

SPORTS / C1

Texas gets dealt double loss on basketball court

SPORTS / C1

CHAMP-EEN!
Killeen wins state title



LIFESTYLE / D1

'Tis the season for hunting deer in Llano

WEATHER

**High: Near 60
Low: Mid-30s
Partly cloudy.
NE wind to 10 mph.
Details, back page**

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THE SPARK OF FEAR

Murders of 4 teens touch soul of city, raising sense of alarm and foreboding

By Chuck Lindell
and Kerry Haglund
Austin-American-Statesman Staff

A new football coach, rainy weather, Christmas shopping. Austin has had a lot of things to talk about this week. And while all of these have received considerable attention, the topic that may have touched closest to the soul of the city is the killings of four teenagers and the fear of crime.

"You wonder when you go out the door if you'll come back," says Barbara Fields of Austin. "I just don't really feel safe."

Statistically and conversationally speaking, it is an overstatement. And yet, in some form or another, it is a concern that Austin residents are thinking about, dwelling on.

Victims, senseless and random, the young shop owners have submitted the community to a few incidents or issues could, cutting through our collective consciousness to a fragile sense of security harbored by a constant stream of major crimes.

A convenience store clerk is shot to death behind the counter. A cab driver is stabbed to death behind the wheel. A woman is killed after leaving a dance hall. A man is stabbed to death as he arrives for work at a furniture store. A girl is sexually assaulted as she walks to elementary school. A college co-ed is beaten to death on the street. Police search for serial rapists in Hyde Park and North-west Hills.

Statistically, Austin looks like a safe place to live, to work, to go to school, to raise a family. But dozens of unrelated, serious crimes tend to build a sense of fear and foreboding.

The killings Dec. 6 at 1 Can't Believe It's Yagurt on West Anderson Lane.



Staff graphics and file photo

MOOD OF FEAR

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Securing businesses A28
Readers' poll results A27
Parents keeping tabs A28

Violence invades young lives

By Pamela Ward
Austin-American-Statesman Staff

Violence has walked off the movie screen into real life. Kids don't have to buy a ticket anymore to see savagery played out in Central Texas. Students this fall have dodged bullets while riding school buses home. They've watched police shoot a 14-year-old at school when he rushed them with weapons. And last week, they lost four of their own to murder in a yogurt shop.

Violence is invading what seemed to be

secure territory for children, and the impact is a range of emotions such as uncertainty, grief, anxiety.

Betty Phillips, a psychologist and coordinator of student intervention services for Austin Independent School District, was among a group of counselors who met with high school students last week.

The murders of four teenagers last week, Phillips said, "is bringing up whatever issues these students have had — personal losses, the killings manifest as a violent shop."

TALK OF THE TOWN

By Serge Schmemmann
New York Times Service

Looking back now, the August coup was both Mikhail Gorbachev's finest moment and the start of the final act in his tumultuous reign.

The collapse of the coup was his victory. It demonstrated that the freedoms he had loosed had taken root, and it brought out the qualities of courage and determination that made him one of the foremost leaders of his time.

But with the collapse of the coup, the pillars of the Soviet Union also collapsed, setting the republics free to partition, to remain, to secede, to join, to leave, to stay, to go.

The man who set about to reform the world's biggest empire now finds himself being swept aside by the very forces he set loose. There is always a chance that he will pull one more of his incredible survival acts, but this time it is an awfully slim chance.

In the four months since the coup, Gorbachev seems to have reeled his entire remarkable career. Back on that August night when

he returned to Moscow in his tank wheelchair from 72 hours of captivity, the president had seemed aglow with moral triumph, with the conviction of a destiny affirmed.

It was a golden moment, and for once it seemed that he was aware of this. "They say I've returned to a different country," he said. "I could even say another country."

But once again events seemed to slip past his grasp. He could have gone straight to Boris Yeltsin's apartment White House, where the crowds which had fawned over the tanks would have hoisted him on their shoulders. He could have embraced Yeltsin, and with him the new era that had opened.

But when Gorbachev did appear the next day, it was at a press conference at which he once again evoked the forgotten Lenin and the "socialist choice." He talked of the coup as an attack against his personality, but he failed to see that people had stood up, not for him, but for the freedoms he had

See Soviet, A25

Gorbachev fails amid triumphs

Strengths become weaknesses

By Serge Schmemmann
New York Times Service

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See Soviet, A25

1991 was a record year for breaking records

A new ranking of 64 U.S. cities with more than 250,000 population lists Austin second only to Honolulu in environmental quality.

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The index is in The 1992 Information Please Environmental Almanac, and will be revised annually, said the book's editor, Allen Hammond.

While other attempts have been made to rank the quality of life in American cities, "this is the first ranking that looks exclusively at environmental criteria," Hammond said.

The World Resources Institute, which publishes the almanac, is an independent policy research center for global environmental and de-

velopment issues.

Another feature in the almanac compares the 50 states on an assortment of environmental factors but makes no effort to rank them overall.

The comparison gave Texas the dubious distinction of being No. 1 in toxic emissions, with 441,000 tons, and last in environmental expenditures per capita, with \$6.76.

Two other Texas cities also scored well on the Green Cities Index. Fort Worth was fifth and San Antonio 11th. But Dallas was 26th, Houston 48th and El Paso 49th.

Glenn West, president of the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, said Austin's score on the Green Cities Index is "particularly important, because we tend to debate environmental issues at such length in our community."

The No. 2 environmental rank

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