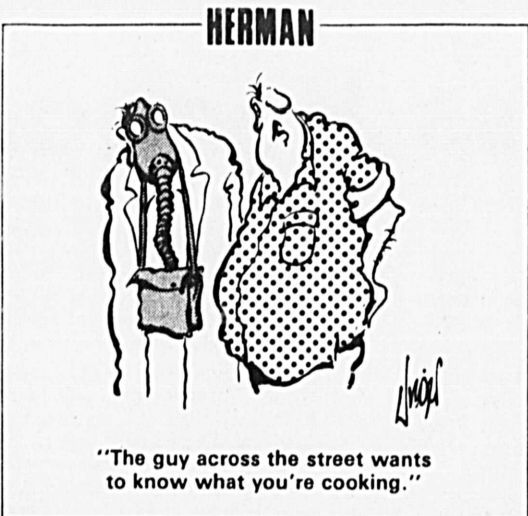


MINI-SCANDALS are embarrassing the Reagan administration and sending the wrong signals to U.S. voters in a period of recession. Page 2

BELT UP or pay up is the message from local police who promise to give you a ticket if you're caught in your car without a seatbelt on. Page 3

AIR CANADA is offering flights across most of North America this spring for as much as 75 per cent off the regular cost. Page 5

A KELLY ROAD athlete is B.C.'s top high school rookie in one of the world's most demanding sports. Page 13



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Spinner Page 3

Sadrack says

We can expect mainly cloudy skies tonight and may have some snow showers. The sun could break through the clouds occasionally Thursday and we could have a bit of snow.

Tonight's low could be -9 and Thursday's high could be -1.

Tuesday, the low was -5 and the high was 6, two degrees lower than the record for that date. We had no rain or snow and 1.8 hours of sunshine. One year ago, the high was -19, the low



The Citizen

Prince George

Serving Central B.C.

COQUITLAM FAMILY SHOT, BLUDGEONED

Son charged in six killings



Citizen photo by Dave Milne

Felix Zurbruggen is surrounded by the good-luck Bush Ghosts he carves from old roots.

'GHOSTS' BRING GOOD LUCK

Carver finds his roots here

by BEV CHRISTENSEN
Staff reporter

Bush Ghosts surround the Zurbruggen home in Mud River.

Their craggy features, ranging from a few inches to several feet, peer out from the porch and the corners of the small house, adding an eerie touch to their neat rural farm home.

Their faces seem to rise like spectres from the grain of the roots and tree trunks Felix Zurbruggen finds in neighbors' newly-cleared fields.

Some of the larger faces have sheepskin "hair" and moose or cow "teeth".

And, if what the Zurbruggens say is true, the ghosts living their house should ensure they are blessed with good luck.

They're reputed to have the power to ensure

any home in which they are permitted to live will be blessed with good fortune.

Legend has it that these "good ghosts" live in the roots and can be freed only by a carver who can capture them and release them onto the surface of the wood, Felix Zurbruggen said.

He began carving the ghosts, which in Switzerland are called Mountain Ghosts, during the summer he spent tending a small herd of goats, sheep and cows in the summer pastures in Switzerland.

Although the Zurbruggens have only been in Canada for a year, he has already found outlets for his ghosts in Banff, Jasper, Nanaimo, Barkerville, Quesnel and Prince George.

Prices begin at \$9 and increase with the size and complexity of the carving.

Because the features follow the natural grain of the wood, no two carvings are the same.

When the carving is completed a walnut stain is painted on the surface of the face then it is rubbed to reveal the highlights. The result is a carving which appears to grow naturally out of the wood.

Felix is the product of three generations of woodcarvers and his modest home is enriched by an ornately-carved desk created by his grandfather, a richly-carved buffet made by his father and a cabinet and other articles he has carved himself.

Having recently located a Swiss cabinetmaker who will build the furniture for him to carve, he hopes to begin making carved cabinets and other furniture to sell.

In Switzerland he was also commissioned to create Mountain Ghost direction signs for his village and signs held by faces to be placed over the entrances and exits of hotels.

