

Friday, August 3, 1990

Statistics indicate that oil barges have more accidents than tankers

DALLAS (AP) — Tank barges frequently are involved in accidents like the one now threatening Galveston Bay and have spilled more oil than tankers in recent years, Coast Guard statistics show.

Oil-carrying tank barges last year collided with other vessels or docks, ran aground, had structural failures or were involved in accidents that caused an oil spill in U.S. waters about every 14 hours, according to Coast Guard records.

Statistics also show in six of the last nine years tank barges spilled more oil than tankers in accidents in U.S. waters, the Dallas Morning News reported in Thursday's editions.

In 1988, for instance, 3.1 million gallons of oil spilled from barges, while approximately 852,300 gallons spilled from tankers. In 1984, 2.48 million gallons of oil spilled from barges, while 1.9 million gallons spilled from tankers.

In 1989, however, 2.2 million gallons spilled

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—Sean Connaughton, maritime transportation specialist

See Captain blames pilot/Page 6

from barges and 10.95 million gallons from tankers.

Industry experts say problems such as limited federal regulations and inadequate training for crews contribute to the frequent number of barge accidents.

Sean Connaughton, a maritime transportation

specialist for the American Petroleum Institute, says tank barges pose a unique safety threat not found in oil tankers because the tugs that guide barges through intercoastal waters are not inspected by the Coast Guard.

"A tanker is inspected periodically," Connaughton said. "You don't know what condition the tugs are in."

Some experts say tank barge safety problems deserve special attention in Houston and elsewhere along the Texas and Louisiana coasts, where more oil spills occur than in any other part of the country.

The Coast Guard says the port of Houston has more tank barge traffic than any other U.S. port.

Last year 639 oil pollution incidents involving barges were investigated, compared with 315 involving tankers. In 1988, 690 barge oil spill accidents were investigated, compared with 265 tanker spill accidents.

Skateboards scorned Campus stunts draw complaints

By MIKE LUMAN
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas A&M's Student Services scheduled a meeting with the University Police Department after complaints increased about skateboard users on campus.

Dr. Malon Southerland, associate vice president of Student Services, said next week's meeting was called as an inquiry.

Children and A&M students performing acrobatics on skateboards are a proven cause of property damage in some areas, Grounds Maintenance Department Director Eugene Ray said.

Questions about the safety of those near such activity also are raised.

"If a kid is doing these acrobatics, and the skateboard and skateboarder part company, the board becomes a missile," Ray said.

Elmer Schneider, associate director of the University Police Department, said there have been complaints about skateboard users.

"We sometimes get calls from concerned people who are dodging skateboards," he said.

Bob Wiatt, director of the UPD, said skateboarding on campus was not a criminal violation.

"Young children not affiliated with the University we ask to leave the campus," he said. "That has been the extent of our involvement."

Wiatt suggested skateboarders choose another place — one that is not a busy thoroughfare on the A&M campus.

Ray said the area near the Engineering and Physics Building and the Blocker Building was a site of skateboard damage.

Benches, low walls and stairs seem to be favorite targets. Apparently metal trucks on skateboards leave marks and gouge chunks of concrete, he said.

"I think there should be some sort of control," Ray said. "We don't have the money to repair and maintain the damage they cause."

Ray wished to distinguish between students who use skateboards for transportation and the children causing the damage.

He said he hates to deprive anyone of fun, but there is a point where it ceases to be fun and becomes a problem.

Skateboard damage is nothing new, he said.

About two years ago, an aluminum handrail on some stairs in the Engineering Physics Building area became sharp because of repeated strikes from skateboards, Ray said.

He said it was sharp enough to cut hands and Grounds Maintenance had to file it down.

Before MSC construction began, the area was also a site of damage, he said.

DEA seizes goods worth around \$1 million from alleged leader of Mexican drug ring

BROWNSVILLE (AP) — Gold and other property worth at least \$1 million has been seized from the alleged leader of a drug ring that is believed to have transported up to a ton of cocaine per month into the U.S., officials said Thursday.

The Cameron County District Attorney's office seized the property Wednesday from Jose Leon Gonzalez, alleging it was obtained through drug trafficking.

Gonzalez, 27, has been jailed in Matamoros, Mexico, since last September on Mexican drug and weapons charges.

Armando Ramirez, Brownsville resident agent in charge of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, said U.S. authorities believe Gonzalez has continued to operate a drug trafficking business with a cellular telephone from his Matamoros jail cell.

Matamoros is just across the Rio Grande from Brownsville.

Also included among Wednesday's seizures were two Brownsville homes and seven vehicles belonging to Gonzalez, officials said. Authorities found the gold coins and jewelry and an estimated \$600,000 in cash in safes at the houses.

Authorities still had not counted the money Thursday morning, nor had a jeweler appraised the jewelry. The jewelry, however, probably is worth a few hundred thousand dollars, Ramirez said.

"That's what they're in the business for — the cars, the luxury, the houses, the money," Ramirez said. "If you take that away, they're really hurting."

Ramirez said the seizure of assets would make it difficult to operate

the alleged drug ring.

He said the Gonzalez organization for at least two years was suspected of shipping up to a ton of cocaine and hundreds of pounds of marijuana per month, primarily to Houston. The ring has been linked to the Medellin cocaine cartel, Ramirez said.

Gonzalez, however, faces no charges in the United States.

Three pistols, a shotgun and several cellular telephones also were seized Wednesday at Gonzalez' houses.

