





## American Airlines workers arrested in drug probe

MIAMI (AP) — Dozens of American Airlines employees were arrested Wednesday after a federal investigation into a drug ring which allegedly used the company's planes to smuggle drugs into the United States. Fifty-eight people were to be arrested on multiple indictments in a predawn sweep that found most at their homes, but a few at Miami International Airport, said Bret Eaton, a spokesman with the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration. "Basically these employees were smuggling drugs and distributing them themselves when they were off duty by fly-

ing using their employee passes throughout the United States," he said. So many people were arrested a bus was parked outside the DEA offices. Men in handcuffs were still being led aboard as the sun rose. The drugs, which included cocaine and marijuana, were taken to points including Philadelphia and San Juan. Some of those arrested were employees of American contractors, such as Lufthansa Sky Chefs, Eaton said; some of the contraband was smuggled aboard in airline food trays. No one was immediately available for comment at

American headquarters in Fort Worth, Texas. No one in management was arrested; no American pilots or flight attendants were among those indicted, Eaton said. A Broward Sheriff's Office deputy, who worked part-time as a baggage handler, was indicted as were two U.S. Immigration and Naturalization agents, he said. "Because it was an undercover operation, it's hard to judge, but they were making lots of money doing this, more than their salaries," Eaton said. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms assisted in the two-year probe, dubbed

Operation Ramp Rat. ATF undercover agents approached suspects, who used their security clearances to get contraband out onto airport ramps, where it was loaded onto planes, said spokesman Ed Halley. "Greed is the bottom line there. They did it all for a price," Halley said. The items to be shipped to other agents — which were fake — included guns and military-style explosives. Six people were arrested on behalf of authorities in the eastern district of New York in a separate but related case. Eaton provided no further details.

## FBI admits agents used incendiary device at Waco

WASHINGTON (AP) — Taking back previous disavowals, the FBI now admits that federal agents fired one or more incendiary tear gas canisters during the 1993 standoff with Branch Davidian cult members in Texas, a federal law enforcement official says. The agency, however, still maintains it did not start the fire that consumed the Davidians' compound with leader David Koresh and more than 80 followers inside. The April 19, 1993, inferno ended a 51-day siege by federal agents trying to serve a warrant for Koresh's arrest on firearms and explosive charges. "The bottom line here continues to be that the Davidians set that fire and that law enforcement did not set that fire," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity Tuesday. Incendiary devices — believed to be two military tear gas canisters — were fired not at buildings in the Branch Davidian compound, but at a bunker nearby, the official said, adding that they bounced off the bunker's concrete roof and did not enter any structures. The canisters were fired early in the morning, around 6 a.m., the official added. The fire that destroyed the compound started around noon after federal agents used a tank to punch holes in the compound before pumping in tear gas.

Other tear gas canisters used by federal agents throughout the day were not flammable or potentially explosive, the official said. Until now, the FBI had maintained it used only nonflammable canisters to get tear gas into the compound because of fears that pyrotechnic grenades might spark a fire in the wooden structure. However, the FBI reconsidered those assertions this week after Danny Coulson, a former deputy director of the agency, told The Dallas Morning News that potentially flammable tear gas grenades were fired into an underground structure that led to tunnels opening into the compound. But Coulson, who also was founding commander of the FBI's hostage rescue team, told the newspaper the incendiary canisters were fired hours before the blaze began and played no role in starting it. "We're aware of the reports and we're trying to get to the bottom of it as quickly as we can," Justice Department spokesman Myron Marlin said Tuesday. Justice Department officials, including Attorney General Janet Reno, in the past have forcefully denied allegations that flammable devices were used by the FBI during the final standoff at Waco. Marlin called such allegations "nonsense" when they were raised by a documentary filmmaker in July.

