

Convicted detectives ask for reinstatement

NEW ORLEANS — A state judge reviewed a request Tuesday to order the city to reinstate three homicide detectives fired for their convictions on federal rights charges.

Former homicide detectives John E. McKenzie, Dale Coura and Stephen Farrar Monday requested Judge Robert Katz bar the firings, forcing the city police department to reinstate the officers.

The three policemen were fired last Thursday after a jury in Dallas found them guilty of violating the civil rights of Robert Davis while he was being questioned in the 1980 slaying of patrolman Gregory Neupert.

Four other city policemen were acquitted of similar charges.

Oris Buckner, an officer who investigated the Neupert slaying, was granted immunity from prosecution in exchange

for testifying for the prosecution. He told the jury he participated along with the three officers in beating Davis. Buckner was not fired from the police department following his admission.

Attorneys for the three officers claimed in a suit that it was unfair for the police department to fire the three and take no disciplinary action against Buckner.

Investigation: Buyers claim U.S. Homes does poor job

COVINGTON, La. — State officials are investigating consumer complaints that Houston-based U.S. Homes, the largest homebuilding and sales company in the nation, did a shoddy job of constructing houses in several subdivisions.

Nadine Ramsey, a spokes-

woman for the consumer protection division of the state attorney general's office, said Monday a preliminary investigation of the company was under way. She declined to discuss the matter.

Five residents in the subdivisions of Tanglewood Village near Slidell and Woodridge be-

tween Mandeville and Madisonville have complained that their houses, built and sold by U.S. Homes, are crumbling because of poor construction and design.

The homeowners have filed suits in state District Court, saying they were unsuccessful in their attempts to settle their claims with U.S. Homes.



staff photo by Guy Hood

A new form of on-campus housing

These two Texas A&M students illustrate an alternative method to on-campus housing. Raymond Bartley, a senior parks and recreation major from

Smithfield, and Terri Masson, a geophysics major from Keyport, New Jersey, camp out by Spence Hall. The two were taking a break from their studies.

WORTH OF BEEF



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Dollar brings vets together

Nearly 40 years ago, Victor Robinson was the swashbuckling pilot of a World War II bomber. Two wars later after a car accident that cost him the use of his legs, he's hoping a dollar bill signed by himself and the crew he hasn't seen since 1945 will bring them together to relish victories, defeats and "being caught in flak like a duck in a shooting gallery."

Dan Salter, a Birmingham coin collector, is trying to reunite Robinson with the other surviving members of a B-24 crew that first flew together a month after D-Day aboard the "Rat Poison."

Last fall, Salter stumbled across a dollar bill bearing the names of the bomber crew and a brief chronicle of their missions. He determined he would find the six airmen who signed the bill on June 3, 1944.

"I just felt this was meant for me," Salter said. "If I didn't accomplish anything else, I wanted to accomplish this."

Salter's dream, and a possibility that the former WWII flying mates hadn't really considered, is on the verge of becoming reality.

The coin collector has located the four surviving airmen and is in the process of working out the details of a reunion in Birmingham. He hopes to convince an airline to provide transportation for the long-lost friends and a local motel to house them.

Salter recently met with officials of the television show "Real People" about doing a segment on the reunion.

One former "Rat Poison" crewmate, tail-gunner Robert Mullen, vividly recalls the days when getting caught in a bar without a bill bearing several

signatures meant financing the next round of drinks.

But Mullen says the usual short snorter, as the bill was called, contained any assortment of names, and that's what makes Salter's dollar special.

Besides Mullen, this dollar was signed by Robinson; nose gunner Carl Eurick, who died two years ago; Keith Moody who manned the top gun turret; copilot Johnnie Rowan, and radio operator Robert Bandfield, who died on a mission with another crew.

Robinson now lives in Fort Worth; Rowan lives in Dedham, Mass.; Mullen in Springfield, Mass., and Moody in Moody, Maine.

The bill's back bears a list of the countries the bomber crew flew over — Scotland, Ireland, France, England, Belgium and Holland. The currency also holds the inscription, "Air Medal 8-13-44."

Mullen says after seeing a picture of the bill in a newspaper he went to one of his scrapbooks and found an identical record on an English 10 shilling note.

"We must have signed the bill going over on the boat. I must have gotten the shilling and had them sign it the same way. It had to happen that way," Mullen said.

The first newspaper story about the bill was read by a man in Auburn, Ala., who contacted Robinson in Fort Worth. Robinson telephoned Salter, who was flown, without charge, to meet the retired pilot by Republic Airlines.

Through wire service reports and subsequent media coverage, word spread to the other members of the crew.

The chance for them to reunite and discuss their adventures is drawing closer. Salter hopes to have them together May 20.

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