

## Victims of fishing boat explosion honored; investigation continues

### Captain tells NTSB officials he didn't know about gas pipeline

CAMERON, La. (AP) — Victims from the fishing boat that exploded in the Gulf of Mexico were honored at a memorial service over the weekend as an investigation into the mishap continued.

More than 100 friends and relatives of the victims of the Northumberland explosion attended the memorial service Saturday after researchers found the last missing crew member in a bunk aboard the ship where 11 people died.

"At a time like this, we would all like to have answers," said the Rev.

Marvin Miles, a pastor at Cameron's Oak Grove Baptist Church, who helped conduct the service. "We'll see something worthwhile out of the worst of this situation. We've seen it happen before."

Meanwhile, the fishing boat's captain told investigators he didn't know his vessel was near a submerged natural gas pipeline.

Three men aboard the vessel were hurt. The explosion Tuesday night aboard the 160-foot Northumberland happened about a half-mile off Sabine Pass.

Zapata Haynie Corp., which owns the Northumberland, conducted the memorial service.

Funeral services for two of the victims, Bennie Crawford and Timmy Lee Thomas, both of Lake Charles, La., are scheduled for Monday. Other services are pending, officials at Combre Funeral Home of Lake Charles said.

The 31-year-old captain, Darreyl Wayne Gough, told National Transportation Safety Board investigators that the crew was preparing to head toward a school of fish to the east of

the accident site when the explosion occurred.

Gough said he was backing up the vessel in shallow water, with the front of the ship facing shore, when he felt a jolt.

"In the process of backing up, he was pulling the boat . . . to the right and that's when he struck the pipeline," NTSB member Lee Dickinson said.

"There was a sudden stop and an immediate boom. Immediately he saw flames," Dickinson said of the captain, who was interviewed by NTSB members Friday at his Sulphur, La., home.

Gough jumped overboard, and the captain recalled how a crew member drowned in his arms as they waited to be rescued, Dickinson said. After spending about 30 minutes in the water, he was rescued by a helicopter. He was treated for shock at a Beaumont hospital, then was released.

The captain's navigation charts were destroyed in the accident and it was not known whether the pipeline was marked on his charts, Dickinson said. He said Gough told investigators he didn't know about the 16-inch pipeline.

A spokesman for Natural Gas Pipeline Co. of America, which installed the pipeline in 1973, said the line was reported to appropriate authorities at the time.

Two victims were discovered Friday by search aircraft near Sea Rim State Park — about 10 miles from the scene of the blast. Two bodies were found Tuesday night, a third was found on Wednesday and five others were recovered Thursday when investigators boarded the ship for the first time.

All but one of those aboard the ship were from Louisiana. The other was from Port Arthur.

## Texas man claims government impeded philanthropic efforts

WHITE SETTLEMENT (AP) — A Texas man says he is ending his 5-year, one-man battle against hunger and death in Central America because of what he claims is persistent harassment from the U.S. Government.

"They win, I quit. But the babies die," said Gary Bennett, founder of Miskito Coast Child Find, an organization that has carried sick and homeless children out of war-torn Honduras and Nicaragua and delivered more than 30 tons of medicine and clothing into Central America since 1984.

Throughout his effort, Bennett said, officials of the U.S. Embassy in Honduras have accused him of "baby stealing" and investigated him on grounds he is not from a licensed adoption agency.

An embassy spokesman told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram it did not harass Bennett's organization.

However, in processing visa requests that involved the adoption of a non-American citizen, the U.S. government must make sure that adoption laws of the United States and foreign countries are complied with, to protect the interests of everyone concerned, the spokesman said.

Honduras officials insist upon children having birth certificates before they may be taken from the country, but Bennett said Honduras refuses to give birth certificates to Nicaraguans.

Child Find was licensed with the state of Texas until Sept. 15, when Bennett allowed the license to expire as part of dismantling the organization.

"I'm just tired of fighting their process," Bennett said. "I have no choice but to let the babies die."

Bennett initially became involved in Central America as a

mercenary of sorts. He taught fighting techniques to soldiers in Nicaragua.

After several missions, he said, he became interested in helping people of Central America displaced by the war. His interest in guns and grenades became secondary to an interest in sick children and hungry families, he said.

Bennett said his problems with Honduras began when a baby he was trying to help turned out to be Nicaraguan instead of Honduran. Bennett said the child's mother told him the child was Honduran, lying to him because she thought it would increase her chances of getting help for her baby.

Honduras officials accused Bennett of falsifying papers.

Four children ranging in age from seven months to two years now are housed in Bennett's House of Love, as he unofficially calls the building in Honduras that is used for orphans until parents are found and paperwork completed.

"Next week I have to go back and close down the house and try to find (the four children's) mommas or try to find them another home down there," Bennett said.

One of Bennett's five children is one he adopted after finding her near death in the Miskito Coast, a 40-mile-wide, 225-mile strip of shoreline in eastern Nicaragua and Honduras.

"They can put me in jail for 20 years, but they still can't find one thing I've done," Bennett told the Star-Telegram. "We've got a lot of babies and older people healthy and happy that wouldn't have been before. And I've got a dollar and a quarter in my pocket."

