

Texas A&M The Battalion

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U.S., Iraq negotiate

Commanders agree on release of prisoners of war

SAFWAN, Iraq (AP) — Allied and Iraqi military commanders cleared the way Sunday for a permanent

cease-fire in the Persian Gulf War, reaching agreement on the release of prisoners and taking steps to avoid further skirmishes.

"I am very happy to tell you that we agreed on all matters," the Desert Storm commander,

Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, said



Schwarzkopf

after a two-hour meeting in a heavily guarded tent at Safwan air base in southern Iraq.

Schwarzkopf said Iraqi military officers "came to discuss and cooperate with a positive attitude." If such dealings continue, the commander told reporters, "We are well on our way to a lasting peace."

The Iraqi commanders also turned over information on the location of hundreds of thousands of mines Iraq planted in Kuwait and Persian Gulf waters.

For their part, the allies promised to withdraw their forces from the Iraqi territory they hold once a formal cease-fire is signed.

Schwarzkopf refused to predict when that may happen, and he said a second meeting with the Iraqi commanders was possible.

The general did not mention other demands the allies have made — demands that could conceivably delay a permanent cease-fire and the long-awaited day when the United States begins withdrawing its 530,000 soldiers.

The United Nations spelled out those requirements Saturday night.

Before a formal cease-fire can be adopted, the world body's Security Council said in a new resolution, Iraq must also rescind its annexation of Kuwait and accept liability for war

damages in the emirate.

In addition, the Security Council reaffirmed earlier anti-Baghdad measures, including one that imposed worldwide trade sanctions on Iraq.

The latest resolution backs President Bush's position that allied troops remain in Iraq until the cease-fire he declared Thursday becomes permanent.

As the complicated endgame to the war continued, there were new reports of civil unrest in Iraq.

Washington repeatedly has urged Iraqis to overthrow Saddam Hus-

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Leader: ground rules for media preserve element of surprise

By Mike Luman
The Battalion

Coalition leaders did not manipulate the media or plant information to mislead Iraqi troops during the ground war, the U.S. Army's chief of public affairs said Friday at Texas A&M.

Brig. Gen. Charles William McClain Jr., Class of '62, said coalition leaders never attempted to raise false expectations of future allied troop movements.

A CNN report Thursday claimed allied leaders led CNN

reporters to believe an amphibious assault on Kuwait was imminent.

Iraqi troops gathered on Kuwaiti beaches, waiting for an attack that never came, CNN reported.

McClain said military leaders already had planned to station U.S. Marines off the Kuwaiti shore, and CNN's reports were not going to change that.

"As far as saying, 'Let's plant information and see what hap-

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FREDRICK D. JOE/The Battalion

(above) About 250 people were on hand to connect the ends of the 31-mile ribbon around Bryan-College Station Saturday. (right) College Station Mayor Larry Ringer (left), Sen. Jim Turner

(center) and Cindy Tate (left), wife of Bryan Mayor Marvin Tate, celebrate at the point where the ends of the ribbon meet. It also was connected to a seven-mile ribbon around campus.

A&M, B-CS set world record with 38 miles of yellow ribbon

By Karen Praslicka
The Battalion

More than 60 Texas A&M students tied seven miles of yellow ribbon around campus Saturday to support American troops, but not much remains of the students' effort.

The ribbon around campus connected at the intersection of George Bush Drive and FM 2818 with 31 miles of ribbon around Bryan-College Station, put in place by members of the Bryan-College Station area.

Most of the ribbon around A&M was removed Sunday, while the ribbon around the twin cities didn't last through Saturday. But the 38 miles of ribbon established a new world record.

The ribbon tied around B-CS will be listed in the next edition of the Guinness Book of World Records.

John Ansbach, chairman of Student Government's External Affairs Committee, said he got the idea a month ago when he saw a news re-

port about another town wrapped in ribbon.

Ansbach said he saw no reason not to connect the campus and city ribbons.

The yellow ribbon was not a political statement but a way to support the men and women who risked their lives in the Persian Gulf and welcome them home, he said.

A&M student Jim Harlan agreed. "Even though the war is over, they need to know we still support them," Harlan said.

Ansbach said the students participating in the project made it successful.

"It felt like every single person out there was strong and sincere in their support," he said.

