

Police trial begins

HUNTSVILLE — Jury selection began yesterday in the trial of two former Houston police officers charged in the drowning death of Joe Campos Torres.

The former officers, Terry Denison and Stephen Orlando, are charged with murder in the May 6 death of Torres who was under arrest and in their custody when he

was allegedly thrown into Buffalo Bayou in downtown Houston.

The trial was moved to Huntsville by State District Judge Allen Stillely, who agreed with defense attorneys Bob Bennett and Mike Ramsey that it would be difficult to get an impartial jury in Harris County.

The case will be tried before State District Judge James "Bud" Warren in the courtroom at the School of

Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State University.

Jury selection was expected to be completed by tomorrow, with testimony beginning Monday.

Torres, 23, was arrested for disorderly conduct in an East End bar. His body was found floating in the bayou two days later.

Five officers were fired after a police investigation of the incident.

Schools to help pay trial costs

HUNTSVILLE — At least three of the universities named as beneficiaries in the "Mormon will" of Howard Hughes have agreed to help underwrite the expenses of a trial on the document.

The three schools include Rice University, the University of California and the University of Texas.

Regents of the University of Nevada, which was also named in the will, will discuss the matter in a meeting Sept. 16.

Nevada administrators have recommended the university not become financially involved in the trial, university attorney Tom Lessly said Tuesday.

Las Vegas District Judge Keith Hayes has set Oct. 3 as the date to begin a trial on the purported will in that city.

"By law we can't walk away from the opportunity of getting a large amount of money," Rice attorney Tom Eubank said Tuesday. "We are not paying anyone's legal fees."

Eubank said expenses shared by the schools may total \$50,000. Jury fees — consisting of everything from lodging to food — are expected to be the biggest expense.

University of California officials said they may spend up to \$10,000 on the trial. University of Texas officials declined comment on the matter.

Chicago killer of 8 nurses given hearing

JOLIET, Ill. — The Illinois Pardon and Parole Board scheduled a closed door hearing Wednesday on a parole request from Richard Speck, convicted of murdering eight student nurses in Chicago in 1966.

It marked the second time Speck was eligible for a hearing. Last year, the board rejected his request as a matter of routine.

Illinois Corrections Director Charles Rowe said Tuesday he can't imagine the decision being different last year or "for many years to come."

The board reportedly has received 250 letters opposing parole. It also was reported that the parents of two of the slain women will ask the board not to release Speck, who is serving eight consecutive sentences of 50 to 150 years.

Current Illinois law requires yearly consideration of eligible parole cases. But a law recently signed by Gov. James R. Thompson, which goes into effect Oct. 1, allows for three-year spans between such hearings.

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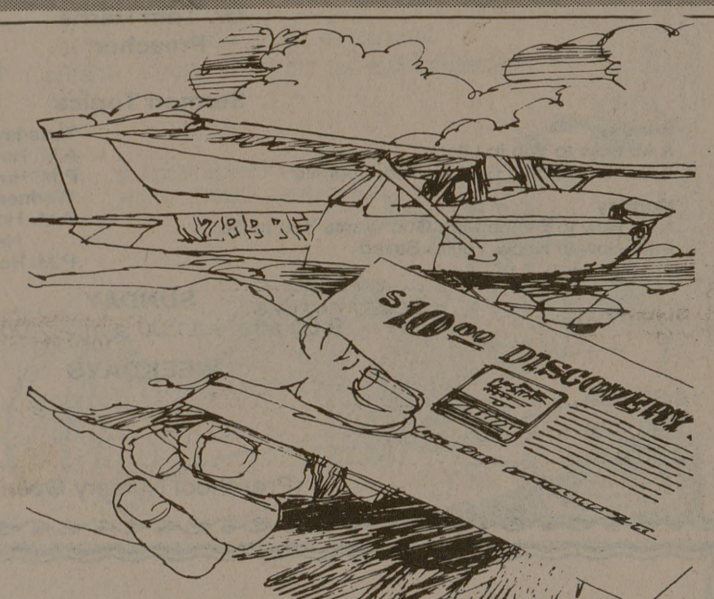
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