COQUITLAM, B.C. (CP) — Bruce Blackman, who a friend says believed he was receiving messages from the Bible and television, has been charged with six counts of first-degree murder in the deaths of his father, mother, brother, two sisters and brother-in-law.

The six, apparently called together to discuss a domestic problem, were shot and beaten to death early Tuesday in the family's well-kept brick and cedar house in this Vancouver suburb.

One of the victims pleaded for help as he was chased around the front lawn of the fashionable house, then was pushed back inside to his death, an eyewitness said.

Police arrested the gunman as he "strolled out of the house" and walked slowly down the road, said Ed Field, who lives across the street.

A 22-calibre rifle was discovered later in the garden of the split-level house.

Blackman, 22, was to appear in provincial court today.

RCMP said autopsies will be performed on the bodies of the victims: Richard Blackman, 50, a Vancouver fire department engineer, his wife Irene, 49, son Rick, 16, two married daughters, Karen Rhodes, 25, and Roberta Davies, 28, and her husband John Davies, 39, of North Vancouver.

Some were shot to death and at least one was bludgeoned with a blunt instrument, said coroner Dianne Messier.

Mrs. Blackman mentioned a "pressing family problem" to a friend two weeks ago. The friend, who asked not to be identified, told The Province that the problem was worrying the close-knit family.

Rod McLaren, 16, a school friend of Rick Blackman, said Tuesday he sensed something was wrong when he dropped Rick off at home Monday evening.

McLaren said one family member, who appeared tense, asked him to leave because he had something important to discuss with Rick.

Field, 50, an unemployed cabinet maker, said he was awakened early Tuesday morning by what "sounded like shots or firecrackers."

He went to his window and saw all the lights were on in the Blackman house.

"I saw two people running around the lawn out front and heard a couple of shots," he said, adding it was too dark to see exactly what happened.

"One guy was shouting 'Help! Help!' One guy looked as if he was hurt, he was staggering. He went down on his knees and the other guy said: 'Now get in the house.'"

Field then called police.

Bruce Blackman was "a pretty ordinary guy" until recently, said Terry Vermeulen, 24, who has known Blackman since they attended high school in North Vancouver, and who shared an apartment with him for 10 months.

"Then about two months ago, he started interpreting the Bible," Vermeulen said. "He wanted to talk to me about it, about messages he thought were in it for him."

"He would see messages, subliminal messages, in many things. We'd be sitting around watching the television and he'd see something in a show he thought was a message."

"He thought the world would end soon and he had a role of some kind to play in it."

Concern over his friend's behavior led Vermeulen to tell Blackman's parents of his worry a month ago.

Two weeks ago, Blackman moved into his parent's home.

Barry, Bruce's twin brother and one of two surviving members of the immediate family, was out of the province at the time of the shooting. Family friends said there is also a 24-year-old married sister living in the Quesnel, B.C., area.

FALKLANDS: THATCHER UNSCATHED

LONDON (Reuter) — Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has emerged unscathed from the important political test of a six-month official inquiry into the origins of last year's Falklands war.

A special commission, including opposition politicians and with access to secret documents, reported Tuesday that Thatcher and her Conservative government could not have foreseen or averted Argentina's seizure of the British South Atlantic colony last April.

Supporters of Thatcher, who faces a general election this year or early in 1984, greeted with relief the news the commission headed by former diplomat Lord Franks had exonerated her. She enjoys a healthy lead in public opinion polls, largely because of Britain's success in recapturing the Falklands last June.

The report criticized some government decisions, including a plan to withdraw a naval survey ship from the South Atlantic, saying this was seen in Argentina as a clear sign of indifference.

It said Britain allowed the initiative over the Falklands to pass to Argentina and there was evidence Argentine President Leopoldo Galtieri was going to take a tougher line.

But the report concluded: "We would not be justified in attaching any criticism or blame to the present government for the Argentine junta's decision to commit its act of unprovoked aggression in the invasion of the Falkland Islands."

