

'Tommy is free!'

Miss. town celebrates civilian's escape

By Kathy Hanrahan
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MACON, Miss. — Civilian contractor Thomas Hamill's daring escape Sunday after three weeks as a hostage in Iraq was "the best wake-up call" for his wife, and this town's mayor promised "a parade that will not end" when he returns home.

"Tommy is free!" one resident yelled as she ran to wake her husband with the news.

Hamill, kidnapped during an attack on his supply convoy April 9, escaped from a house south of Tikrit and ran to a nearby U.S. patrol, the U.S. military announced in Baghdad.

Kellie Hamill said she got a call at about 5:50 a.m. telling her that her husband, a truck driver for a subsidiary of the Halliburton Corp., was free. He later called home, "the best wake-up call I've ever had," she said.

"He sounded wonderful, so wonderful. He said he was fine," she told The Associated Press. "He said he was more worried about his mom, his grandmother, me and our kids. The first thing he said to me was, 'How are you doing?'"

Hamill's captors had threatened to kill him unless the United States lifted its siege on the city of Fallujah.

Kellie Hamill later went to church, where well-wishers greeted her with joyful hugs and tears.

Worshippers at Calvary Baptist Church had prayed for Hamill around the clock, said choir member Shirley Battle.

"I don't think anyone in this group had given up," Battle said.

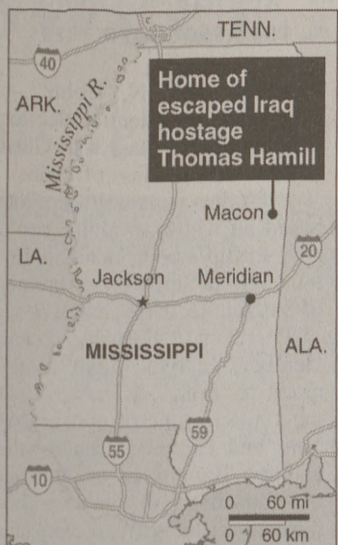
Thomas Hamill's father, Leo, said he fell asleep Saturday night while watching a television newscast and woke Sunday to church programming being interrupted by a bulletin reporting his son's escape.

"I knew when I saw him on TV, I knew it was him," the teary-eyed father said. "I hoped they would return him safe."

Promising to "grab and hug his neck" upon his son's return, Mark Hamill raised his hands skyward and proclaimed Sunday "a beautiful day."

Church deacon and Sunday school teacher John Gauntt, 36, said he was in bed when his wife ran down the hall yelling "Tommy is free!"

"We believe that everything



SOURCES: Associated Press; ESRI AP

works for the good for those that trust him," Gauntt said.

Hamill, 43, was "in good health," said Army Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt. A gunshot wound to his left arm, possibly suffered when he was captured, appeared to be infected and he was flown to Baghdad, Maj. Neal O'Brien said.

Kellie Hamill said her husband told her he pried a door open at the house where he was being held after he heard a U.S. Army patrol nearby.

Saudi Arabian rampage frightens families

By Adnan Malik
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

YANBU, Saudi Arabia — American and European families packed their bags Sunday after a deadly attack on foreigners, and traumatized Saudi schoolchildren recounted how the attackers proudly summoned them to watch them drag a victim's body through the streets.

The streets of Yanbu were eerily quiet a day after four brothers went on a bloody rampage that killed five Westerners and a Saudi. But behind closed doors, foreigners scrambled to book flights and Saudis comforted children shocked by the violence.

"I couldn't eat and I couldn't sleep the whole night. I have been having nightmares," said an 18-year-old student who gave only his first name, Layyan. "This thing has changed my life forever."

After spraying the office of Houston-based oil

contractor ABB Lummus Global Inc. with gunfire, the four bearded men tied the body of one of their victims to the bumper of a car and headed for the Ibn Hayyan Secondary Boys School.

Students said Sunday that the attackers drove into their parking lot and fired into the air to attract attention to the bloodied corpse attached to their car by its right leg. "This is the president of America!" the men screamed.

"God is great! God is great! Come join your brothers in Fallujah!" they shouted, referring to an Iraqi city where U.S. troops are battling insurgents.

Students and school officials said some of the boys ran crying from the scene.

Saudi troops deployed heavy weaponry Sunday to guard foreigners' houses and offices as government officials vowed to hunt down the terrorists who have struck four foreign targets in the past year.

Corps

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most at \$13,902, earning next year's senior cadets the right to stand at the edge of the football field during games.

March to the Brazos is the culmination of an entire year of the Corps' fund-raising efforts where all the money is compiled and donated. Ted Baglin, from Santa Rosa, Calif., said he enjoys doing the march and that it's great to be associated with A&M. Baglin said he never attended A&M, but that still flies out from California every year to participate in March to the Brazos.

"I've worked with many

Aggies and heard their stories and just fell in love with Texas A&M," Baglin said. "In 1981, I attended an Aggie wedding and made a lot of friends in Company E-1. In 1982, I was visiting San Antonio and called down (to College Station) to see if I could visit the guys (in E-1) and I ended up doing March to the Brazos."

Baglin said he's been involved in many A&M activities since, including Aggie Bonfire and Bonfire cut. This was his 23rd year to participate in March to the Brazos, he said.

McAdams said this year's march will be a memorable experience for the cadets.

"I'm sure the cadets will look back and always remember this

one," he said.

March to Brazos began when A&M's commandant at the time decided to have the cadets make a 14-mile trip to the Brazos River because he was not happy with the pranks and other problems cadets were making, said Keith Smith, a senior geography major and former Corps member. The trip was a way to wear out the cadets and it eventually became an annual spring event for the Corps, he said.

The Corps will also have its Final Review on May 15, which marks the end of the senior class' four-year Corps career and the juniors' chance to step up in a new pair of leather boots.



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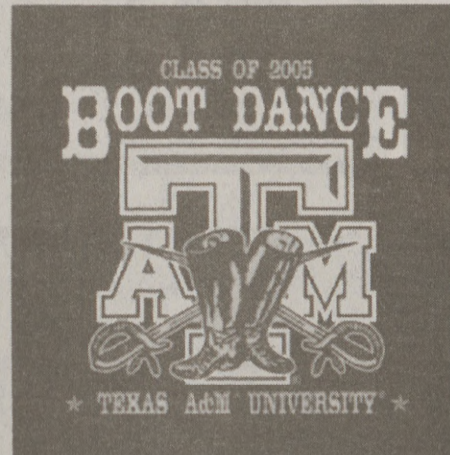
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