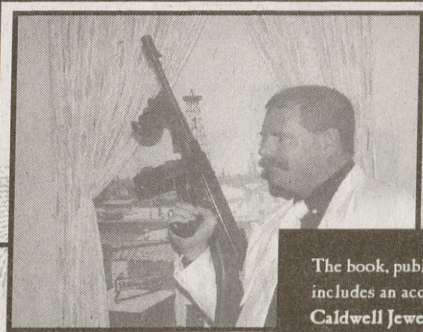


Local writer Patrick McConal will be signing his book, *Over the Wall: The Men Behind the 1934 Death House Escape* at Barnes & Noble Saturday, September 30. McConal will begin the signing at 6:30 p.m. and give a brief reading at 7 p.m. There will also be a signing at Hastings in Bryan October 14, from 2-4 p.m.



The book, published by Eakin Press, includes an account of the 1933 Caldwell Jewelry robbery in downtown Bryan by the Whitey Walker gang. Also included are the details of one of the most infamous prison escapes in history at the Walk Unit in Huntsville.

Show me, "wash the car."



ANDY HANCOCK/The Battalion

Tina Martinez and Nick Whitacker, both senior RPTS majors, wash a car this past weekend. The students are raising money to go to the National Recreation Parks Association conference in Phoenix, Ariz.

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Philippine fighting takes civilian lives

TALIPAO, Philippines (AP) — Coconut farmer Ullah Saddaramil was watching military planes bombard rebel camps in the mountains of southern Jolo island when soldiers chasing a suspected rebel accidentally shot him, his wife and two neighbors.

Only Saddaramil survived the attack in Talipao, witnesses said.

"We got caught in the fighting," Saddaramil said from his hospital bed, the back of his head swollen from a bullet wound and his eyes welling with tears.

"We are expecting more casualties, but we cannot enter some areas. We need military permission."

— Nelsa Amin provincial health official

Despite attempts by the military to play down the costs to civilians of a massive assault aiming to free 19 hostages held by Muslim guerrillas, witness accounts indicate many villagers have been caught in the cross fire.

Anni Mohamad was playing in front of his house when a Philippine air force plane dropped three bombs nearby, showering this tiny coastal village with shrapnel and debris.

Shrapnel pierced the 11-year-old boy's hip, and three of his playmates were also injured.

The fighting has forced 14,000

people to flee their homes, overcrowding evacuation centers, says the military, which has tightly controlled information. But military officials insist only two civilians have been killed.

Nelsa Amin, a provincial health official, said villagers have been afraid to report deaths caused by the attack.

"They refuse to provide names or details," she said. "We are expecting more casualties, but we cannot enter some areas. We need military permission."

Thousands of government troops launched the rescue attempt Sept. 16 on Jolo, an impoverished island at the country's southern tip.

Two French journalists escaped last week while their captors fled the assault. An American, three Malaysians and 13 Filipinos are still believed to be held.

The Abu Sayyaf rebels say they are fighting for a separate Islamic state in the southern Philippines, but the government regards them as bandits.

Since March, the rebels have seized scores of hostages, including 21 tourists and workers taken from a Malaysian resort on April 23. Most have been released, with Libya and Malaysia reportedly paying more than \$15 million to free 19 foreigners.

Thousands of troops backed by attack helicopters closed in Sunday on rebels fleeing with the American hostage in the hills of Jolo, officials said. The Abu Sayyaf rebels holding Jeffrey Schilling, 24, of Oakland, Calif., were attempting to reach a beach to escape from the island, Vice Governor Munib Estino said.

The government halted talks with the rebels and attacked after the guerrillas kidnapped more people despite a promise to halt abductions while negotiations were under way.

Swiss vote down quota plan

GENEVA (AP) — Swiss voters on Sunday rejected a plan to limit the proportion of foreigners in the country to 18 percent of the population and fix it there by law.

It was the fifth anti-immigration plan to fail since 1970, the result showed that concerns persist among a significant minority over what the plan's backers called "mass immigration."

"I'm extremely happy with the clear result," said Justice Minister Ruth Metzler, adding that the plan on foreigners "would not have been a good thing for our country."

Final results showed 63.7 percent of voters — 1.33 million people — voted against the "initiative for the regulation of immigration."

It was supported by 750,000 votes, or 36.3 percent. None of the 26 cantons, or states, voted in favor of the measure. National voter turnout was 43.4 percent, about average for Switzerland.

The lawmakers who launched the initiative five years ago, in a recession, said the country suffers from cheap imported labor and a steady increase in foreign students. Unemployment is now 10 percent — its lowest in more than eight years.

The government, industry leaders and bankers said the cap on foreigners would lock out experts in areas such as health and information technology, damage tourism, undermine Switzerland's humanitarian tradition and tarnish its international image.

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Meet Peace Corps Recruiter and Returned Volunteer Joseph Garcia (Paraguay 1997-99)

- Tuesday, September 26
Memorial Student Center, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Bizzell Hall Conference Center, 7 to 8 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 27
Memorial Student Center, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Thursday, September 28
Memorial Student Center, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Bizzell Hall Conference Center, 7 to 8 p.m.
- Friday, September 29
Memorial Student Center, 10 a.m. to Noon.

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