

THE BATTALION

Bomb-sniffing dogs learn their trade in San Antonio

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A bomb was hidden somewhere in the two long rows of battered luggage, and it was up to Renza to find it.

The 2-year-old Belgian Malinois started at the end of the first row and worked her way along methodically, sniffing each suitcase before moving to the next. She eventually reached the last bag without detecting the bomb.

Richard Osborn, the dog's handler, had Renza retrace her steps, and soon a scent from one of the

cases grabbed her attention. Her ears twitched, then she sat down next to it and waited.

Osborn, clued into her body language, let loose a loud whoop and threw a heavy black-rubber play toy across the room. Renza skittered across the cement floor to bite onto it — her payment for diligence and a good nose.

The luggage search was part of Renza's training at Lackland Air Force Base to be a bomb-sniffing dog at Tampa (Fla.) International Airport.

While she missed the unarmed explosives the first time, she still passed the sniff test.

"Bottom line, she found what she was looking for and got the reward," said Osborn, a Tampa airport policeman.

The Air Force's 341st Training Squadron oversees the dog program for the Transportation Security Administration, created after the Sept. 11 attacks to ramp up safety at the nation's airports.

The 341st also did the dog training when the

Federal Aviation Administration was in charge of airport security, but the terror attacks have focused more attention on the program and more demand for trained canines and their handlers.

Before Sept. 11, four 11-week handler courses were conducted a year, each with six to eight students, said Master Sgt. John Pearce, program director. The trainee output has been doubled by increasing the class size to 13 students and adding a fifth session.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Remnants of Enron comes off ballpark

HOUSTON (AP) — The last vestiges of Enron Corp.'s stamp on the Houston Astros' ballpark started coming down Tuesday, just a week before the Houston Astros throw out the first pitch of the 2002 season.

The same company that installed 10-foot blue letters spelling out "Enron Field" above the ballpark's right field entrance returned to haul them down about three decades earlier than planned.

"Whenever we install something, we install it to stay for years and years," said Joe Hernandez, general manager of Neon Electric Corp. "I never thought we were going to see Enron again."

On Feb. 27 the Astros agreed to buy out Enron's 30-year, \$100 million naming rights deal for \$2.1 million. Enron also gave up the company suite but kept season tickets for 35 box seats.

The buyout allowed the Astros to start negotiating with other companies interested in buying naming rights. Astros owner Drayton McLane hoped to have a deal by mid-April.

Companies that have expressed interest in naming rights include Amoco Inc., Compaq Computer Corp. and Landry's Restaurants, all based in Houston.

Study shows some resist heart benefits of aspirin

DALLAS (AP) — A new study suggests that some people who take aspirin to ward off heart attacks may not be getting all the benefits they thought they were.

The study in Tuesday's issue of the journal *Circulation* found that as many as 75 percent of patients showed some resistance to the blood-thinning effects of aspirin.

Aspirin works by blocking the formation of thromboxane A2, a chemical in the body that makes platelets sticky and promotes blood clotting. Heart attacks are caused by clots.

The study found that taking aspirin did not adequately block thromboxane in some people, making them 3 1/2 times more likely to die of a heart attack than those in whom aspirin works.

Sign up for no-call list ends today

AUSTIN (AP) — Texans who don't want to be annoyed by telemarketers have to sign up by Wednesday for a "do-not-call" list that blocks companies from calling customers at home.

More than 50,000 people have rushed to add their names to the list over the past five days, bringing the total to 320,000 since Jan. 1, said Public Utility Commission spokesperson Terry Hadley.

"We were told, based on other states' experiences, to expect a large response like this," Hadley said. "We're not telling people they need to sign up. We're just saying that this service is now available — if you're interested, you need to sign up."

