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the nation

Bianchi confesses to seven murders

United Press International
LOS ANGELES — A 28-year-old security guard, who beat the gallows and gas chamber by confessing to a series of murders and implicating his cousin, faces arraignment today as the man who preyed on Los Angeles women as the Hillside Strangler.

Moments after Kenneth Bianchi tearfully admitted murdering two girls in Bellingham, Wash., he confessed to five of the 13 Los Angeles-area killings and agreed to testify against his cousin, Angelo Buono Jr., 44.

Within a half hour, Buono, 44, was arrested in Glendale, Calif., without resistance and charged in 10 of the 13 killings which occurred during late 1977 and early 1978.

Bianchi pleaded guilty in the Bellingham cases in exchange for a promise that Washington authorities would not seek the death penalty against him. He was sentenced to two consecutive life terms for those killings.

Los Angeles County District At-

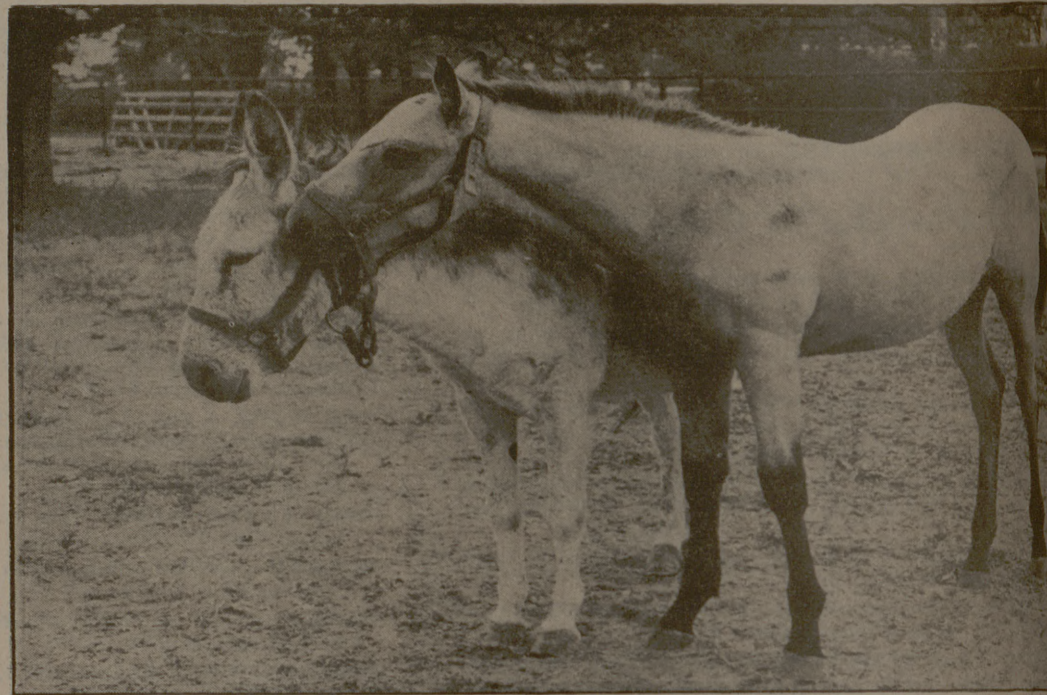
torney John Van de Kamp said California would not seek the death penalty if Bianchi appeared as a truthful witness for the state in Buono's trial.

Bianchi could have been sentenced to hang in Washington or to the gas chamber in California.

Van de Kamp said both men would be arraigned in Los Angeles Municipal Court Monday on a variety of felony counts in connection with the 10 strangling murders.

Bianchi, trembling and weeping, wore a bullet proof vest under a three-piece gray suit when he appeared before Judge Jack Kurtz Friday and changed his plea to guilty from one of innocent by reason of insanity.

"I can't find the words to express the sorrow for what I have done," he told the judge. "In no way can I take away the pain I have given to others and in no way can I expect forgiveness from mothers."



You lead, I'll follow

A 6-month-old Quarter Horse colt, owned by the Texas A&M Large Animal Clinic, spends the first few hours of his halter breaking tied

to Jackson, a steady hand at keeping boisterous youngsters down to earth.

Battalion photo by Marsha Filkins

'Pooch' credited with 20 snake encounters

United Press International
PYOTE — For the 11 men who work round-the-clock shifts at a natural gas processing plant in "the middle of nowhere" — far West Texas — a dog named Pooch is the best friend they have.

Not only is the German shepherd good company during the sometimes solitary shifts, but Pooch's

legendary exploits have made many a worker at Lone Star Gas Co.'s Warnick plant breathe a little easier.

In his two years of residence at the plant, located 8 miles northwest of Pyote, Pooch at last count had headed off 20 potentially fatal encounters between workers and sleeping diamondback rattlesnakes.

and several times warned workers away from natural gas leaks that could kill them.

"These guys who work out here would fight for ol' Pooch," says Gary Jones, superintendent at the plant.

"Everybody out here talks more about Pooch than they do their own kind, I guess. Nearly everybody who works out here brings an extra sandwich for the dog."

As an example of the workers' respect for the dog, he cites an entry in the plant logbook for Oct. 10:

"Administered first aid to Lone Star legend after dog having been bit by a rattler. I almost got it but Pooch got in front of me. That makes No. 20."

It seems Pooch had gotten the bite the rattler had aimed at a man who disturbed the snake by turning over some pipe in the back of the plant.

"Ol' Pooch, darn it all, got bit," Jones said. "His head swelled up the size of a wastebasket. He was very, very sick the next day but he overcame this thing."

"When he was sick, it seems everyone had a long face because they were so worried about ol' Pooch."

During the six years the Warnick facility has been open, one dog or another has taken up residence at the plant where gas is cleaned be-

fore it is piped to 1.1 million Star customers in Texas and eastern Oklahoma. But before the dogs only provided com-

"Before Pooch came, there was a snake coiled around your leg, your mind that you'd end up in the hospital," says Kenny Heath, Lone Star transition supervisor. "But now you do your job without worrying what's lurking around the corner."

No one ever had to show what to do when he met up with a rattler, a common sight in the parched West Texas. He seemed to understand that he could withstand a snake bite better than the workers, and went after rattlers that had slithered up the plant for shade.

A few months ago, a plant employee was about to step into a hole when Pooch suddenly appeared and knocked the man to the ground. As the stunned man picked himself up, he saw the wrestling with a rattlesnake in the shade of the car.

Pooch has been bitten "seven or eight times" during his two years at the plant, Jones said, but has never required a doctor's care. "He's bit enough times that he needs and everything, but it doesn't hurt him because he's got an immunity."

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