



**Sign language**

Photo by Phelan M. Ebenhack

Texas Tech fans show their support for their team during the Tech-Texas A&M game at Jones Stadium in Lubbock Saturday

afternoon. The Red Raiders defeated the Aggies 27-24 with two fourth-quarter touchdowns. See related story/Page 5

## Officials say U.S. prepared action to seize Noriega

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Bush administration was preparing covert action to seize Panamanian leader Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega during a coup attempt last week but the uprising collapsed before the plan could be executed, officials said Sunday.

President Bush made the decision near the end of a failed coup Tuesday, and the order was conveyed to the commander of U.S. forces in Panama, Gen. Maxwell Thurman, said Secretary of State James A. Baker III and Brent Scowcroft, the White House national security adviser.

"The message that was sent was that if there were an opportunity to do this, without risking bloodshed and significant loss of American life, and to do so without open military involvement, then he was free to go ahead, the commander on the ground was free to go ahead," Baker said on the NBC-TV program, "Meet the Press."

Defense Secretary Dick Cheney said that at the outset of the coup he told Thurman to be prepared to use peaceful means to take custody of Noriega, but the chance never came.

"After the Panamanians had contacted us and told us . . . that they had Noriega but that they would not give him to us, I made it clear that our commander on the scene was authorized to get him if he could, without using military force, and that he should develop an option or a plan to use military force to get him," Cheney said on the CBS-TV program "Face the Nation."

"We never made the decision to use military force, that would have involved going in against the rebels and taking Noriega from them. I never thought that was a very good idea, but we told him to be prepared in case he got the order to do so. Shortly after that, the coup fell apart," Cheney said.

The order to ready non-uniformed U.S. forces for a covert action to grab Noriega was first reported in Sunday editions of the *Washington Post*.

Although that report did not attribute the decision to the president, Scowcroft said, "President Bush personally was responsible what ever guidance was sent down, yes, personally ordered whatever guidance was sent to General Thurman."

Baker, Cheney and Scowcroft said top presidential advisers believe they acted correctly during the failed coup, despite criticism from Congress that U.S. forces should have helped the rebels or intervened to seize Noriega for trial in the United States on drug charges.

"There is nothing like 20-20 hindsight. Given what we know now about what was actually happening on the ground, then, I think I would not change what we did," Scowcroft said on the ABC-TV program "This Week with David Brinkley."

Nearly a week after the incident, it was still not 100 percent certain that the rebels ever had custody of the leader, Scowcroft said.

## PBS documentary examines mission of visiting A&M prof

**UNIVERSITY NEWS SERVICE**

Dr. Dennis Sheehy, a visiting professor of range science at Texas A&M University, will be featured in a PBS television documentary airing nationwide Monday.

The special program, entitled "The Cowboy in Mongolia," documents a Vietnam veteran's return to Asia on a mission to save the Chinese grasslands. The program will air locally at 9 p.m. Monday on KAMU-TV Channel 15 (cable channel 4).

While recovering at a Navy hospital after losing an arm in a rice-paddy firefight during the Vietnam War, Sheehy began thinking about

returning to Asia in a non-combat activity.

Eighteen years later, the Chinese government hired the Mandarin Chinese-speaking scientist trained in rangeland management to set up a pilot grass-saving project.

Sheehy and his family moved from their Oregon ranch and became the first foreigners ever to live in Yihenoer Sumu in the People's Republic of China.

His mission, he says, was to help stop the destruction of Mongolia's grasslands due to over grazing — changing patterns in place since the time of the Mongol empire ruler Genghis Kahn.

## Gallup Poll of college seniors shows deficiencies in basic history, literature

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Columbus Day poll suggests one-fourth of American college seniors either never heard or do not remember the childhood ditty: "In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue."

In addition to finding that one in four do not know Christopher Columbus made his famous landing in the Western Hemisphere prior to the year 1500, the Gallup Poll suggests considerable ignorance of other basic facts about history and literature.

Nearly 60 percent did not know the Korean War started when Harry S. Truman was president, 58 percent did not know that William Shakespeare wrote "The Tempest" and nearly a quarter believed a famous saying from Karl Marx is part of the U.S. Constitution.

