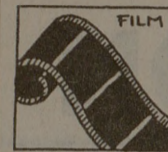


Where are the blockbusters?



Summer movie season crawls with mediocrity, but "Die Hard II" may knock your socks off.

See Lifestyles Page 4

Jury acquits Marcos of charges of looting

NEW YORK (AP) — Imelda Marcos got a birthday present Monday: A jury cleared her of charges that she looted \$222 million from the Philippines and hid the money by buying art and properties with financier Adnan Khashoggi's help.

The U.S. District Court verdict reduced the former Philippines first lady to tears and sent her supporters into jubilant celebration.

The jury also acquitted Khashoggi, the Saudi jet-setter once known as the world's richest man, of charges that he helped Marcos and her late husband conceal ownership of four New York buildings.

"This is the best birthday present I ever had," a beaming Marcos said as she left the courtroom. Monday was her 61st birthday.

"I am in great awe and respect for the jury system that symbolizes the soul of the American people," she said.

Marcos went directly to St. Patrick's Cathedral, where she walked on her knees down the aisle to the altar, then bowed her head to the floor and prayed.

Khashoggi, 54, also praised the American jury system.

"I feel very happy for myself and my family and for the United States," he said. A Moslem, he said he planned to leave New York to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, Islam's holiest city.

As was his habit during the trial, Khashoggi returned to his posh midtown apartment via subway, posing with strangers and signing autographs. Once above ground, he and his wife used a cellular phone to call friends in France, England and California with the news.

If convicted on all charges, Marcos could have been sentenced to 50 years in prison and fined \$1 million. Khashoggi could have drawn a sentence of 10 years and

a \$500,000 fine.

The jury announced its verdict in the fifth day of deliberations after a three-month trial. Prosecutors called 95 witnesses. The defense, led by Marcos' attorney Gerry Spence, called none.

"It was a poorly prepared case," forewoman Katherine Balton said later in a telephone interview. "There was nothing to convince any of them that there was a case."

When Balton read the first innocent verdict in court, Marcos supporters cried out, ignoring Judge John F. Keenan's warning against outbursts.

Marcos was in tears. She smiled and hugged her lawyers.

The prosecutors sat facing the judge, eyes downcast.

In a terse statement, the office of U.S. Attorney Otto Obermaier praised the work of the trial prosecutors and said, "The jury has rendered its verdict. Our system of justice has spoken."

The jury acquitted both defendants of all charges — racketeering, racketeering conspiracy, mail fraud and obstruction of justice against Marcos, and mail fraud and obstruction of justice against Khashoggi.

Carmen Pedrosa, a spokesman for the Philippine government, said in a hastily written statement issued here that even though Marcos was acquitted, the trial showed that Marcos' regime was rife with "unbridled corruption and total abuse of power."

Estimates on how much the case cost the U.S. government were not available, Obermaier's office said.

Marcos had been accused of conspiring with her husband to buy art, jewelry and four Manhattan commercial buildings with \$222 million stolen from their country.

Train wreck



Photo by Thomas J. Lavin

An Amtrak train collided with a tractor at Wade Road and FM 2154 in Wellborn Monday evening. Although the train was moving at 54 mph, no injuries were sustained.

Lung association announces 'Nondependence Day' for smokers

By SEAN FRERKING
Of The Battalion Staff

A day after Americans celebrate Independence Day, the American Lung Association of Texas will try to get smokers to declare their "nondependence" from smoking.

The American Lung Association will promote "Nondependence Day" Thursday to try to show millions of smokers across the nation that smoking is hazardous to their health.

According to the ALA, of an estimated 49 million people who smoke, 390,000 die annually from diseases caused by smoking.

In the United States, approximately one

out of every six deaths is the result of the "nicotine habit."

In 1988, close to 20 percent of male and 80 percent of female high school seniors smoked one or more cigarettes on a daily basis.

Most started smoking between the ages of 11 and 14.