While students tied ribbon to signs and trees around campus, people driving by honked car horns and gave the Aggie "thumbs up" sign.

A&M student Matt Wade said the ribbon was not a "trivialization of war."

He said troops might never see yellow ribbons tied to telephone

poles or car antennas, but this event is something troops probably will hear about.

Andy Keetch, another student participating in the event, said it is important for troops to know they have this kind of support.

Local radio station KORA ordered the ribbon with Texas seals from a Texas surveying company. It was funded by the Student Senate and local merchants.

Disk jockey Roger W.W.W. Garrett said the ribbon was intended to make a statement of support for the troops and what they have done.

Ansbach said individuals and campus organizations were involved in the project.

"The students were willing to go out and do something," Ansbach said. "Whether you're involved or not, this kind of issue just crosses all boundaries."

Ansbach said the event would not have been possible without the students and the committee.

"It's something I won't forget for a long time," Ansbach said.



Medical loan program aids rural counties

By Mack Harrison
The Battalion

Texas A&M medical students could benefit from a little-known new loan program designed to revive statewide rural health care.

The Outstanding Rural Scholar Recognition and Forgiveness Loan Program is intended to provide rural counties with health care workers.

The program matches funds from an agency in the rural community with state aid.

Ty Newton, coordinator for student affairs for A&M's College of Medicine, says no one from the University has applied for the program and few qualified people even know about it.

"The state didn't send the information to the medical schools, but to the communities," Newton says. "They mailed the information to the communities that would qualify, so they would put the word out."

Students in the program must find a community-based sponsor to pay half of their educational expenses.

In return, students agree to return to the community to practice after completing their education, says Mack Adams, assistant commis-

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Focus

Almost but not quite

A&M men's, women's basketball bitten by Cougars.



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Bonfire committee initiates tree-planting program

By Katherine Coffey
The Battalion

Bonfire crews started a new tradition Saturday by planting 365 trees on land where they have cut since 1983.

Bonfire redpot Johan Ost, a Texas A&M junior building construction major, said students who work on bonfire plan to make the tree-planting program an annual event, and possibly bi-annual.

The idea was initiated by the Bonfire Committee and coordinated with the Texas Environmental Action Coalition (TEAC), A&M Forestry Club and Texas Municipal Power Agency (TMPA).

"The idea came from the Bonfire Committee because of environmental reasons," Ost said. "We feel it is something that had to be done."

Headstack redpot Jim McTasney, a junior electrical engineering major, also thinks the issue is important.

"We're not eco-terrorists," McTasney said. "We are concerned with the environmental issue."

About 80 bonfire workers, members of TEAC, the Forestry Club and TMPA showed up at the mining site in Carlos, about 30 miles out of College Station.

TMPA Land Department Manager Hubert Nelson said trees used for bonfires would have been bulldozed anyway because of mining processes.

Nelson, Class of '62, said TMPA allows students to cut trees just before the mining process and then clears the land, pushing other trees into a mining pit.

Nelson said TMPA has about 40,000 acres of land, but only about 12,500 acres have been disturbed by mining.

"Aggies don't clear hardly any of the area, but they cut in little clearing groups, which is better for the ecosystem," he said.

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RICHARD S. JAMES/The Battalion

Jim Nance (left) and Jason Loveless (right) plant a tree near the bonfire cut site Saturday morning. Groups participating in Saturday's planting included the TEAC, TMPA and Forestry Club.

Forester says tree cutting helps growth, wildlife

By Katherine Coffey
The Battalion

Though tree planting at the bonfire cut site will not stir much opposition, one Texas A&M forest management graduate student believes tree cutting also provides some benefits.

"The way the bonfire crew cuts trees is good for the ecosystem because they create small areas for open space, which allow more tree species to grow," Darren Gabriel says. "It also helps the same species grow more healthy."

Gabriel, who helped plant trees Saturday in Carlos, spent a year collecting facts about the different perspectives on bonfire.

Bonfire has been one of the main targets of environmental groups at A&M in recent years, and Gabriel decided he should look into the issue.

"As a forester, I decided I needed to look into what bonfire was doing," he says. "I thought this needed to be researched."

Cutting trees is beneficial for the land until it is mined, says Gabriel, who does tree planting and research for the forestry department.

After each area is cut, it takes months before the land is mined, he says. During this time, trees and animals benefit from the cut areas, says Ga-

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