

World and Nation Datelines

Washington

Reagan's daughter urges Senate to increase Alzheimer's fight

WASHINGTON (AP) — Maureen Reagan said Tuesday that although her father remains "a handsome devil" with a sweet tooth, the ravages of Alzheimer's disease have destroyed the former president's ability to conduct sensible conversation.

She urged a Senate panel to boost federal spending on Alzheimer's research by \$100 million and said that if her father were able he would be testifying in her place on behalf of the millions of Americans expected to suffer from the disease as the population ages.

"He's doing very well, but he continues to get worse, so there is a great deal of concern," she said.

Texas

Inmate may have broken out of cell using dental floss

HOUSTON (AP) — Prison officials believe an inmate used dental floss or a similar coated string to painstakingly cut his way out of his cell and kill a rival.

Antonio Lara was accused of crawling out from under his cell bars and killing Roland Rios, said Alfred M. "Mac" Stringfellow, Texas Board of Criminal Justice chairman.

Lara, 26, was serving a 15-year sentence for attempted murder, robbery and aggravated assault. Rios, 41, was serving a 10-year term for aggravated robbery and injury to a child.

Stringfellow said Lara coated the nylon string with toothpaste or another abrasive to cut through metal bars and attack Rios as he was being escorted by guards to the shower March 16.

Rios' stabbing death resulted in confinement of some 122,000 Texas prison inmates to their cells in a rare systemwide lockdown to collect contraband and try and prevent further gang warfare.

California

Man rescued after 2 1/2 days trapped in overturned van

DOWNEY, Calif. (AP) — Trapped for days in a crashed van as traffic whizzed by only a few feet away, Lee Risler got so desperate he tried to cut off his pinned hand with a pocketknife.

Risler's van veered off Interstate 605 and overturned in a ditch around 3 a.m. Saturday. The 53-year-old sandal maker spent the next 2 1/2 days stuck there, his left arm trapped outside the van between the door and some trees.

Risler was freed around noon Monday when a California Department of Transportation worker spotted his 1991 Ford hidden by trees a few yards off the freeway, about 15 miles southeast of downtown Los Angeles.

Risler complained of thirst and was bleeding from the hand but was coherent, rescue workers said. He told them he began cutting at the wrist and fingers of his left hand, struggling to get free.

California

Tom Green diagnosed with testicular cancer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — MTV shock-comic Tom Green has dropped the jokes for a serious announcement — he has cancer.

Green, who is known for playing lewd practical jokes on his parents and friends, announced his battle with the disease during an interview with syndicated show "Entertainment Tonight."

Green has testicular cancer, according to MTV. The 28-year-old comedian said he had been feeling ill and initially thought he injured himself while performing a stunt for his self-titled comedy show on the music network.

Green learned the diagnosis March 9, following a doctor's exam. He has halted production of "The Tom Green Show" while he undergoes treatment.

FDA will not regulate tobacco

The Supreme Court halts President's main anti-smoking initiative

WASHINGTON (AP) — The government lacks authority to regulate tobacco as an addictive drug even though tobacco use may be "the single most significant threat to public health," the Supreme Court said Tuesday, throwing out the Clinton administration's main anti-smoking initiative.

The 5-4 ruling said Congress did not authorize the Food and Drug Administration to regulate tobacco.

President Clinton and others immediately said Congress should pass a law letting the FDA reinstate its rules cracking down on cigarette sales to minors.

"If we are to protect our children from the harms of tobacco, Congress

must now enact the provisions of the FDA rule," Clinton said in a statement issued while he was traveling in India.

But Mark Smith, spokesman for Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp., welcomed the ruling.

"Business and industry throughout the nation ought to breathe a sigh of relief. The highest court in the land has confirmed that a federal agency cannot on its own go beyond its limits of authority set by Congress," he said.

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, writing for the court, said: "By no means do we question the seriousness of the problem that the FDA has sought to address.

"The agency has amply demon-

"Business and industry throughout the nation ought to breathe a sigh of relief."

Mark Smith

Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp. spokesman

strated that tobacco use, particularly among children and adolescents, poses perhaps the single most significant threat to public health in the United States."

However, she said: "We believe that Congress has clearly precluded the FDA from asserting jurisdiction to regulate tobacco products."

The Justice Department also has a

lawsuit pending against the industry, which has agreed to pay the states \$246 billion for the cost of treating smoking-related illnesses. Cigarette billboards around the country were taken down last year as part of that agreement.

The ruling throws out the FDA's rule requiring places that sell cigarettes to require identification from anyone under age 27 buying tobacco products.

Israel welcomes Pope's first visit

JERUSALEM (AP) — In a spiritual climax to his 22-year papacy, Pope John Paul II on Tuesday began the first official visit by a Roman Catholic pontiff to Israel, fulfilling his dream of visiting the land where Christ was born and died.

The pilgrimage caps the ailing 79-year-old pope's efforts to reconcile Catholics and Jews. But he got a quick and sharp reminder of his differences with Israel over Jerusalem, which the Jewish state insists is its undivided capital.

Within minutes of John Paul's arrival, Israeli President Ezer Weizman described Jerusalem as a city that "has been reunified" — a reference to Israel's capture of the mainly Arab eastern sector in the 1967 Middle East war. The Vatican has called Israel's occupation of east Jerusalem "illegal."

Weizman's speech was a clear signal that the pope's journey, though billed as a mainly personal and spiritual one, has unavoidable political significance. Among other issues is Jerusalem's future: The Palestinians want to make the city's eastern sector the capital of an eventual Palestinian state.