Dian Gilham, program administrator for smoking and health for the American Lung Association of Texas, said the organization is trying to reverse the trend of people smoking with "Nondependence Day."

She said although smoking has become socially unacceptable in many areas of the nation, many young people smoke.

One reason people continue to smoke is

that they don't know how to quit.

"There are a lot of people who want to quit (smoking)," Gilham said. "With 'Nondependence Day,' we're just trying to give them another chance to stop."

She said the association is trying to capitalize on the symbolic spirit of the Fourth of July and give millions of people the chance to improve their health.

Gilham said "Nondependence Day" is an informal event the American Lung Association started two years ago. She said the ALA will promote both the immediate and long-term advantages of quitting.

Gilham said within two weeks of quitting, a smoker's energy level should rise and

their sense of smell and taste should improve. In the long run, risks of developing lung cancer, emphysema and chronic bronchitis are greatly reduced.

Gilham said once smokers quit, their body actually begins to heal damage the habit may have caused.

Gilham said she hopes smokers see the advantages of quitting and use "Nondependence Day" as a way to lead a healthier life.

"Sometimes people just need something for motivation," Gilham said. "We hope with 'Nondependence Day,' smokers who want to quit will use the day to their advantage."

The American Lung Association also has

the following tips for those wanting to quit:

- Throw away all smoking materials and ashtrays.

- When you feel the urge to smoke, take 10 deep breaths.

- Prepare a nonsmoker's kit that contains toothpicks, straws, chewing gum, sunflower seeds and raw vegetables.

- Make a list of the reasons you stopped smoking and keep it with you.

- Practice saying, "No, thank you, I don't smoke."

Gilham said those wanting to stop smoking should call the ALA's toll-free number 1-800-252-LUNG or call the ALA of Texas office in Austin at (512) 343-0502.

Fireworks, festivities scheduled for Fourth

By MIKE LUMAN
Of The Battalion Staff

A fireworks display at Olsen Field, a party at the Bryan Aquatic Center and a ceremony with U.S. Sen. Phil Gramm highlight local Fourth of July festivities Wednesday.

The College Station Noon Lions Club is hosting a celebration at 7 p.m. Wednesday at Olsen Field.

Food concessions, games and live music by Jack Houston will be among the activities. A fireworks display is scheduled for around 9:30 p.m.

For afternoon entertainment, the Bryan Aquatic Center is having a party sponsored by Bryan Parks and Recreation and KTAM-KORA radio.

Sarah Cliver with Bryan parks said live broadcasts will be from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday. The center will be open to the public from noon to 8 p.m.

"There are games, prizes, fashion shows, scuba experiences and all kinds of things to do," she said.

The center is located on Oak Ridge Drive behind Bryan High School.

Sen. Gramm will speak to and meet residents at 8:30 a.m. Wednesday in Central Park in College Station as part of an Independence Day celebration.

A letter from Gramm reads, "I hope you and your family will join me July Fourth as together we pledge to preserve the precious gift of freedom for America's next generation."

Citizens for Historic Preservation, a local organization, will have a flag raising ceremony at 10 a.m. in Heritage Park, at 31st and Hutchins Streets in Bryan.

A Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce Convention and Visitors' Bureau representative said there will be ice cream and live music.

B—CS fines for fireworks fun



Photo by Mike C. Mulvey

By ELIZABETH TISCH
Of The Battalion Staff

The Bryan/College Station police and fire departments will be busy at work to ensure a "bang-up" Fourth of July for family and friends.

However, the departments remind residents that possession, sale or discharge of fireworks is illegal within the B—CS city limits unless one obtains a permit, David Turk, Bryan fire department deputy chief, said.

In cities where the possession of fireworks is legal, Texas law prohibits selling fireworks to children under 12.

Municipal Court Clerk Hilda Phariss stressed the seriousness of the B—CS law.

"Anyone caught with possession of fireworks will be fined \$217.50," Phariss said.

This includes fireworks of all sizes from sparklers to bottle rockets.

