

Deck the halls



Leah Edmundson (left), a freshman history major, and Theresa Duncan, a freshman computer science major, check out Christmas ornaments in the MSC's Texas A&M Bookstore yesterday.

PATRIC SCHNEIDER/THE BATTALION

NEWS IN BRIEF

Valujet contractor convicted in crash

MIAMI (AP) — In the first criminal case of its kind in the United States, an aircraft maintenance company was convicted yesterday of mishandling the oxygen canisters blamed for the 1996 Valujet crash in the Everglades.

Two employees of the maintenance company, SabreTech, were acquitted, and the company was also acquitted of conspiracy and some hazardous-materials charges.

Violations outlined in Microsoft trial

WASHINGTON (AP) — The government outlined for a federal judge yesterday the antitrust laws it believes Microsoft violated, advancing the

case to the crucial next stage even as lawyers met again in Chicago to try to negotiate a settlement.

The government called Microsoft's actions toward rivals "nakedly anticompetitive" and said they deprived consumers of important innovations.

"This is a case in which a monopolist in an unregulated market intentionally set out to squash promising marketplace efforts," the Justice Department filing said.

Utah authorities search for 6 runaway campers

CEDAR CITY, Utah (AP) — One of the teen-age boys who fled a camp for troubled youth turned himself in yesterday after trudging 30 miles across the Utah desert, two days after some boys beat a counselor and tied up another.

Search crews with bloodhounds and helicopters continued to scour southern Utah for six other boys who fled Saturday.

Authorities were concerned about the boys' ability to survive in the rugged wilderness after two nights in the bitter cold. The boys, between the ages of 14 and 16, had some survival gear, wool coats, blankets and a two-way radio but only one-day packs of food.

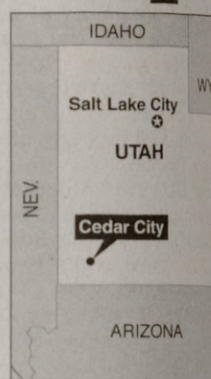
"We're absolutely worried about them," Iron County Sheriff David "Dude" Benson said. "They've done some stupid things, but they're just kids."

An eighth boy in the group turned himself in Saturday after he became ill and was abandoned by the others. He was charged with felony aggravated assault, simple assault and theft.

"The boys are not outfitted for extended periods in this type of weather and this type of terrain," Steve Peterson, co-founder of Red-Cliff Ascent Inc., which teaches wilderness survival skills to troubled youth, said.

Benson said the teens beat 23-year-old counselor Kirk Stock with sticks Saturday, tried to break his legs and then bound him with duct tape.

The boys allegedly then threatened 22-year-old counselor Sunshine Fuller, tied her to a tree and fled. They escaped near Cedar City, 220 miles south of Salt Lake City.



The boy who turned himself in yesterday was not identified. He was taken to a hog farm in Beaver County and was held in a command post near Lund. His condition was not disclosed. Benson said he has not been charged with any crime.

Court to reconsider Miranda ruling

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court, confronting its landmark Miranda ruling head-on, agreed yesterday to decide whether police still must warn criminal suspects they have a "right to remain silent" and to get a lawyer's help.

The justices said they will rule by summer on whether Congress in 1968 effectively overturned the 1966 decision.

Clinton administration lawyers are refusing to defend the anti-Miranda law enacted by Congress, but a federal appeals court upheld it earlier this year — setting the stage for this constitutional showdown.

The court, far more liberal 33 years ago than it is today, sought to remedy "inherently coercive" interroga-

tions by requiring police to inform criminal suspects of their rights before questioning them. Failure to do so could result in evidence — a confession or a criminal statement — being lost to prosecutors.

But in a surprising ruling earlier this year, the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the 1968 law known as Section 552 should not have been used to issue Miranda warnings no longer required with every automatic exclusion of evidence in federal prosecutions.

The appeals court's rationale would apply to three state prosecutions as well. By an 8-5 vote last year, the Supreme Court said Section 3501 made failing to give Miranda warnings just one of several factors in deciding whether statements to police were made voluntarily.

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