

state

Judge threatened with job if conduct doesn't improve

United Press International
AUSTIN — The State Commission on Judicial Conduct publicly reprimanded a Denton district judge Wednesday, and warned if the judge does not demonstrate better conduct in the future, the commission may take steps to remove him from office.

The reprimand was the third given to Judge Robert G. Scofield of the 58th District Court in the past four years, but it was the first time the commission has made one public.

The commission decided after a Feb. 16 hearing to reprimand Scofield again, saying, "your conduct was willful and persistent conduct which was inconsistent with the proper performance of your duties as a judge, and conduct which casts public discredit upon the judiciary.... A recurrence of acts of misconduct as set forth above will necessitate the commission's taking steps to remove you from office."

Scofield's actions, cited by the commission which merited the reprimands in 1976, 1978 and this year, included:

- Advising the director of the commission that a loan to satisfy an Internal Revenue Service judgment against him was from his mother, although the commission later determined at least \$10,000 of the money came from an attorney who regularly practices in Scofield's court.
- Verbally abusing litigants and attorneys.
- Failure to attend the College for State Trial Judges despite being told twice by the commission to do so.
- Accepting season tickets for the 1976 and 1977 Texas Ranger baseball games from a corporation which contributed to his campaign and frequently has cases in his court. The tickets and accompanying parking places were valued at \$8,085.
- Telling jurors after they acquitted a defendant in an attempted capital murder trial, "You just turned a murderer loose on the people of this county."
- Scolding a grand jury foreman and threatening him with contempt for attempting to present a report on the grand jury's investigations which had not resulted in indictments.

Case to be reconsidered

United Press International
AUSTIN — The Texas Supreme Court agreed Wednesday to reconsider an earlier decision and hear further arguments on a suit seeking \$1.26 million in damages from Alamo National Bank of San Antonio and a salvage company hired by the bank to demolish a downtown building.

The high court had ruled in January that the bank and Kelly Salvage Co. were jointly responsible for payment of \$1,261,803 to the husband and son of a woman killed when the wall of the building collapsed onto the woman's car.

Nancy Marie Kraus was killed in the accident, and her son, John L. Kraus, was injured.

'Bionic baby' helping fight infant respiratory problems

United Press International
SAN ANTONIO — Dr. Rajam S. Ramamurthy's "bionic baby" has no superhuman strength or telescopic vision like the bionic people on television but it is useful in teaching medical students how to restore breathing in newborn infants.

The baby-size doll was christened when two children saw it in Ramamurthy's car. When the University of Texas Health Science pediatrician explained its purpose, the two tots immediately chorused, "Oh, a bionic baby."

Ramamurthy said reception of students to the "bionic baby" had been very favorable, and the doll also can be used to train nurses, paramedics and families affected by Sudden Infant Death syndrome.

An adult's heart, for example, is located more on the left side of the chest than an infant's. And an adult needs a large volume of air to expand the lung, while a newborn can tolerate only a small amount, she said.

Pressure applied in resuscitation, and time, are important, too, and an infant's heartbeat and respiration rate are much faster than an adult's, the pediatrician said.

The most common problem with infant resuscitation in the past, she said, was applying too much or too little pressure while performing the cardiac compressions and breathing.

"With an adult-sized doll, it's impossible to measure these variables. But in the 'bionic baby,'" a chart recorder simultaneously records pressure, heartbeat and lung expansion for the student to see as he or she is performing resuscitation.

In addition, the doll's neck is constructed so that the student can practice holding it in the correct position.

Ramamurthy, a pediatric neonatologist, conceived the idea for the doll-sized electronic simulator, which was constructed in the center's electronic instrument shop.

At the Robert B. Green Hospital, where a charity delivery service has operated, the physician said 2 percent to 3 percent of the babies born each year require some help with breathing because of complications during delivery.

Training in respiration and resuscitation comes early in a medical education, but Ramamurthy said too often a physician's actual experience comes in the delivery room, where there is no margin for error.

District stops giving Bible

United Press International
ARLINGTON — The Arlington Independent School District has ended its 14-year-old policy of helping distribute free Bibles to students.

Superintendent Woodrow Counts said U.S. Supreme Court rulings indicate the Bible giveaways would be declared unconstitutional. At a Tuesday night trustees meeting, board president Truett C. Boles said continuing the policy would give all groups access to mass distribution of material.

The district is committed to the constitutional principle of separation of church and state," Boles said. The school district will neither advance nor inhibit religion.

Bibles have been given on a voluntary basis by Cideon International, a group of Arlington businessmen who has donated funds for Bibles for

graduating seniors.

The policy change was in response to a request by the American Civil Liberties Union, which suggested the Bible giveaway be discontinued or all organizations be given the same opportunity to distribute literature.

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State workers get option for union dues deduction

United Press International
AUSTIN — Comptroller Bob Bullock Wednesday told members of the Texas AFL-CIO's political education committee that state employees could start having union dues deducted from their payroll paychecks effective June 1.

Last year the comptroller had told another state AFL-CIO convention that state employees needed to organize for collective bargaining rights.

Immediately after lighting that little fuse, I believe every newspaper editorial writer jumped right on my back," Bullock said. "For that matter, so did a number of state employees and some other state officials."

Gov. Bill Clements and Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby criticized Bullock for advocating union rights for state employees. But Attorney General Mark White ruled that the comptroller could establish a dues checkoff system so long as the state did not incur any costs.

"Today, I am happy to inform you that we will have such a check-off system no later than June 1," Bullock said.

The comptroller also said the Texas Public Employees Association had been one of the most vocal critics of the dues checkoff plan but was now ready to back him.

"Lo and behold, you know who I got a letter from yesterday saying they wanted a meeting next week to talk about the checkoff program? It was the Texas Public Employees Association," Bullock said.

He said his office had already received inquiries from private organizations who want to use the checkoff system. Bullock said the Texas Highway Patrol Association, some credit unions and other organizations have indicated they want to participate in the plan.

Bullock said he did not favor the Texas Municipal League's request for a 3-cent increase in city sales taxes, and some local entities' request for an additional 1-cent increase.

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