



Alabama wilderness is 8 hours from N.O., its beauty 300 years old
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N.O. 'coffee tray ladies' gather every morning in store's 50-year tradition
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State's oil tax bonanza is over, and the outlook is bleak, says Little Man
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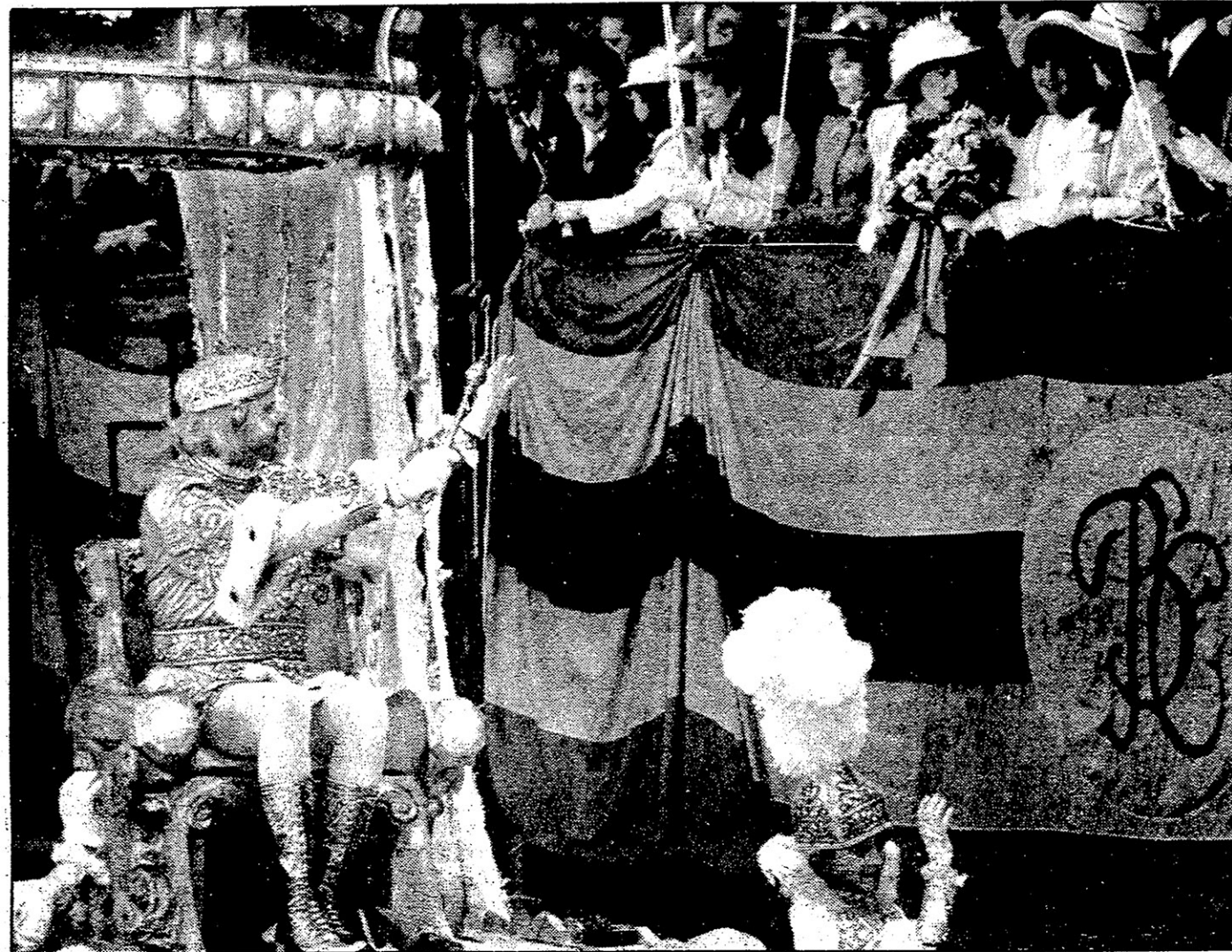
WEATHER

CLOUDY SKIES with a 40 percent chance of rain through Wednesday night is the National Weather Service forecast. High Wednesday, in the upper 50s; low, near 40. High Tuesday, 68; low, 43. Map, details, Sec. 3, Page 4.

