Monday.

The maker of Excedrin, Bristol-Myers, recommended similar action nationwide Tuesday.

"Although we believe this to be a local, isolated incident, we are also asking all stores throughout the United States to quarantine Excedrin capsules for the time being and to remove Excedrin capsules from store shelves until we have more information on the situation in Auburn," Harry Levine, a vice president of Bristol-Myers, said in New York.

"This applies to Excedrin capsules only," he said. The product also is sold in extra-strength and regular strength tablets.

Monnett said that as of late Monday no cyanide was found in any of the bottles pulled from store shelves in Auburn and tested by the FDA.

Authorities believe Snow, who was married and had two daughters, purchased the capsules in Auburn a couple of days before she died. Police say they have been unable to determine which store sold the capsules.

The batch was manufactured in Morrisville, N.C., and bore the lot number 5 H 1 02-Aug. 88, Rezendes said.

Levine said the company had received no threats or communication relating to the poisoning.

At least nine deaths have been linked to drug-tampering since seven people in the Chicago area died in 1982 after taking Extra-Strength Tylenol contaminated with cyanide.

The February death of a New York woman remains under investigation, while officials ruled the April death of a woman in Pullman, Wash., was not a case of consumer-product tampering. A poisoning case in Tennessee was ruled a suicide.

## Son held in Father's Day killings

HAWKINS (AP) — Chad Beasley was bloodied, his eyes swollen shut and his arm broken when Steven Gage spotted him on a highway.

According to Gage, when he picked the 9-year-old up, the boy said, "Paul shot his daddy and his mother and his sister."

The boy had just escaped a Father's Day celebration that exploded into blood, terror and rage after a quarrel over a payment for haying chores.

Paul Owen Beasley Jr., 27, was charged with two counts of murder Monday in the deaths of his mother, Ruth Johnson Beasley, 62, and his sister, Linda Beasley Birkinbine, 37, of Euleless.

Beasley was being held in lieu of \$1 million bond, said Teri Fox, a Wood County sheriff's dispatcher.

Both women died Sunday of gunshot wounds to the face and throat. They also had been stabbed, officials said.

Beasley's father, Paul Owen Beasley Sr., 70, was in critical condition Tuesday at Tyler Medical Center from a gunshot to the head and a knife wound to his neck, according to hospital officials.

The suspect's 2-year-old nephew, Matthew Birkinbine, was treated for a lacerated throat and released Monday night.

## Legislators aid in securing permission

### Father gets OK to go to Moscow

DALLAS (AP) — Several calls to embassies, a congressman and a senator were needed before the father of a girl hospitalized in Moscow finally secured permission Tuesday to fly to the Soviet Union to see his daughter.

Gordon Riggs, father of Lisa Riggs, 17, traveled to Washington Tuesday afternoon to secure a visa and head for Moscow.

His daughter, who was part of an Irving high school tour of Eastern block nations, suffered an asthma attack and cardiac difficulties after climbing to the top of a circus arena in Moscow. She was in satisfactory

condition, said the girl's mother, Cheryl Riggs.

With help from a Texas congressman and a direct call to the American embassy, the girl's parents finally learned about their daughter's condition late Monday. Riggs also received an emergency visa sooner than usual with help from Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas.

Riggs, a Dallas computer consultant with the Federal Reserve Bank, said he would stay with his daughter about a week, until she could travel.

"If she's improving as rapidly as we are told she is, he will be bringing her home rather quickly," Ms. Riggs said.

The Riggs, who first heard of their daughter's plight Sunday afternoon, did not know how serious the attack had been until late Monday. They said they were unable to learn of anything through the State Department.

"I'm still amazed at how I could get through to the embassy and yet the State Department, their emergency services, indicated that they could not," Riggs said. "I have a real hard time understanding that—how I can get through and the State Department emergency cannot. Its real frustrating."

A spokesman for Rep. Martin Frost, D-Texas, said staff members

also had difficulty getting assistance from the State Department.