"If the students' answers were to be graded, more than half of those tested would have failed," concluded the survey, which was conducted for the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Armed with the survey results, NEH Chairman Lynne Cheney called Sunday for colleges and universities to revise their curricula so undergraduates study "essential areas of knowledge."

In a booklet titled "50 Hours," she outlined a suggested core curriculum for college students.

Responding to her admonition, several college presidents essentially told the NEH chief — in more or less polite terms — either to mind her own business or that she was behind the times.

Here are some of the Gallup Poll highlights:

- 24 percent of the college seniors surveyed thought Columbus landed in the Western Hemisphere some time after 1500.
- 42 percent could not place the Civil War in the correct half century.
- 58 percent did not know that Shakespeare was the author of "The Tempest," but 95 percent knew that Mark Twain wrote "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn."
- 58 percent did not know Truman was president when the Korean War began. Fourteen percent thought it started when John F. Kennedy was president.
- 55 percent could not identify the "Magna Carta."
- 23 percent believed that Marx's phrase, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need," is part of the U.S. Constitution.

According to the survey, 39 percent of the college seniors failed the 49-question history section. On the portion of the survey devoted to literature, which consisted of 38 questions, 68 percent of the students failed.

## A&M joins other colleges in statewide effort to beef up security measures for students

**STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS**

Texas A&M University Police are part of a statewide effort to prove to students that college campuses are not crime-free playgrounds.

"Students think they are Alice in Wonderland once they enter a university environment," Bob Wiatt, A&M's director of security and university police, said. "They think there is an umbrella over the college

campus that protects them from the realities of the outside world."

A&M instituted AggieWatch, similar to a neighborhood watch program, this year.

The program allows students to get to know each other while increasing their awareness of crime and ability to prevent it.

A&M has added 12 security officers to its police force this year, which also has 42 commissioned po-

lice officers, seven dispatchers and six civilians.

The security officers can neither arrest nor detain suspects, but are charged to be additional eyes and ears for the police, Wiatt said.

The University of Houston employs similar tactics with a computer-aided dispatcher — the only such system used by a Texas university.

The computer dispatcher shortens the department's response time to two minutes for emergency calls and five minutes for all other calls, Assistant Police Chief Frank Cempa said.

Houston's campus, which has a police force of 40 commissioned officers, 22 civilians and about a dozen student volunteers, this year became a subscriber to Law Enforcement Television Network. LETN is a cable network carrying police-oriented training and education programs.

"We're here to educate the community, to remove the opportunity and desire for crime to occur," Cempa said.

At Houston, students are required to show identification before entering the newer dormitories. The older residence halls are patrolled by the Cougar Guard, a student branch of the campus police.

"It's been so successful, we really don't have transients walking through the buildings anymore," Cempa said.

Police at Rice University in Houston conduct a similar program with



Photo by Kathy Haveman

### Round and round

Jason Oakes, a junior MSC Town Hall member from Plano, participates in the "bat race" at MSC Play Day. The MSC organizations gathered Sunday at Hensel Park to compete and have fun at the annual event. Activities included volleyball, flag football and a tug-of-war, all designed to boost morale.

## BVSO lowers prices to encourage students

The Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra is offering a special season ticket price to students: \$20 for 5 performances.

"We want to make the season affordable for Aggies," Franz Krager, conductor of BVSO and lecturer of music at Texas A&M said. "We would love to have a balcony full of students."

Although attendance at the performances has been growing steadily since he took over the baton six years ago, Krager said he wants to get more students into the concert hall.

"I look at the audience and don't see the 18 to 21-year-old age group," Krager said. "We want to get them into the concert

hall for the first time — if they get exposed, they're going to grow."

Krager said there is a problem with education of symphony music in America not present in Europe.

"In Europe, I saw a garbage collector singing opera while he was picking up trash," he said. "They grow up with it. Here we formalize it to the point that we scare people."

"We want to break the idea that the symphony is for the old and lofty. That's a myth. Music speaks to all ages."

For more information call Bruce Williams at the symphony office at 776-2877 or the MSC Box Office at 845-1234.