Despite the law, people still can be seen purchasing fireworks at stands set up outside the city limits. One fireworks stand along Highway 21 sells approximately \$18,000 worth of fireworks during the Fourth of July holiday,

Robin Hart, a contractor hired by U.S. Fireworks of America, said.

She said the most popular items are the novelty fireworks which include smoke bombs, snappers and champagne poppers.

Hart says she uses her own discretion when handing over the fireworks to customers.

"We try to cater to all age groups with pre-packaged fireworks," she said. "We sell firecrackers that are easier to handle to the younger kids."

In addition, she said she does not even carry some fireworks that she feels are too dangerous for her mostly teen-aged customers.

She considers fireworks called rocket missiles, colorful birds, cherry bombs and bottleless rockets dangerous.

The attorney general's office has printed a brochure with the following safety tips for those who may be in an area where fireworks are legal.

- Light fireworks outdoors in a clear area away from houses, dry leaves, power lines and flammable materials.

- Store fireworks in a dry, cool place.



Photo by Söndra N. Robbins

(Top photo) Cody White, sophomore building construction major and entrepreneur, shows some of his more popular fireworks to Brian Bruns and Lesley Blevins (left to right) of Victoria.

(Bottom photo) Signs warn residents that neither Bryan nor College Station allow fireworks in city limits.

Patrolmen anticipate fewer holiday deaths

By MIKE LUMAN
Of The Battalion Staff

The Texas Department of Public Safety has estimated as many as 15 people will be killed statewide in traffic accidents during the Fourth of July holiday period.

The Fourth of July holiday period is from 6 p.m. today until midnight Wednesday.

Col. Joe Milner, DPS director, said in a public statement that increased holiday traffic raises the likelihood of fatal collisions.

"Even though July Fourth falls on Wednesday this year, we believe additional patrol hours are necessary," Milner said. "All available troopers will be on duty."

He said officers will watch for life-threatening violations including DWI and speeding.

Bob Gideon, a state trooper with the local DPS branch, said all six Brazos County troopers will be on patrol.

"Nobody has the day off," Gideon said. "Some drivers license troopers

who don't generally work the highway will also be out."

Speeding, DWI and seat belt violations are the primary concern during the period, Gideon said.

Milner said the Fourth of July driving period last year ran 102 hours. There were 34 traffic fatalities in that time, less than the DPS estimate of 52.

He said another lower-than-expected body count is hoped for this year.

"We're relying on motorists who respect state officers and traffic laws to help us meet the challenge," Milner said.

Gideon recommended those who wish to drink and travel appoint a designated driver.

The Bryan and College Station police departments plan no increase in patrol cars over the period.



Facilities, offices plan to close as campus observes holiday

By JAMES M. LOVE
Of The Battalion Staff

In observance of the Fourth of July, many city, state and federal facilities and offices, including Texas A&M, will close Wednesday.

No classes or events are scheduled at A&M, and most of the campus will close in observance of the holiday.

A majority of the offices in the MSC and Rudder Tower are scheduled to close.

This includes the barber shop, bookstore, bowling and games area, box office, browsing library, craft center, faculty club and the MSC basement snack bar.

Rumours snackbar, the post office window in the MSC, the student programs office and the visitor's information center also will close.

The MSC building and its main desk, however, will open and students can cash checks from 8:30 a.m.

to 6:30 p.m.

Cain Pool will be open from noon to 5:30 p.m. and recreational sports facilities in the Read Building also will be open with regular hours.

The A.P. Beutel Health Center's main clinic will close, but the emergency staff will remain on duty.

Campus food services will remain open, as well as the Sterling C. Evans Library for those who will be celebrating with their textbooks. The library's hours will be 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday.

The city offices of College Station and Bryan also will close for the holiday. Garbage pickup service for Bryan will be suspended for the Fourth of July, but regular solid waste pickup will resume Thursday.

All local banks and all post offices will close. For those wishing to shop, however, the Post Oak Mall will be open from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m.