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## Globetrotting

### Syria celebrates Independence

Today is Independence Day in Syria. Three Texas A&M students are from this country.  
Facts about Syria:  
• Official name: Syrian Arab Republic  
• Area: 85,170 sq. mi. (about the size of North Dakota)  
• Population: 10.5 million  
• Capital: Damascus  
• Languages: Arabic (official), English (widely understood), French, Kurdish, Armenian  
• Religions: Sunni Moslem, other Moslem sects, Christianity, Judaism, Yazidis  
• Literacy: 78 percent (men), 58 percent (women)  
• Life Expectancy: 66 years  
• Currency: Syrian pound (One U.S. dollar = 3.9 Syrian pounds)



## Local, federal officials look for three escaped cellmates

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Local, federal and Mexican officials searched Monday for three inmates, including one suspected of leading a multimillion dollar drug ring, who pulled a gun on a guard and escaped from a privately-run jail.  
The three men — Mario Alberto Salinas Trevino, Charlie Edward Compton and Juan Chapa Garza — left the Central Texas Parole Violators Facility, where they were cellmates, late Sunday night on foot.  
Salinas, 37, led one of the largest drug-smuggling and money-laundering rings between Texas and Mexico, authorities said. He was among 25 people arrested last year in "Operation Jet Set," a series of raids by federal authorities in California and Texas.  
Law enforcement authorities suspect Salinas will go to Mexico, about 150 miles away, because he may have access to millions of dollars there.

"That's a logical escape route," U.S. Marshall Bill Jonas said. "If that's the case, I think he's acting ill-advisedly. I have every reason to believe the Mexican government will cooperate with us."  
Customs agents on both sides of the border were alerted to the escape, he said.  
But Compton has strong ties in San Antonio, Jonas said, and photographs of the three men were circulated to area police departments and news outlets.  
Compton was awaiting trial on possession of cocaine with intent to distribute charges. Chapa was charged with possession of marijuana with intent to distribute.  
The fugitives' cases were not connected, Jonas said, but added, "I would think that the three of them would stay together for a while."  
Authorities seized \$10 million from Salinas when he was arrested last year. He's suspected of having up to \$10 million in drug money stashed in Texas or Mexico, Jonas said.  
Jonas said Marshall's Service prisoners usually are kept in county facilities. But overcrowded conditions forced Bexar County officials to contract with a Florida company, Wackenhut Corp., to house inmates at a facility across the street from the downtown police headquarters.  
The three men left the medium-security facility about 9 p.m. Sunday, officials said.  
Compton pretended to be sick to lure a guard to the cell then pulled a .25-caliber handgun on him, Jonas said. The three inmates then locked up two guards in a closet and overpowered another before seizing the security control panels and opening a door, he said.

## Youth killed, others shot in gang-related attacks

AUSTIN (AP) — A 14-year-old boy was killed and five other youths were shot in two separate attacks Sunday that police said were gang-related.  
Chris Lamont Dean was shot to death near the Sixth Street entertainment district.  
Later, shooting erupted at Town Lake's Festival Beach Park, just east of Interstate 35, sending members of two rival gangs to local hospitals.  
None of the gunshot wounds were life-threatening, according to officials.

Police would not comment on whether the Sunday evening shooting was connected to the earlier shooting near Sixth Street.  
Dean was shot once in the chest with a .22-caliber pistol, according to the Travis County medical examiner's office.  
Police described the gunman as a 16- to 19-year-old Hispanic.

## Jury selection starts up in trial of fired Houston police officer

DALLAS (AP) — Jury selection began Monday in the murder trial of a former Houston police officer accused of killing a woman after a 12-mile freeway chase.  
Dozens of spectators from Houston, including members of the Ida Lee Delaney - Byron Gillum Justice Committee, arrived to watch the start of proceedings against Alex Gonzales.  
Gonzales, 25, is accused of killing Delaney, 50, last fall while he was off-duty. Delaney and Gillum, 24, both black, were fatally shot within two weeks of each other last fall by city police officers. The officer suspected of shooting Gillum was not indicted.  
Some of the spectators were ushered out to allow 60 potential jurors into the Dallas County courtroom, where state District Judge Ted Poe moved the trial on a change of venue.  
Committee co-chair Ada Edwards said more than 40 people drove to Dallas early Monday "to make sure the community is aware of what happened."  
"We're very, very concerned that justice be done in this case," Edwards said.  
Some attorneys volunteered to watch the trial with committee mem-

bers, she said.  
Edwards said the activists were more concerned with the process than the outcome of Gonzales' murder trial. But, she said, "He is guilty of killing Ida Delaney. Now if they want to get technical about what level of guilt, I can't speak to that."  
Don Smyth, who heads the Harris County District Attorney's office's civil rights division and is prosecuting Gonzales, said testimony will begin Tuesday.  
Delaney was driving to work on a Houston freeway when Gonzales and two other off-duty officers chased her in an unmarked car. After she pulled over, Delaney and Gonzales exchanged gunfire.  
Gonzales' attorney, Mike Hinton, said Delaney fired first and Gonzales was acting to stop her from injuring them.  
The off-duty officers had been attending a birthday party at a nightclub for several hours before the shooting. Hospital records showed Gonzales was legally intoxicated when he sought treatment for gunshot wounds to the abdomen.  
All three officers were fired, but only Gonzales was indicted on a murder charge by a grand jury. All are appealing their firings to independent arbitrators.

**ALL MAJORS INVITED TO APPLY**

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- Photographers • Cartoonists • Graphic artists • Clerks

Application for fall and summer semesters can be picked up in 216 Reed McDonald and are due by 5 p.m. Wednesday, April 18.