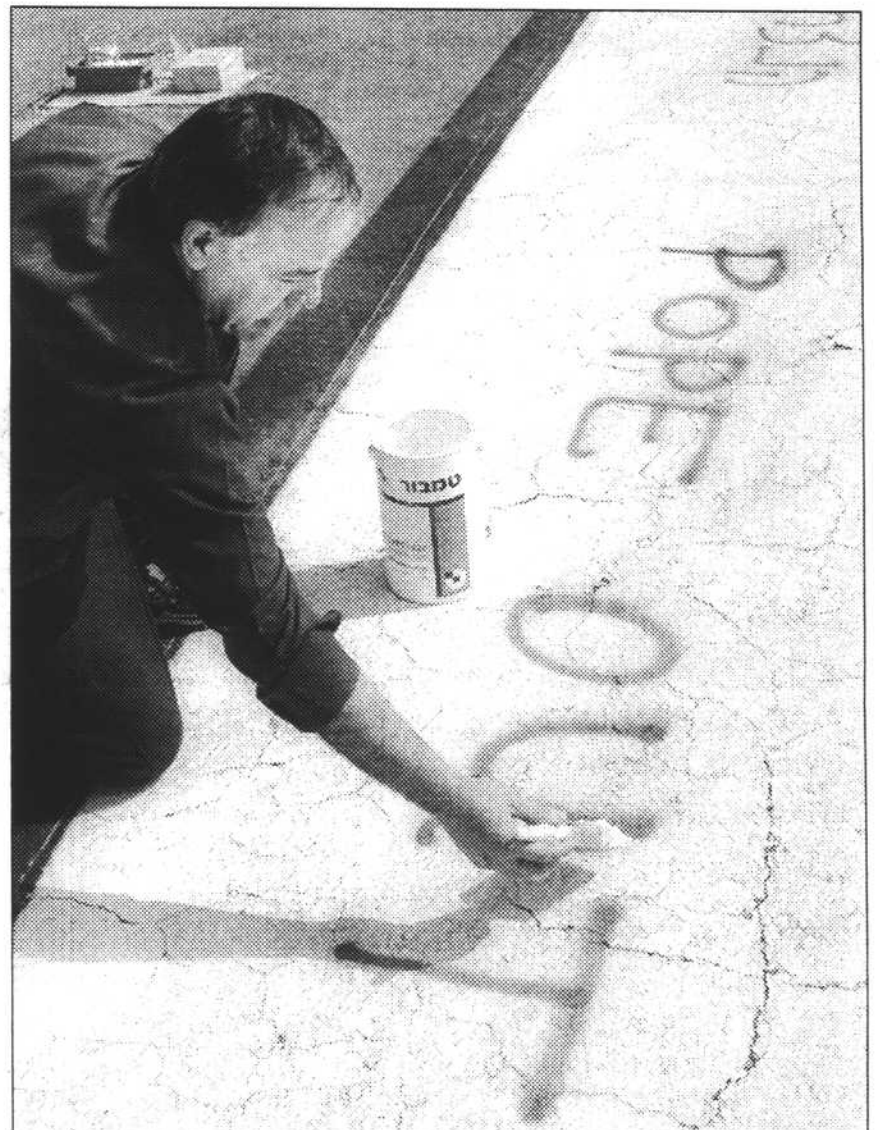
With a flourish of trumpets, John Paul arrived at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport, then moved on to Jerusalem, where he will retrace the footsteps of Jesus.

"We all know how urgent is the need for peace and justice, not for Israel alone but for the entire region," he said.

In a sign of the importance the Jewish state attaches to this visit, virtually the entire Israeli government was on hand at the Tel Aviv airport to greet John Paul II, spiritual leader of the world's 1 billion Roman Catholics, as he arrived after beginning his pilgrimage in Jordan.

Pomp and ceremony stood in stark contrast to the last papal visit, an unofficial one in 1964, three decades before the Vatican and Israel would establish diplomatic ties.

Brian Hendler/Newsweek
A JERUSALEM MUNICIPAL worker paints over graffiti at a helipad Monday. The helipad will be used in the transportation of the Pope to and from his visits to the holy sites in Israel.



Officials investigating fiery death of cult

Catholic Church says it does not condone Ugandan sect's beliefs.

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) — Uganda's Roman Catholic hierarchy distanced itself Tuesday from the fiery deaths of hundreds of members of a religious sect led by former Catholic clergy, saying the group's excommunicated leaders "erred and broke the discipline of the church."

The sect members "were misled by obsessed leaders into an obnox-

ious form of religiosity completely rejected by the Catholic Church," the bishops said in a statement issued in the Ugandan capital, Kampala.

At least 330 sect members burned to death Friday in a chapel on the sect's farm in southwestern Uganda.

Authorities still were investigating the tragedy and left open the possibility that charges might be filed in the deaths. They didn't say who might face charges.

Bulldozers completed the burial Tuesday of hundreds of charred bod-

ies in a mass grave alongside the burned chapel.

Nearby, a salvage team was carrying out the grisly task of sorting through an undetermined number of human remains discovered in a latrine pit. Authorities have offered no explanation for how they got there.

The bishops interrupted an annual retreat Tuesday to respond to suggestions they had erred in isolating the sect over disagreements about church doctrine.

Leaders of the Movement for the

Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God proclaimed the world would end in 2000, saying they received the message directly from God, the statement said.

The leaders, two of whom were former Roman Catholic priests, also preached that only those who heeded their apocalyptic message would go directly to heaven, it said.

Supporters of the group defied the church's authority and constantly rejected its warnings and admonitions about these dubious teachings, the statement said.

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WEATHER

TODAY

Showers
high 59, low 46

TOMORROW

Showers
high 59, low 44