## Lawmakers fear secrets may slip out in declassified papers

WASHINGTON (AP) — To shine light on America's secret past, government record keepers have worked the past three years to declassify 600 million pages of documents — some as thin as onion skin, others yellow with age. Now, because Washington fears that nuclear weapons information has slipped inadvertently from the government's attic, the bleary-eyed declassifiers might have to do it again. Legislation headed for approval in Congress would require all these documents to be re-examined to make sure they don't contain sensitive details about the U.S. nuclear arsenal. "I support efforts to release government information to the public, but in doing so we have to be careful not to continue to

accidentally release sensitive nuclear weapons design data that countries like Iran and Iraq could use to advance their own nuclear weapons programs," said Sen. Jon Kyl, R-Ariz. Steven Aftergood, who directs the Project on Government Secrecy at the Federation of American Scientists, said Congress is overreacting. "This is all part of the frenzy about Chinese espionage that is driving Washington crazy," Aftergood said. "The idea that they're going to reread material that's already been declassified is preposterous. It will basically cripple the declassification program by driving it in circles." Present efforts to lift the veil of government secrecy are driven by an executive order President Clinton signed in 1995. The order instructs federal agencies to open by next April

classified records that contain historical material and are more than 25 years old. Exceptions are narrowly defined. In the past three years, more than 600 million pages have been declassified. Subjects range from the Cold War to Vietnam, POWs to UFOs. Researchers are rewriting history with new information about the U.S.-Soviet arms race, the failed Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba, a 1973 coup in Chile, covert action around the globe. The public already can access 400 million pages that have been unsealed. An additional 200 million pages are declassified, but are not yet on public shelves. Nearly 1 billion more pages still must be reviewed. Declassification was moving

at a fast clip until last year when some lawmakers worried that nuclear secrets still classified under the Atomic Energy Act weren't being properly protected. Sens. Kyl, Richard Shelby, R-Ala., chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee; and Bob Smith, I-N.H., wrote to National Security Adviser Sandy Berger saying that "in a frenzied attempt" to meet the April 2000 deadline, documents containing sensitive nuclear weapons information may have been released or were in danger of being released. The prospect prompted Congress to pass a law last year that required declassifiers to come up with a plan to scan documents, page-by-page, looking for nuclear material — unless the records were "highly unlikely" to contain such information.

## Man beaten after breaking into house sues homeowner

ROSEVILLE, Mich. (AP) — A man who broke into a house has sued the owner, saying she was responsible for the beating he took when he returned the next day, allegedly because he was invited to "party." Cassidy VanHorn, 21, suffered two broken arms, a broken jaw and other injuries in the July 1997 attack at the home of Diana Folbigg, his attorney said Tuesday. VanHorn is seeking at least \$25,000 in damages. Ms. Folbigg did not take part in the attack, but she owed a duty to VanHorn to provide a safe environment at her home when she "lured" him back, according to the lawsuit. "They said: 'Come on back, forget about what happened... Let's party,'" lawyer David Femminino said. "He's kind of slow, not the most intelligent guy." It was not immediately clear how and why VanHorn was invited back to the home. Police arrived and arrested VanHorn along with one of his attackers, who later pleaded guilty to assault and battery. VanHorn later pleaded guilty to breaking and entering and to an assault and battery charge. He spent 85 days in jail.

## Storm ravages cotton harvest

CORPUS CHRISTI (AP) — Cotton growers in south Texas will have slim pickings in the aftermath of Hurricane Bret. "There's quite a few depressed farmers here now," said Bill Ordner, a cotton farmer who was among those who fled the storm. He returned to his 1,500-acre cotton field southwest of Corpus Christi on Tuesday to find crops ruined. "It made us sick," he said. Ordner estimated his losses at \$700,000. Most of the crop had been harvested, but the remaining cotton will likely be rotten. Farmers might as well kiss the wet cotton goodbye, said John Norman, a Texas A&M University agriculture specialist. "It'll sprout and rot and basically be of no use," he said. Bret rolled ashore Sunday with drenching rains and 125-mph winds. The storm caused relatively few problems considering its size and strength, missing urban areas and quickly deteriorating into a tropical storm.

## Fly in the works: Endangered insect species halts development

COLTON, Calif. (AP) — Some people in this Southern California community wish the problem would just buzz off: An endangered species of fly is holding up construction projects worth hundreds of millions. Communities around the country have squared off against environmentalists over owls, foxes, fish and trees. But here, the fly has a number of foes: county officials, developers, bond holders and residents. The U.S. government has all but halted development across the sand dunes in the desert

east of Los Angeles to protect the tiny Delhi Sands flower-loving fly — the only fly ever to make the Endangered Species List. "People feel like their community is being run by a fly. Where it can develop, when it can develop — all dictated by a fly," said Ray Bragg, a development official in Fontana, one of several small cities whose plans have been thwarted by the orange-brown insect the size of a straight pin. The flies' only known breeding grounds are the Delhi Sands dunes stretching from San

Bernardino to Riverside to Ontario, about 60 miles from Los Angeles. The fine dunes were created by Santa Ana winds carrying grit from the mountains and dropping it in the desert valley. The Delhi Sands are the largest remaining sand dune system in the Los Angeles basin. But the few dunes that remain are surrounded by freeways and encroaching development. Most are privately owned. Because the fly's habitat is disappearing, its numbers are down to just several thousand.

