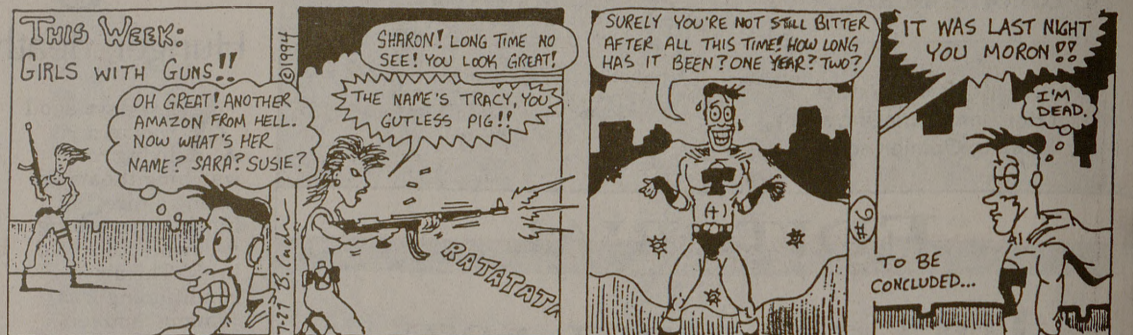


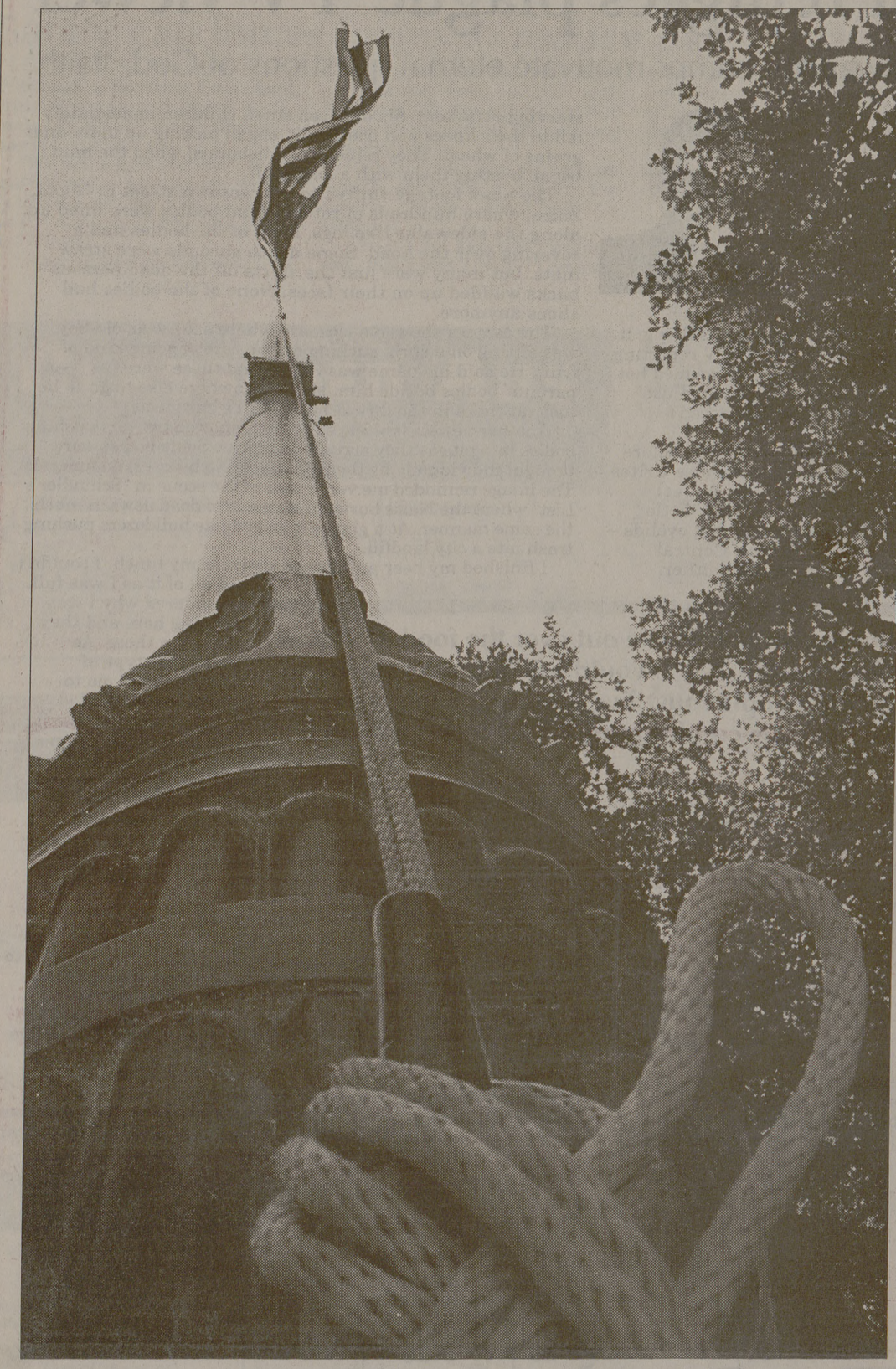
### Tubularman

By Boomer Cardinale



### OUT THERE

By JD



Stew Milne/The Battalion

### In memory of ...

The U.S. flag near the Academic Building flies at half staff on Tuesday. Flags on campus are lowered on the last Tuesday of each month, honoring recently deceased faculty and staff members.

## Ravaged reptile recovers

### Myrtle the turtle survives vicious pitchfork attack

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — When a sluggish, 15-pound snapping turtle, mutilated by pitchfork-wielding attackers, was brought to a Castle Hills animal hospital, an appalled staff leapt into action.

Veterinarian Maria Williams headed an hour-long operation to repair a 300-degree neck laceration, fractured bones and brutal leg gashes that severed muscles.

"It was a sickening situation," Williams said in Tuesday's San Antonio Express-News. "Some of the cuts were all the way to the bone."

With blood oozing out at a life-threatening rate, there was no time for anesthesia before Williams began suturing her suffering patient.

Veterinarian Teri Temple said the turtle seemed to sense they were trying to save its life.

"It never once opened its mouth and tried to snap at us," she said. The approximately 35-year-old turtle, dubbed Myrtle by the staff at Castle West Animal Hospital, is now nearly ready to leave the wading pool Temple bought for it and return to the wild.

The turtle's ordeal began June 25, when two men spotted the snapping turtle in Brackenridge Park and began attacking it with a pitchfork, trying to decapitate it.

A family having a picnic nearby was horrified. They put the turtle in an ice chest and rushed it to the animal hospital in Castle Hills, a suburb of San Antonio.

Myrtle's attackers were caught by Texas Parks and Wildlife game wardens, who cited them for hunting a non-game animal without a valid hunting license, a Class C misdemeanor.

Ottress Thomas, age 67, was fined \$60 earlier this month, a small punishment because he "was very apologetic and didn't realize it was an offense to kill a turtle" without a license, said Justice of the Peace Keith Baker.

The other man, Foster Scallion, age 39, failed to appear in court, and a warrant was to be issued, said a clerk in Baker's office.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Game Warden Lt. Glen Felps said he believes the men planned to eat Myrtle.

Turtles are also often killed by fishermen to be used for bait or because they ruin their tackle and steal bait. It's legal, Felps said, for anyone with a \$13 hunting license or a \$25 hunting and fishing license.

The veterinarians who saved Myrtle say they are disgusted by what happened to the turtle. They don't want Myrtle to be returned to Brackenridge Park, saying they fear next time it won't be so lucky.

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