147th Year No. 23

NEW ORLEANS, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1983

15 cents



—Staff photo by Robert W. Hart

Rex, John G. Phillips, waves to his queen, Elinor Spicer Bright, second from right with bouquet

Merrymakers stay high and dry

By JOHN POPE

Fat Tuesday 1983 was a day for defying the odds.

Float riders and fun-seekers joined forces, like jockeys riding on longshots, to defy the high probability of rain. Even though the odds in favor of rain were as high as 80 percent, the maskers were determined to mount their floats and horses, and the spectators were just as determined to head for the neutral grounds of Uptown New Orleans and the litter-ridden streets of the French Quarter.

And they won.

After chilly pre-dawn temperatures, Zulu, Rex and the suburban krewe rolled beneath clear skies, cheered by spectators who had left windbreakers and down jackets on the nearest patch of ground. During the afternoon, clouds threatened to break up the picture-perfect weather, but the rain held off, and Comus, Carnival's oldest organization, marched beneath dry skies.

It was enough to make Larry

More Mardi Gras stories, pictures, Section 1, Pages 11, 13, 16; Section 3, Page 4; Section 4, Pages 6, 18

Samuel, a New Orleans lawyer, doff his flannel alligator mask, look skyward and smile.

"Why would anyone live anywhere else?" he said.

But parade goes like Samuel had it easy. All they had to do was show up on the parade route with as much refreshment as they could carry. For examples of hard-core odds runners, consider the ladder people — the groups who showed up on St. Charles Avenue hours before dawn to secure their traditional spots.

Bob Eason is one of about a dozen people who have gathered in the 1700 block of St. Charles Avenue every year for more than a decade, coming from as far away as Mississippi and Texas for the privilege of yelling for beads, drinking beer and eating sandwiches

made on a table above the streetcar tracks.

"One of our party comes down in a van at 12 or 1 in the morning," he said. "At 4:30, he gets up to tie the stepladder to a lamppost. If you don't come down that early, you wouldn't be able to do that."

After the ladder came the table, topped with sandwich ingredients and drinks, and surrounded by enough lawn chairs to make the spot in front of Lucky Coin Machine Co. look like an outpost of suburbia.

The group has kept coming back, Eason said, because "we like the family environment."

These merrymakers were hardly alone. There were many more outposts like theirs on the St. Charles Avenue neutral ground from Lee Circle to Napoleon Avenue. Costumed parents may have tried to present a carefree image, but, along with their food, beer and trinkets, many carried a day's supply of Pampers.

The sight of ladders — as well as the sight of families huddled like refugees over Sterno cookers and hibachis — amazed Istvan Kulcsar, a Hungarian broadcaster.

When asked if there was anything quite like this spectacle in his native Budapest, he said, "Nothing." Then he paused and said, "Except, perhaps, the May Day parade."

Kulcsar arrived Friday. It was his first Carnival, and he saw it stylishly. He saw parades from the Gallier Hall reviewing stand and was admitted to the Rex den Sunday, when John G. Phillips, king of Carnival, was presented to the Rex organization.

On Tuesday morning, after an unsuccessful pre-dawn search for Mardi Gras Indians, he was heading for a Jackson Avenue party to watch Zulu before moving to St. Charles to view Rex. His retinue included Sean Hillen, a Belfast

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Demos told not to 'tinker' with jobs bill

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Reagan gave his first public blessing to a multibillion-dollar package of emergency jobs and recession relief Tuesday, as Republicans moved to protect their party's \$4.3 billion program from Democratic "tinkering."

Reagan conferred with Republican congressional leaders, who then cautioned that adding provisions opposed by the president — and more spending — could sink the entire effort to pass emergency jobs legislation quickly.

The House Republican leader, Robert Michel of Illinois, said the GOP program could provide the first of "several hundred thousand jobs" by this spring.

"We must resist build-on, pump-up, Christmas-tree" legislation, said Senate Majority Leader Howard H. Baker Jr. of Tennessee, who told reporters that departing from what Reagan sees as "socially useful jobs... would sabotage the package."

But a few hours later, the Republican chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Sen. Mark Hatfield of Oregon, introduced a \$4.4 billion alternative proposal of his own. It includes \$350,000 for summer youth employment, women and infant feeding programs and weatherization of low-income housing — three programs missing from the White House bill but mentioned by Democrats.

