

AGGIE RING ORDERS

The Association OF FORMER STUDENTS

ATTENTION: UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE STUDENTS

Students who will either complete all of the following requirements after the Fall '99 semester final grades are posted...

Any student or former student who completed all the requirements as of summer '99, must visit the Aggie Ring Office to complete a ring audit...



AGGIE RING ORDERS CLAYTON W. WILLIAMS, JR. ALUMNI CENTER DEADLINE: DECEMBER 8, 1999

Undergraduate Student Requirements:

You must be a degree seeking student and have completed all of the following requirements to order an Aggie ring:

- 1. 25 cumulative undergraduate credit hours reflected on the Texas A&M University Student Information Management System degree audit.
2. 60 undergraduate credit hours must have been completed in residence at Texas A&M University...
3. 30 undergraduate credit hours must have been completed in residence at Texas A&M University...

Please remember that you will lose resident credits if you pass a course at A&M with a D or better and retake it at another institution and make a higher grade.

- 3. 2.0 cumulative GPR at Texas A&M University.
4. Be in good standing with the University, including no registration or transcript blocks for past due fees, loans, parking tickets, returned checks, etc.

Graduate Student Requirements:

If you are a December 1999 degree candidate and do not have an Aggie ring from a prior degree, you may place an order after you meet the following requirements:

- 1. Your degree is conferred and posted on the Texas A&M University Student Information Management System; and
2. You are in good standing with the University, including no registration or transcript blocks for past due fees, loans, parking tickets, returned checks, etc.

However, if you have completed all of your course work prior to this semester and have been cleared by the thesis clerk, you may request a "letter of completion" from the Office of Graduate Studies...

Procedure to order a ring:

- 1. If you meet all of the above requirements and you wish to receive your ring on March 2, 2000, you must visit the Ring Office no later than Wednesday, December 8, 1999 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. to complete the application for eligibility verification.

It is recommended that you do not wait until December 8 to apply for your ring audit. Should there be a problem with your academic record, or if you are blocked, you may not have sufficient time to resolve these matters before the order closes out on December 10.

- 2. Return no later than December 10, 1999 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. to check on the status of your audit and if qualified, pay in full by cash, check, money order, or your personal Discover, Visa or MasterCard (with your name imprinted).

Men's 10K - \$332.00 14K - \$438.00
Women's 10K - \$204.00 14K - \$227.00

\* Add \$8.00 for Class of '98 or before and \$15.00 if ring needs to be shipped out-of-town. The ring delivery date is March 2, 2000.

Officials recruit, arms forces while on tour of Chechen city

Rebels retaliate by staging ambushes, firing at Russian jets

ACHKOI-MARTAN, Russia (AP) — The convicted embezzler tried to help the Moscow-backed government in Chechnya collect and arm recruits for a paramilitary force during a tour yesterday of a Russian-held Chechen city.

Meanwhile, Moscow shrugged off mounting international pressure yesterday for a diplomatic solution to the fighting, showering bombs on the last rebel-held route to Grozny in the on-going battle for the Chechen capital.

The rebels retaliated by staging ambushes in small groups and firing at Russian jets with large-caliber machine guns and shoulder-held rockets. The militants have been resisting tenaciously on several fronts in recent days.

In a new move yesterday, Russian commanders gave Kalashnikov rifles and uniforms to a pro-Moscow militia composed of Chechens who said they will fight alongside federal troops.

The group is led by Bislan Gantamirov, a former mayor of Grozny who was serving a prison term for embezzlement before Russian President Boris Yeltsin pardoned him earlier this month and chose him to lead a Moscow-backed Chechen government.

Gantamirov said he would encourage rebel fighters to defect to his group, but did not say exactly what military role the force would play. Gantamirov led a previous, Moscow-backed militia in 1994 that was defeated by separatist fighters.

His group of about 200 men looked disheveled. Some were unshaven. Some wore leather jackets and others military fatigues. They stood in a line in a muddy, snowy field for inspection by Russian regional commander Col. Gen. Viktor Kazantsev.

Meanwhile, the Russians are attempting to surround Grozny and cut off militants from their bases in the mountains. Yesterday's fighting was concentrated around Urus-Martan, a city about 12 miles southwest of the capital.

With sunny weather increasing visibility, the Russians sent barrages of rockets and artillery shells slamming into Urus-Martan.

During lulls in the bombing, the rattle of automatic weapons fire could also be heard as Russian troops tried to advance on the city from the west.