In 1993 it was designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as an endangered species. "Any time there's a listed species that's warm and fuzzy and endearing, it's easier for people to rally around it and work together toward a common goal. But this is about more than just God's creatures great and small," said Jeff Newman of the Fish and Wildlife Service. "This is a unique system with unique species." Like the El Segundo fly, which disappeared when its breeding grounds were paved

over for a tarmac at the Los Angeles International Airport. For now, the Fish and Wildlife Service is trying to determine how many Delhi Sands flies there are and how best to protect them. In Fontana, hopes for a \$500 million project of single-family homes, shopping centers and strip malls have been dashed. Rancho Cucamonga, Ontario, Rialto and Hemet have had to delay housing projects, critical in a region absorbing residential overflow from Los Angeles. Colton had hoped to build a manufacturing plant.

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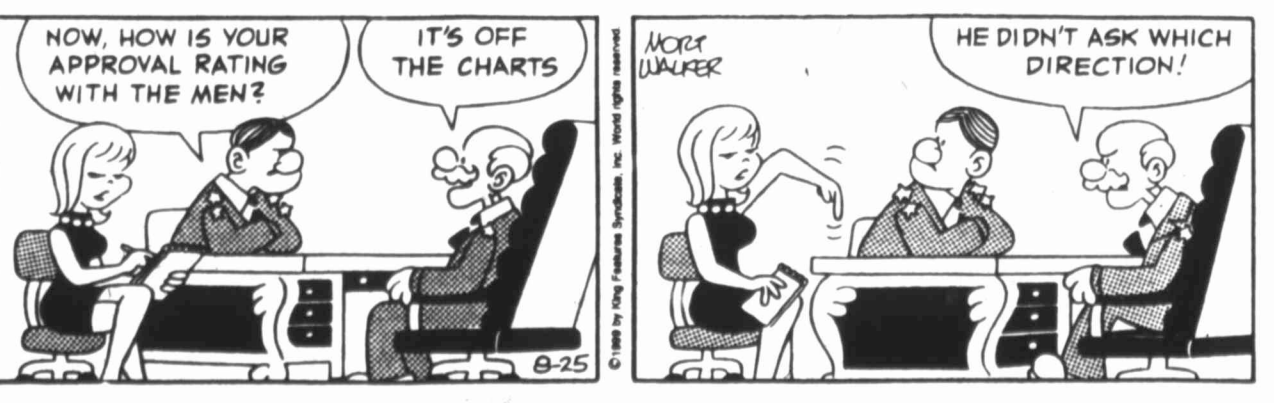
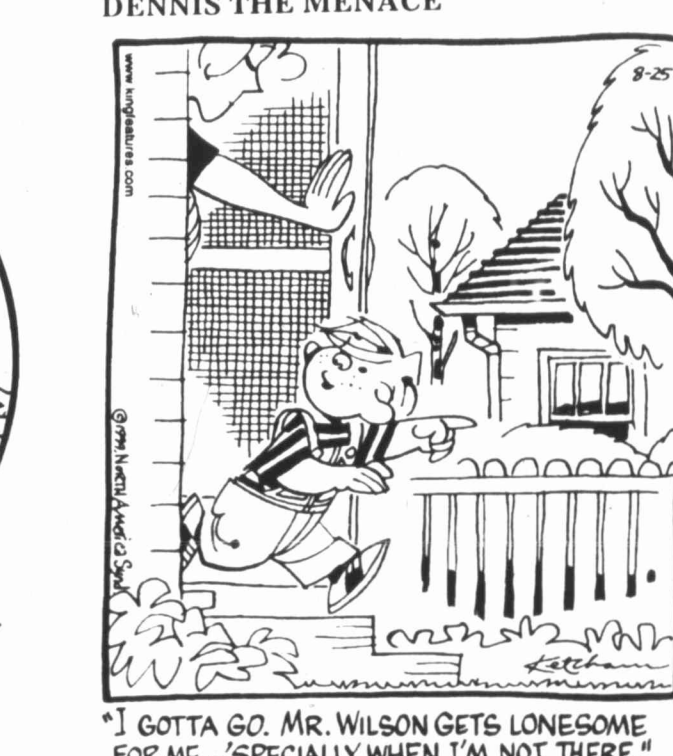
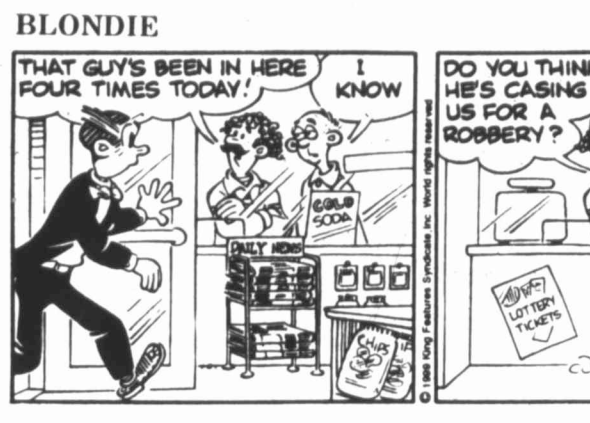