Britain sent a naval task force to recapture the islands. The resulting war cost the lives of 255 British servicemen and about 1,000 Argentinians.

Franks, the commission chairman, and his panel concluded the Argentine military government did not actually decide to attack until March 31 — two days before the landing — or possibly April 1.



BUENOS AIRES (Reuter) — The Argentine air force moved two squadrons of Mirage jet fighter-bombers to southern air bases within striking distance of the Falkland Islands three weeks ago, diplomatic sources here said Wednesday.

The sources were commenting on a report by the U.S. television network CBS that Argentina is planning to launch a campaign of harassment against British forces in the Falklands, which the Argentinians call the Malvinas.

(Earlier story page 2)

Pay-TV Playboy shows protested

by Canadian Press

Below-freezing temperatures failed to deter hundreds of demonstrators across Canada from attending rallies Tuesday to protest against a national pay TV service's plans to show Playboy magazine programming.

About 400 people demonstrated on Parliament Hill in Ottawa and a similar number gathered in front of Toronto's city hall. There were smaller protests in Montreal, London, Ont., Winnipeg, Brandon, Man., Saskatoon, Regina, Edmonton and Calgary.

Despite the public outcry, Don MacPherson, the president of First Choice Communications Corp., defended the decision to televise the "erotic" programming and said the company has no intention of cancelling its deal with Playboy.

And in the House of Commons, Communications Minister Francis Fox reiterated his hands-off stance

in the matter while MPs from all three parties criticized First Choice.

At many of the rallies, speakers urged potential subscribers, the federal government and the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission to demand that First Choice cancel plans to show Playboy's soft-core programming.

They also advocated a boycott of Eaton's department stores because of the Eaton family's financial involvement in the production of the programs.

First Choice, which starts pay TV service Feb. 1, announced earlier this month it has entered into a deal to co-produce Playboy programs and show them on Friday and Saturday nights after midnight. It also will broadcast some programs from the Playboy Channel, a U.S. pay TV service.

The reaction of many to the deal was summed up by one Edmonton woman who said she objected to

business "making a lot of money off women's bodies."

On Parliament Hill, Lynn McDonald, New Democratic Party member of Parliament and former president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, told the gathering the federal government should revoke First Choice's licence. Progressive Conservative MP Flora MacDonald said the licence should be reviewed.

But Fox told the House of Commons what he told a news conference Monday — the issue is a matter for the CRTC, the federal broadcast regulator. However, he admitted he phoned CRTC chairman John Meisel about the matter.

Fox said he is confident the CRTC will "monitor the situation and . . . take corrective action." Specific regulations that might have prevented pay TV from showing so-called adult programming do not exist.

In Toronto, the Canadian Coalition

Against Media Pornography decried the "alarming increase in actual violence against women and children in the form of sexual assault, incest, sexual harassment, wife-battering and murder."

One demonstrator symbolically cut up her Eaton's credit card in defiance of the Eaton family's 80-per cent control of Baton Broadcasting Inc., which is doing much of the production work for the Playboy movies to be shown on First Choice.

In Montreal, demonstrators picketed the CRTC's office, while protests in Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton and Calgary were held in front of Eaton's stores.

Eaton's president Frederick Eaton responded by emphasizing the independence of the retail chain from the family's other investments. "The Timothy Eaton Co. Ltd. has nothing to do with the production of television programs," he said.

now hear this . . .

• A law-abiding citizen reports taking note of 34 vehicles lacking front licence plates during a 35-minute stroll in the downtown area at lunchtime. Dissatisfied with previous responses from police over his efforts to point out local drivers' foibles, he wrote to the Minister of Highways who wrote to the police. A little later he received a copy of the letter the police wrote back, explaining they felt the law requiring front licence plates was "adequately enforced".

• At a school board meeting Tuesday, trustee Lois Boone struck upon a trendy way to report that recent assessment tests show local students scored a few per cent higher on reading tests than the Canadian average. "I would like to point out that students in our district here do, in fact, 'read good'," she said.