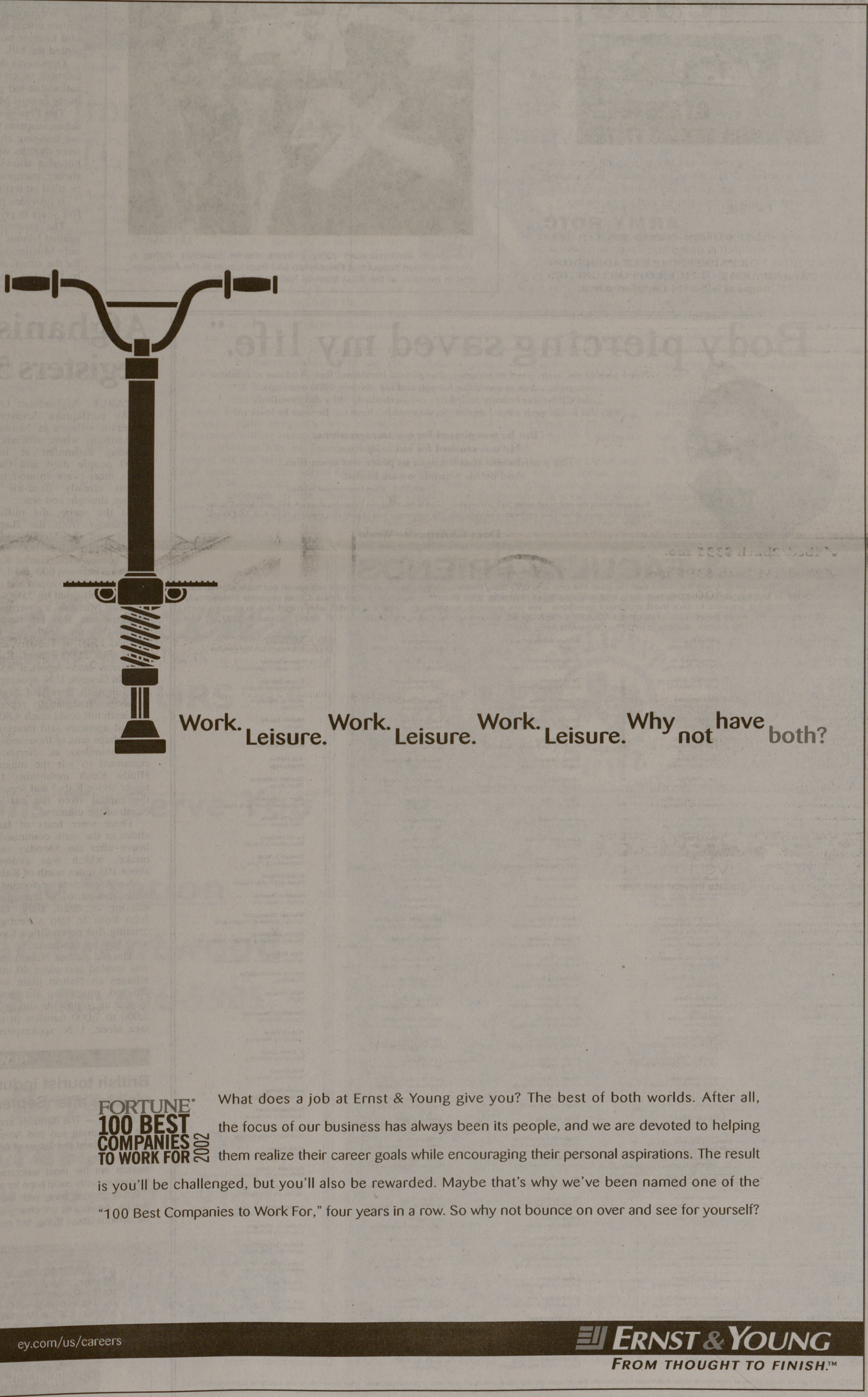
Wednesday's deadline is for customers attempting to get on the first list. Subsequent lists will be updated every three months.

Telemarketers are required to purchase the PUC list and update their records within the first 60 days of the state publication.

Companies that do not follow the law are subject to penalties of up to \$1,000 per violation.

Charities, non-profit groups and debt collectors are excluded from the law, which lawmakers approved last year.

Companies with prior business relationships with customers also may continue to call. Plus, telemarketers who hold state licenses, such as insurance agents, real estate agents and stockbrokers, can call. But they must complete transactions with face-to-face meetings.



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