

State

Helicopter rescue a success in Gulf

United Press International
FREERPORT — Apparent engine failure Wednesday forced down a helicopter with six persons aboard in the Gulf of Mexico, but all six escaped to a raft and were rescued.

The only injury reported was one superficial head cut. The helicopter, which turned over in the water but did not sink, was being recovered by an offshore industry workboat, a spokesman for owner Houston Helicopters Inc. said.

Coast Guard spokesman Ray

Baker said the Jet Ranger 206 L-1 crashed about 8 a.m. while en route to Freerport from an offshore drilling rig in Block 578, about 40 miles out.

The Coast Guard spokesman said another helicopter spotted it upside down in the water 25 miles southwest of Freerport, 12 to 15 miles from the nearest beach.

The six persons aboard escaped to a raft, were picked up shortly after 10 a.m. by a Coast Guard helicopter and taken to Community Hospital in Freerport, the

spokesman said.

"The pilot of the Coast Guard helicopter reported the only injury sustained was one man and he had a superficial cut on his head," the spokesman said.

HHI owner Felton Baker disputed the Coast Guard's description of the incident as a crash.

"There was no crash. A crash implies impact. We did have an emergency landing. We had a flameout (engine failure). It was successfully landed," he said. "It auto-rotated down. That's about

like a plane gliding."

The HHI official said the helicopter had automatically inflatable floats that failed to work, but he said the crash occurred near enough to a rig for a crane-equipped workboat to fish the aircraft from the water.

Coast Guard spokesman Baker said weather did not appear to be a factor.

"Weather conditions were pretty good," he said. "The winds were about 10 knots, seas were about 5 feet and skies were clear.

We should be able to get some report from the pilot once he's rescued."

The Coast Guard identified the pilot as John Kemp, 30, of Houston, and said the five passengers were employees of Schlumberger Inc., an oil well service company, and two offshore platform catering services.

HHI is a contract helicopter company that provides helicopter service to offshore oil industry operators.

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Bill raising legal drinking age encounters state Senate snag

United Press International
AUSTIN — Senators have agreed to disagree with House changes in a bill raising the minimum legal drinking age in Texas to 19. Instead, the measure has been sent to conference committee.

Backers consider the Tuesday setback temporary because both houses earlier expressed overwhelming support for the plan to require persons to be 19 years old to legally purchase or consume alcoholic beverages.

The measure hit a snag on an amendment by Rep. Dan Kubiak, D-Rockdale, placing the burden on retailers to make certain their customers are 19 years old before selling them beer or liquor.

Kubiak's amendment, which was approved by a lopsided vote in the House, would create a legal presumption that retailers "knowingly" sold alcoholic beverages illegally to persons under 19 if they failed to ask for identification.

Kubiak stood firm on the amendment Tuesday.

"We're going to hold firm to keep that amendment in there," Kubiak said. "The problem is not one of 18-year-olds or 19-year-olds drinking, but it is one of enforcement. If they don't ask for identification, then this law is a farce."

Kubiak said opposition to his amendments is coming from retailers of alcoholic beverages who do not want the burden of checking identifications to verify ages of their customers.

Sen. Bill Sarpalius, D-Amarillo, the author of the bill, had indicated last week he had no objection to Kubiak's amendment. But he reversed that position Tuesday, asking the Senate to reject it, and senators unanimously agreed.

"It puts a lot of burden on the retailer," Sarpalius said. "It does not address the person who is 17 and looks 25 or the person who is 25 and looks 17."

He said the conference committee would probably agree on an amendment that re-

quires retailers to ask for proof of age when "a reasonable person would have been aware from the appearance of the minor that the minor was underage."

"I'm sure some of the alcoholic beverage people talked to them carefully about that amendment," Kubiak said.

"There are some people in the industry who are in the selling field... who are afraid they could lose their licenses if people brought in false identifications and they sold them beer."

But Kubiak contended the bill already has ample safeguards to protect retailers in such cases, and requires them only to check the identification — not verify its authenticity.

Gov. Bill Clements declared the bill an emergency earlier in the session, pointing to a continuing problem of high school students drinking on campus or coming to class drunk.

Texas first gave 18-year-olds the right to buy alcoholic beverages in 1973.

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B-CS is 6th in nation's metro population growth

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The U.S. Commerce Department reports that five of the 25 fastest growing metropolitan areas in the nation are located in Texas, based on preliminary results of the 1980 census.

Bryan-College Station ranks sixth in the nation with a 61.2 percent population increase in 10 years.

Figures released Tuesday for Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas across the nation indicated the Houston SMSA was the heaviest gainer during the 1970-1980 decade, with a population in-

crease of nearly 900,000 people, or 44.6 percent.

Based strictly on percentage increase in population, however, Houston was the 21st fastest growing SMSA in the nation.

The Rio Grande Valley area of McAllen-Pharr-Edinburg grew by 54.2 percent.

Also ranking in the top 25 were Brownsville-Harlingen-San Benito, No. 18 at 48.3 percent; Austin, No. 20 with a 47.8 percent growth; and in addition, the Dallas-Fort Worth SMSA joined Houston on the list of 11 U.S. cities with population increases of

300,000 or more. The population of the so-called "metroplex" increased by 586,719 between 1970 and 1980. That 24.7 percent increase was not sufficient to place Dallas-Fort Worth in the top 25 SMSA.

The Commerce Department's figures nationwide indicated the South and West were the big population gainers in the 1980 census. In all, 30 of the 32 metropolitan areas losing population were in the Northeast and North Central states, led by the New York area, which lost 893,000 people.

Bride-to-be tarred, feathered; fiance's ex-wife charged later

United Press International
TOWN CREEK, Ala. — A bride-to-be was set upon by her fiance's ex-wife and ex-sister-in-law, partially stripped, tarred and feathered and hauled to the city dump, police say.

"It's about time someone did this," said the furious woman charged with the assault. "What she was trying to do was take my husband away."

Elizabeth Jameson, 40, was to marry Dr. John McElwey, 62, Tuesday. She was in his trailer preparing for the wedding, in the

northwest Alabama town, when she claims she was attacked.

Jameson said the two women entered with a gun, forced her into a chair, cut her long hair with scissors, stripped her to the waist and tarred and feathered the upper part of her body. Then, she said, she was taken to a car and driven to the city dump outside of town and shoved out.

She walked to a house about a half-hour after the incident Tuesday and notified police. She was checked at a hospital and released in good condition.

Deputies said when they arrested Marietta McElwey, 53, of Vinemont, Ala., and her sister, Robbie Jean McCorkle, the women were removing tar and feathers from their hands with gasoline.

They were jailed on charges of first-degree burglary, second-degree kidnapping and third-degree assault, officers said.

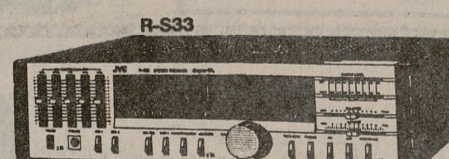
Mrs. McElwey, who was married to the doctor from 1946 to 1956, later told a reporter she had no apologies for the incident.

"It was justice for the bride," Mrs. McElwey told a reporter.

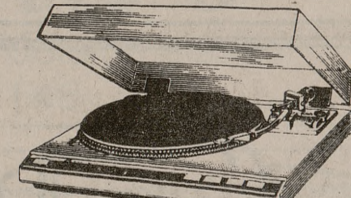
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