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33 illegal aliens arrested by immigration officials

HOUSTON (AP) — Federal immigration officials arrested 33 illegal aliens at two Houston "drop houses" and seven others accused of smuggling them into the city in a rental truck, authorities said.

The Central American aliens were rounded up during weekend raids of two southeast Houston apartments in renewed attempts to thwart alien smuggling following the end of the immigration amnesty program, officials of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service said.

The anti-smuggling sweep targeted Houston, Brownsville and McAllen, said Michael McMahon, district INS director in Houston.

Twelve illegal aliens fled prior to a Brownsville raid after operators of a drop house were tipped off, McMahon said.

The aliens arrested in Houston Saturday included 17 men, 15 women and a 3-year-old girl.

McMahon said the INS task force had received information that a group of 80 illegal aliens was entering the United States in areas other than Brownsville and McAllen and moving inland to larger cities.

The aliens arrested during the weekend crossed into Texas on foot and paid up to \$2,000 for the trip in the back of a rental truck to Houston, McMahon said.

Authorities are investigating whether some of the aliens were recruited for jobs in the United States, he said, adding that some of the smugglers had indicated they had come from North Carolina or South Carolina to take back some of the aliens.

Since an INS task force was sent to the Rio Grande Valley to process amnesty applications, the number of those seeking asylum has dwindled and only 2 percent of the applications are being approved, officials said.

Man retires after 57 years at same store

FREEPORT (AP) — Bobby Girouard says he never knew how enlightening it could be to feed bread to the seagulls until he took the time to try it.

"I can see why man is so intrigued with wanting to fly," Girouard said, tossing pieces of a loaf into the sky above Surfside Beach for the birds' feasting pleasure. "Everybody ought to come and feed the seagulls."

It is one of the simple practices Girouard, 65, has been able to enjoy since retiring in January from ever-constant duties at what is one of the state's landmark general stores, known for its large marine inventory.

Along with his older brother, Sagness Girouard Jr., Bobby Girouard had been running the Gulf Coast shop bearing the family name since 1946.

The Second Street building with the pink stucco walls and metal roof is a browser's paradise, where wrenches are sold across from grills, and cookies share shelves with gas stoves. Some claim it is the only grocery store in America certified as a government chart agent.

Estimates have targeted the amount of merchandise at 25,000 items.

In 1985, Girouard's was voted the "Best General Store" in the state by Texas Monthly, which cited its "mammoth maritime inventory" as a reason for the honor.

Bobby said leaving the business is an adjustment, but more time with wife Joyce at a recently built beach house peering at the Gulf of Mexico will make the transition easier.

"I enjoyed my years at the store, enjoyed working with people," Girouard said. "It's been our life."

It started for him at age 8, sweeping and stocking items at the store for Sagness Sr., who opened Girouard's in 1924.

The original location was only a few blocks from the Broad Street station where workers caught the train bound for Hoskin's Mound, where sulphur was produced.

Girouard said his dad, a Louisiana native who came to the area to work for the Freeport Sulphur Co., "had a lot of common sense and knew what to do with that."

Because his father believed idle hands were the devil's workshop, the boys began early at the store, which mainly sold groceries and even allowed credit to some customers. By the time they got out of the Navy, the store was handed over to them.

Geoscience students share research data

By Susan B. Erb
CORRESPONDENT

Stressing an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the Earth, Texas A&M geosciences graduate students shared research results and proposals with faculty and colleagues Wednesday and Thursday at the Texas A&M University Student Geosciences Symposium.

Philip D. Rabinowitz, director of the Ocean Drilling Program, which sponsored the symposium, said cooperative research in geoscience fields ranging from geology to oceanography is essential to understanding the complex environment of the earth.

"We live on a very dynamic and mobile earth," Rabinowitz said. "Knowledge gained over the past years, primarily through programs such as ODP, has made us aware that most of the processes shaping Earth today are taking place beneath the deep ocean floor."

"Results of many of the studies that students present here are changing the very way we think about our earth and our environment."

Frank Rack, a member of the symposium organizing committee and a graduate student in oceanography, said the symposium was conceived as a way to encourage interdisciplinary communication between students and faculty in the earth-science departments at Texas A&M.

"One of our goals in having student researchers present their talks during this symposium is to learn from each other and to develop an understanding of the many challenges and opportunities inherent in interdisciplinary research," Rack said.

Fifty-nine graduate students in the fields of marine biology, continental geology, geophysics, geochemistry, oceanography, meteorology and geography presented results of research or proposed research topics.

Dean Merrill, a member of the organizing committee for the symposium and a graduate student in oceanography, said the symposium gave students an opportunity to present research to a group similar to that at a national meeting.

Khalid Mahmood, a graduate student in geological oceanography, practiced his thesis presentation at the symposium.

"Without question, the symposium was very helpful," Mahmood said. "It increased my confidence and gave me the opportunity to gather and shape my results so they could be understandable to somebody in a different field."

In Advance

Some students need measles immunization

The Brazos County Health Department and the A.P. Beutel Health Center recommend that all students returning home during spring break to areas where there are measles outbreaks and who have not been reimmunized for measles since 1980 do so before returning to Bryan-College Station.

In an outbreak area, standards are upgraded to epidemic control status and the vaccine is more readily available for control measures.

Anyone with questions should contact the Brazos County Health Department, Personal Health Services Division, at 361-4440, or the health center at 845-1511.

Dog owners should be aware of distemper

Brazos Valley Animal Shelter has recently seen a high number of dogs with distemper.

Distemper is a serious disease in dogs that can be prevented by vaccination. The shelter asks that you call your veterinarian and be sure that your dog is up to date on vaccinations.

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