The Democrats, said House Majority Leader Jim Wright of Texas, "have no intention of sabotaging the package."

House Democratic leaders insisted, however, that they may want to revise the president's proposal, either by switching some of the money from one program to another, or by increasing the overall amount.

House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., D-Mass., said Monday that Democrats might want to add as much as \$1 billion to Reagan's \$4.3 billion — for summer employment, nutrition programs for women and children, and weatherizing low-income housing, programs that are included in Hatfield's bill.

And Democratic Party whip Rep. Thomas Foley of Washington said White House aides clearly understood the Democrats might push for additional programs.

Foley and White House chief of staff James A. Baker III were expected to meet Wednesday about specific items in the legislation.

Sen. Baker, meanwhile, sought to discourage Democrats from increasing the administration's proposal by suggesting other legislation could be used later in the year to increase spending on jobs programs.

"We haven't said every word we're going to say on jobs this year," Baker said.

But he also said he doubts a second bipartisan package will be enacted.

Baker, House Minority Leader

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74 are safe after plane crash-lands

MIAMI (UPI) — An Eastern Airlines 727 jetliner carrying 74 people jammed a landing gear Tuesday night and made a spectacular and safe belly landing in a shower of sparks so intense they looked like flames.

Fire and rescue personnel evacuated the 67 passengers and seven crew members and they stood on the tarmac and applauded pilot R.R. Curti as he emerged.

An Eastern spokesman said seven passengers were treated for abrasions at the airport.

"It was the smoothest landing I've ever seen — the pilot should get a medal," said one unidentified male passenger.

Other passengers said there generally was no panic on the plane but a few passengers did cry.

"There were a few people a little upset and crying because we did see doom," said another passenger. "The crew did a super job and generally nobody panicked."

"Nothing came loose. It was like being on a roller coaster," she said.

When the plane came to a rest on Runway 9-Right at 8:30 p.m. along the south perimeter of the airport, the emergency chutes were deployed and those aboard slid to safety. Firemen sprayed the runway with a light layer of foam immediately after the landing.

Alan Shedin of New York, who was

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Lebanese army takes east Beirut from Christians

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — The Lebanese army took over east Beirut Tuesday without opposition from the Christian militiamen who controlled it for eight years.

Reliable sources who requested anonymity said the Phalange militia moved its heavy arms, including tanks, armored personnel carriers and field artillery, out of Beirut to mountain strongholds in the Christian heartland to the north.

About 4,000 troops with several tanks and armored personnel carriers moved unopposed into residential neighborhoods of the Christian sector of the capital shortly after midnight Monday as 1,800 other soldiers regrouped in Moslem west Beirut.

Local radio stations said 200 U.S., French, Italian and British troops of the multinational peacekeeping force will move into east Beirut Thursday to support the army. But spokesmen for the foreign force declined to comment on the report.

"You are going to reunify Beirut in every sense of the word," President Amin Gemayel said in a 30-minute address to his troops. "This is the first step toward the reunification of the whole of Lebanon."

"The world is looking at us to see the value of the Lebanese state and whether it is capable of rising up. So preserve this value. Make all citizens feel you are their army, the army of Lebanon. Assure them you are with no one faction against another."

This is the first time the restructured Lebanese army, now totaling 22,000 men, has established control over the entire Lebanese capital since it broke up into sectarian factions during the 1975-76 civil war. Half the army now is Christian and half Moslems, but most of the senior officers are Christians, as they always have been.

The move was seen as an attempt to

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—Staff photo by Norman Berteaux Jr.

The body of Bernice Holman lies beside car; women at left are companions

Woman shot dead in robbery

A Panama City, Fla., woman visiting for Mardi Gras was shot to death Tuesday during an armed robbery at the corner of Toledano Street and South Claiborne Avenue.

Bernice P. Holman, 36, was shot in the face by a robber about 3:30 p.m. outside of Popeyes Restaurant, at 2900 S. Claiborne Ave., after telling him she had no money, police said.

She was lying face-up in a pool of blood between two cars in the restaurant's parking lot. Several pairs of Carnival beads dangled from her neck.

Holman and five companions had just left the restaurant when they were approached by an armed man demanding money, police said.

The two men with the group handed their wallets to the gunman and the robber turned to Holman demanding money from her, said Deputy Chief Louis Turner, of the New Orleans Police Department.

Holman told the man she didn't have

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