## AgNet helps radio stations broadcast consumer-based agricultural news

By Todd Swearingen

Of The Battalion Staff

It's not a bird, it's not a plane, and it's not a farm show! It's the Consumer AgNet Radio Program, brought to you by the Department of Agricultural Communications at Texas A&M.

Communications Specialist Randy Lemmon said the network radio program is not a farm show, but instead focuses on consumer-based agricultural news. Lemmon said that radio stations do not cover agricultural news to the extent that they did in the past and that gearing agricultural news to the consumer allows him to reach a much larger audience than traditional farm shows.

"There are still some farm shows out there, but by and large they're dying," Lemmon said.

Lemmon produces the reports in long and short formats to give stations flexibility in broadcasting them. Several volunteer student reporters are used, Lemmon said, to provide a variety of voices and add a professional touch to the program. The news is presented so that the general audience can understand how it will affect them at the grocery store or the shopping mall, he said.

"We also focus a lot on what we call high interest subjects — gardening and family related sciences (diet, health and nutrition)," Lemmon said.

Most of the news stories concern research by the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, because these agencies have a tremendous impact on people's lives, he said.

Lemmon spent three-and-a-half years producing radio and television programs for the Texas Farm Bureau before helping create AgNet just over a year ago, and has watched it grow initially from about 70 stations to 123 stations in Texas and Louisiana.

"We sent out the very first week of programming Sept. 27, 1988," Lemmon said.

"We really didn't know what to expect — we thought we had something that was good."

"Before we sent out the first week of programming, we asked probably over 200 stations whether or not they wanted to be a part of it."

Lemmon said that the program has gained a good reputation, and now stations are starting to contact him requesting the program.

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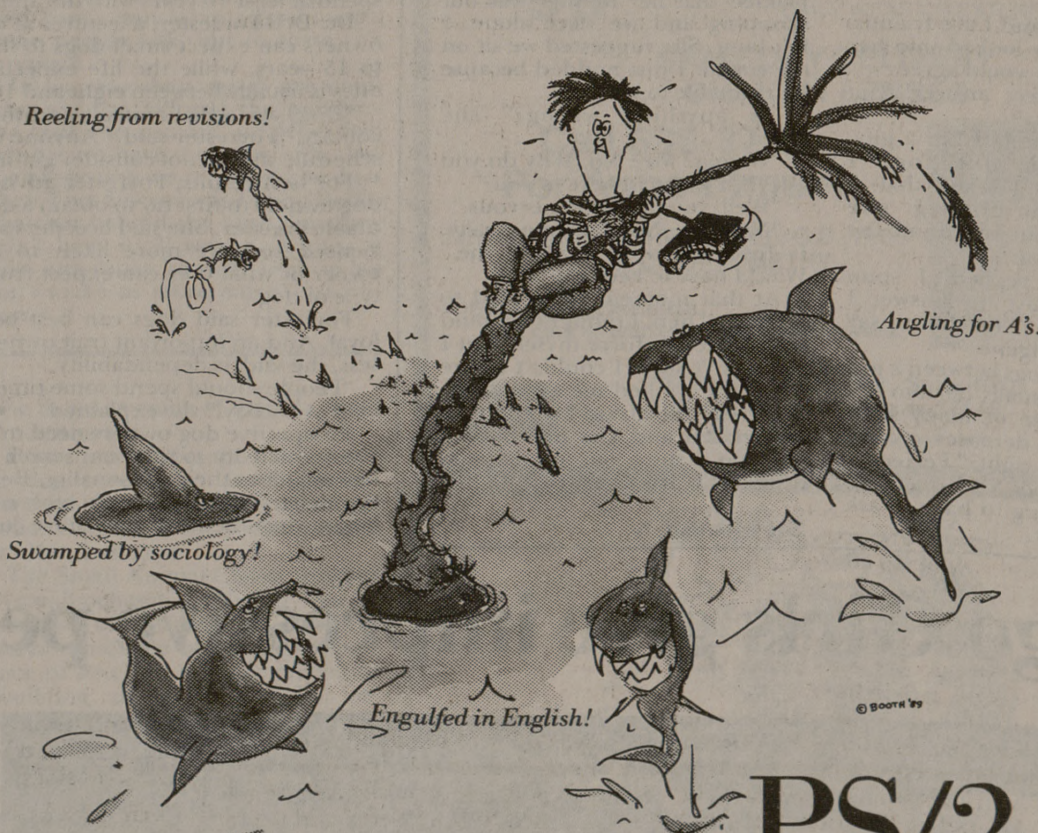
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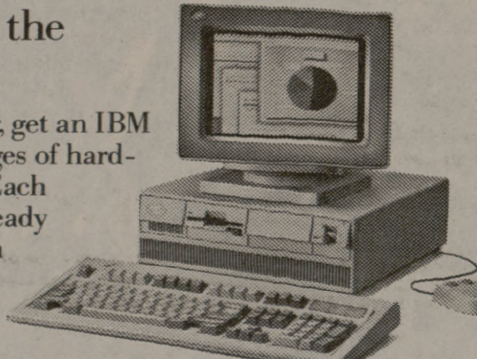
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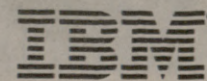
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