WEDNESDAY AUG. 25
Table with 25 columns representing different channels (KMID, KPEJ, KERA, etc.) and rows listing program titles and times.



THIS DATE IN HISTORY
The ASSOCIATED PRESS
Today is Wednesday, Aug. 25, the 237th day of 1999. There are 128 days left in the year.

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

Crossword puzzle grid with clues: ACROSS 1 Hinged fastener, 5 Closet eater?, 9 Sandal strap, etc.

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some settling in present-day New Orleans.

In 1825, Uruguay declared independence from Brazil.

In 1875, Matthew Webb became the first person to swim the English Channel, from Dover, England, to Calais, France, in 22 hours.

In 1916, the National Park Service was established as part of the Interior Department.

In 1921, the United States signed a peace treaty with Germany.

In 1943, U.S. forces overran New Georgia in the Solomon Islands during World War II.

In 1944, Romania declared war on Germany.

In 1950, President Truman ordered the Army to seize control of the nation's railroads to avert a strike.

In 1984, author Truman Capote was found dead in a Los Angeles mansion; he was 59.

In 1985, Samantha Smith, the schoolgirl whose letter to Yuri V. Andropov led to her famous peace tour of the Soviet Union, died with her father in an plane crash in Maine.

Ten years ago: Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., acknowledged hiring a male prostitute as a personal employee, then firing him after suspecting the aide was selling sex from Frank's apartment.

Five years ago: The Senate passed a \$30 billion crime bill, a major victory for President Clinton.

One year ago: Retired Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell died in Richmond, Va., at age 90.

Today's Birthdays: Former U.S. arms control director Eugene V. Rostow is 86. Actor Van Johnson is 83. Actor-producer Mel Ferrer is 82. Game show host Monty Hall is 76. Actor Sean Connery is 69. Actor Page Johnson is 69. Talk show host Regis Philbin is 68. Actor Tom Skerritt is 66. Jazz musician Wayne Shorter is 66. Movie director Hugh Hudson is 63. Actor David Canary is 61. Movie director John Badham is 60. Filmmaker Marshall Brickman is 58. Rhythm-and-blues singer Walter Williams (The O'Jays) is 57. Actor Anthony Heald is 55. Actress Anne Archer is 52. Rock singer-actor Gene Simmons is 50. Actor John Savage is 50. Country singer-musician Henry Paul (Blackhawk) is 50. Rock singer Rob Halford is 48. Rock singer Elvis Costello is 45. Movie director Tim Burton is 41. Actress Ally Walker is 38. Country singer Billy Ray Cyrus is 38. Rock musician Vivian Campbell (Def Leppard) is 37. Actress Joanne Whalley-Kilmer is 35. Actor Blair Underwood is 35. Rap DJ Terminator X (Public Enemy) is 33.

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