Although the houses had an estimated total value of less than \$200,000, District Attorney Luis Saenz said both houses were lien-free and one of them was purchased recently with cash.

"Obviously by what you see here, this was not a plain Joe," Saenz said

Thursday, pointing to a table at the Brownsville DEA office, where piles of Gonzalez's cash, gold and other property were put on display for reporters.

"You're talking about a high-roller, a guy that's been able to move substantial amounts of cocaine and marijuana," he said. "You don't get this amount of money by working and earning \$3.40 an hour."

Saenz said he planned to seek final forfeiture of the cash and property through court proceedings.

Authorities also arrested two associates of Gonzalez' on illegal investment charges related to Wednesday's seizure, Saenz said.

Also involved in the operation was the sheriff's department, U.S. Customs, Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Internal Revenue Service.

What's Up

Friday

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: will have a general meeting at noon. Call the C.D.P.E. at 845-0280 for more information.

MAGINATION STATION: will have troupe auditions for an adult troupe of actors performing plays for children at 7 p.m. at College Station Community Center. Call 822-1733 for more information.

COMMUNITY OF SINGLE ADULTS: will have Happy Hour at 5:30 p.m. at K-Bob's. Call 774-4355 for more information.

Saturday

REPUBLICAN WOMEN OF THE BRAZOS VALLEY: will "meet the candidates" from 5:30 p.m. till 11 p.m. at the Roy Barnes Pavilion. Call 776-7374 for reservations. Tickets are \$15 per person.

COMMUNITY OF SINGLE ADULTS: will have Happy Hour at 8 p.m. at the Ramada Bistro.

Sunday

COMMODORE AMIGA CLUB: will have its monthly meeting at 2 p.m. at 300AB Langford Architecture Center. Call James at 847-0043 for more information.

Monday

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: will have a general meeting at noon. Call the C.D.P.E. at 845-0280 for more information.

BRAZOS COUNTY A&M CLUB: will have an Annual Coach's Night with R.C. Slocum at 6:30 p.m. at the College Station Hilton. For tickets call 693-7374.

Tuesday

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: will have a general meeting at noon. Call the C.D.P.E. at 845-0280 for more information.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS: will have a general meeting at 8:30 p.m. Call the C.D.P.E. at 845-0280 for more information.

UNIVERSITY APARTMENT COUNCIL OF TEXAS AGGIES: will have a National Night Out event against crime at 7 p.m. at the University Owned Apartments. Call Sandra at 846-5798 for more information.

COMMUNITY OF SINGLE ADULTS: will go dancing at Hall of Fame at 8 p.m.

Items for What's Up should be submitted to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, no later than three business days before the desired run date. We publish the name and phone number of the contact only if you ask us to do so. What's Up is a Battalion service that lists non-profit events and activities. Submissions are run on a first-come, first-served basis. There is no guarantee an entry will run. If you have questions, call the newsroom at 845-3315.

In Advance



National Night Out encourages crime prevention in communities

Texas A&M students, faculty and staff are invited to celebrate National Night Out at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the University Owned Apartments office at the intersection of College Main and University Drive.

The University Police Department, the University Apartment Council of Texas Aggies, The Battalion, Pizza Hut and Pepsi are hosting the party Tuesday.

The goal of National Night Out, a national community crime prevention event, is to get residents to

lock their doors, turn on their porch lights, get to know their neighbors and send a message to criminals that residents are uniting against them.

Lt. Bert Kretzschmar, with UPD, is encouraging everyone to turn on their porch lights. The lights on Kyle Field will be turned on for this event.

A U.S. Air Force satellite will pass over the Brazos County at approximately 9:30 p.m. Tuesday to measure light intensity.

Restaurant Report

The restaurants listed below were inspected by the Brazos County Health Department between July 9 and July 13. Information is from a food service establishment inspection report.

SCORED BETWEEN 95 AND 100:
Ferri's Italian Cuisine at 1808 Valley View **Score — 98.** Points were deducted for inadequate food protection during storage. It was a regularly scheduled inspection.

SCORED BETWEEN 90 AND 94:
Jack In the Box at 1504 S. Texas Ave. **Score — 92** Points were deducted for improperly stored single-service articles, not providing hand cleanser or hand drying devices, unprotected outer openings and unclean floors.

It was a follow-up inspection.

SCORED BETWEEN 85 AND 90:
Cafe Eccel at 101 Church St. **Score — 86** Points were deducted for inadequate food protection during storage, unclean non-food contact surfaces, inaccessibility of toilet and handwashing facilities, not providing hand cleanser or hand drying devices, presence of vermin, unprotected outer openings and unclean floors. It was inspected because of a complaint.

SCORED BETWEEN 75 AND 80:
College Station Hilton at 801 University Dr. **Score — 78** Points were deducted for inadequate food protection, improper storage of in-use utensils, poor hygienic practices of

personnel (major violation) inaccurate dishwasher thermometers, unclean food-contact surfaces, improper storage and dispensing of single-service articles, inadequate plumbing maintenance, inadequate toilet and handwashing facilities, improper storage of toxic items (major violation) and unclean walls and ceilings.

David Jefferson, a registered sanitarian at the department, said restaurants with scores of 95 or above generally have excellent operations and facilities. He said restaurants with scores in the 70s or low 80s usually have serious violations in the health report.



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Celebrate NATIONAL NIGHT OUT at 7 p.m. next to the University Owned Apartments Office at the intersection of University Drive and College Main.

Sponsored by UPD, UACTA and THE BATTALION.

AUGUST 7, 1990

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

America's Night Out Against Crime