

Battalion Classifieds

Dallas walking stick is shown at mart

United Press International
DALLAS — Most of today's cowboys wear their hats as fashion items rather than as protection from the sun and their jeans with a designer's name on the back pocket. Their fancy boots are more likely to be seen two-stepping or

in a business meeting than in the stirrups of a saddle. So it was only a matter of time before another item of the Old West found its way into the Western fashion trend.

"He needs something to hold on to," says Bob Stringer, designer of the missing item. Stringer, recently in Dallas to show his "Authentic Dallas Walking Stick" at the World Congress of Menswear in the Apparel Mart, claims a walking stick is all the

modern cowboy needs to complete his outfit.

Currently living in California, but a former resident of Dallas, Stringer knows about outfits. The 36-year-old admits he "dresses to the hilt" in the latest Western-style clothes.

Stringer says a walking stick "originated when cowboys sat around the campfire at night," drawing designs in the dust with a twig.

His stick, though, is much

more than a twig.

The Dallas stick is one of 18 he has designed to recognize certain cities. Could the Dallas stick be the Los Angeles stick or the New York stick? Maybe, but Stringer says he picked Dallas to latch onto the current Western fashion craze.

"The Western trend materialized out of Texas," he said. "Anything sold as 'Texas' is Western. That's why I didn't make it the California stick. At this point, the Western market and Dallas walking stick go hand in hand."

The teakwood taper is topped with a hexagon-shaped brass head. The stick's promotional material claims the head is "hand-polished to the brilliance and clarity resembling that of an early Texas morning sunrise."

The pointer is encased in a leather scabbard topped by a miniature Texas flag made of silk. "It's not only a walking stick,

it's a little flagpole," Stringer said. "I couldn't see anything that would recognize Dallas more than the Lone Star flag on a pole."

Although marketing of the stick began only in December, Stringer is counting on sales of up to 100,000 this year.

"The exposure on the Dallas stick alone has been phenomenal," he says.

Exposure is helped when Stringer is seen presenting the stick's former hostage Marine Sgt. Johnny McKeel Jr. of Balch Springs, Dallas mayor Robert Folsom, J.R. Duncan, the real owner of Southfork ranch, made famous by the television series "Dallas."

The Authentic Dallas Walking Stick is being sold now in California and Holland. Stringer is hoping the appearance at the Apparel Mart's trade show will spread the stick's popularity and availability.

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Customs seeks help in freighter seize

United Press International
HOUSTON — Customs officials sought backing from the State Department Wednesday to seize a Colombian freighter found for the second time in six months to be smuggling cocaine into this country.

Of 26 stowaways also found on the Cartagena de Indias, docked at the Port of Houston, 15 were held on \$100,000 bond each as material witnesses to the fatal shooting of another stowaway Tuesday by a security guard trying to keep them from escaping a small room.

Customs officials said none of ship's officers or crew admitted knowledge of 14 pounds of cocaine found aboard by a drug-sniffing dog, and usually in such cases the ship's owner is fined.

In Sept. 1980 the owner, Grand Colombia Lines, was fined \$53,200 for bringing 66 pounds of cocaine to Houston, and previously the freighter was fined for carrying 15 pounds of marijuana, spokesman Charles Conroy said.

He said it was probable another fine will be levied, but that the federal agency was seeking to take stiffer action by possibly seizing it.

"It's not a Customs decision (to seize the ship)," Conroy said. "We're coordinating with the State Department. We are seeking backing from another source."

No charges were filed against Danner Inc. security guard Williams Hall Robertson, 51, after his

shotgun blast killed Ramon Garcia, 24, and injured another Colombian during an unsuccessful breakout attempt by 16 stowaways held at Danner's offices on the ship channel. The other 10 stowaways had been moved to a Galea Park jail because of overcrowding at Danner's offices.

The evidence in the shooting will be presented to a Harris County grand jury this week at next.

Employees at Danner said the shooting was accidental, but the stowaways gave a different story to investigators.

Harris County District Attorney Ted Wilson, speaking through an interpreter to 15 stowaways, said, "You all say it was in cold blood. But the other witness said it didn't happen that way."

The stowaways tried to escape early Tuesday from a 12-foot-by-16-foot room where they had been held since Sunday. Security guards told police they tried to hold back the men when they broke through a steel-barred door and into an outer office.

The freighter's shipping agent, E.S. Binings Inc., said the men turned themselves into the crew when their provisions ran out half way in a voyage from Colombia.

Immigration and Naturalization Service officials disclaimed responsibility for the stowaways, saying the shipping agent had custody. Binings had contracted for the services of the security firm.

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