"The State Department is telling us they will not or cannot get through," spokesman Bob Mansker said.

Peter Martinez, a spokesman for the State Department, said he could not comment on the incident because he was not familiar with the case.

"My experience has been there's almost always an explanation why these things are the way they are," Martinez said. "They could have called at a time the lines were not jammed up or at a time when the Soviet bureaucracy is open."

## Dates cited in cutting Broadway series

By Jeanne Isenberg  
Staff Writer

The Memorial Student Center's Town Hall committee, which brings concert and professional theater entertainment to the A&M community, announced in May that the traditional Broadway series has been cancelled for 1986-87.

Jim Hurd, the program adviser for the committee, said the shows for the season were settled upon, but when the negotiations for the show dates got under way, scheduling conflicts, on top of Town Hall's recent budgetary problems, sparked the decision to cancel.

"We always get offers from tours for the winter months," Hurd said, "because everyone thinks the southwest is the place to be in the winter — warm weather. As we negotiate, we usually try to spread the dates around. This year, we couldn't spread the dates."

Representatives for the touring companies said they felt the decision was also based on financial problems. They said A&M's losses on theatrical performances last year led to a much shrewder business policy.

Betsy Frasier of Kolmar-Luth Associates, which books "Jesus Christ Superstar," said conflicts with dates can often lead to the collapse of a series.

The first planned show, "Jesus Christ Superstar," ended up on a date just before an MSC Opera and Performing Arts Society show, Hurd said. MSC OPAS shows are booked further in advance than the Broadway shows, he said.

The other three scheduled shows, "A Christmas Carol," "Biloxi Blues," and "Of

Mice and Men," all ran into similar date problems, Hurd said.

"Biloxi Blues" not only had a scheduling conflict with the Miss TAMU Scholarship Pageant, it also would have been the most expensive of the productions, he said. The "name play," written by Neil Simon, may have drawn a crowd, but Hurd said Town Hall learned from this year's "42nd Street" that A&M can't always handle the big shows financially.

"42nd Street" was the biggest show A&M has ever done, he said, but it was a major fac-

tor in the \$61,000 deficit Town Hall accumulated this year.

The only show from the 1986-87 Town Hall/Broadway series which still will be presented is "Romeo and Juliet." Hurd said it was the least expensive show, with very affordable tickets.

He added that the Shakespeare festival at

*"We always get offers from tours for the winter months. . . . As we negotiate, we usually try to spread the dates around. This year, we couldn't spread the dates."*

— Jim Hurd, MSC Town Hall program adviser.

A&M this spring did well and the show's date — Feb. 14 — couldn't be better.

Although the traditional Broadway season has been cancelled, Hurd said plans for an "alternative season" already are underway. He said the committee is considering acts leaning toward the style of Las Vegas club shows.

Johnny Mathis, New Orleans' Preservation Hall Jazz Band, the Mantovani Orchestra and Kevin McCarthy in a one-man show titled, "Give 'em hell, Harry!" about Harry S. Tru-

man are just some of the acts Town Hall has looked at so far.

The future for Broadway at A&M remains up in the air, he said.

"We may combine Broadway with OPAS. We may see demand for more theatrical productions, or see a lack of sufficient demand for them."

Hurd said the re-introduction of Broadway in the 1987-88 season also depends on the market — the quality of the shows touring and the available dates. And if the "alternative season" goes over well with the community, he said, that could be a factor, too.

Hurd said he expects the committee to at least break even this year, since smaller acts will reduce both the production costs and the theater costs.

He also said the concert season looks encouraging for Town Hall. The committee is trying a new promoter-oriented approach this year, he said. Instead of the committee taking the risks which accompany concert deals, Hurd said Town Hall will use promoters to negotiate and take the risks.

That means that although the committee doesn't have the potential to make a lot of money from the acts, Hurd said, the kind of major money losses suffered by Town Hall last year should be a thing of the past.