The Russian military command said 50 rebels were killed in yesterday's fighting around Urus-Martan, Grozny and other Chechen towns. Chechen officials claimed significant Russian losses, but neither claim could be independently confirmed.

The Russians have showed no sign of easing up despite international pressure for a negotiated solution to the conflict.

Alvaro Gil-Robles, the Council of Europe's human rights commissioner, traveled to Russian-controlled parts of Chechnya on Tuesday to inspect living conditions, Russian news reports said.

French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine and German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer criticized Russia for not setting a date for a visit to Chechnya by Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe chairman Knut Vollebaek.

Vedrine and Fischer called on Russia to allow humanitarian aid into the region and said they were "shocked by the consequences of the repression on the civilian population."

Some 233,000 refugees — almost a third of Chechnya's population — have fled the fighting.

U.S. State Department spokesman James Rubin said that Secretary of State Madeleine Al-

Chechen rebels regroup to defend Grozny

Russian forces attack Chechen rebel strongholds in the capital as Chechen fighters flock to its defense



bright had spoken by phone with Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov on Monday.

Albright stressed that the United States does not believe "a purely military solution to the conflict is possible," Rubin said. She told the war is "causing humanitarian problems, damaging Russia's international reputation and complicating the achievement of a political solution."

Russia said the military campaign is an internal matter, and that it does not intend to negotiate with the Chechens until the rebels are roundly defeated. Russia also blames militants for apartment bombings that killed people in several Russian cities in September.

Support within Russia remains strong for the campaign, which has caused massive displacement in Chechnya, a territory already ravaged by a 1994-96 war in which Chechens fought for independence.

Remarks from wife of Palestinian leader cause uproar

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — It has been a turbulent month for Soha Arafat.

First, the wife of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat publicly renounced her mother for meddling in her life. Then she caused an international uproar by accusing Israel of intentionally poisoning Palestinians with gas, deeply embarrassing first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton.

All the while, she insists her marriage to Arafat, a man twice her age, is sound — even while acknowledging she almost never sees him.

Mrs. Arafat's remarks have unexpectedly trained the spotlight on the Palestinians' first family, especially on the 36-year-old Mrs. Arafat. They have also embarrassed the Palestinian Authority which has been under U.S. pressure to distance itself from her.

Mrs. Arafat's mother, Raymonda Tawil, said her daughter is simply trying to assert her independence.

Arafat "understands [Soha's] quest for freedom," Tawil, 59, long an influential force herself in the Palestinian community, especially in the '70s and '80s, when she

owned a Palestinian news agency and her home was frequently a gathering point for resistance against Israeli occupation, said.

During her 10 years of marriage to Arafat, Mrs. Arafat has spoken out on a number of issues, including corruption in the Palestinian Authority and the peace talks with Israel.

Her public role has been relatively modest. She has tended to a few charities, including services for handicapped children, but has rarely accompanied her husband on his many trips abroad.

There have been long stretches of seclusion in a Paris apartment, where she stayed with her 4-year-old daughter, Zahwa, while Arafat remained in Gaza City.

For a long time, Mrs. Arafat and her mother were considered close. Then, in October, came Mrs.

Arafat's sudden declaration that she was severing ties.

Claiming that Israeli agents were trying to destabilize the Palestinians, Mrs. Arafat last week told the French weekly Paris Match that "my mother, herself, had let herself get caught up in [the Israelis'] machinations."

Mrs. Tawil acknowledged that being pushed away by her daughter was painful. "This was very tough for me as a mother," she said in an

interview in her home in the West Bank town of Ramallah. "Soha is like a bird. When it wants to leave the nest, it kicks the mother."

Mrs. Arafat, born into a wealthy Christian family, grew up in the West Bank.

Taught by nuns, she completed her education at the Sorbonne. She worked in the Palestinian Liberation Organization headquarters in Tunis

in the late '80s when she met Yasser Arafat's attention.

Rumors abound that the marriage has been shaky for some time. The Palestinian leader married to the Palestinian leader and many believe his presence have not really changed. Arafat is no as popular as he once was and has endured criticism for his affluent lifestyle.

Mrs. Arafat painted a picture of her relationship with the Palestinian leader who stays in the office until the hours of the night.

"My husband and I are not in love, but we are not divorced," she said in an interview in her home in the West Bank town of Ramallah. "Soha is like a bird. When it wants to leave the nest, it kicks the mother."

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