

# Flash may be caused by large size meteor

**United Press International**  
**LITTLE ROCK, Ark.** — A flash that lit up a clear Arkansas sky late Friday night may have been caused by a large meteor entering the atmosphere, officials said.

Paul Engle, a physics and astronomy professor at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, speculated the bright light, seen in the four corners of the state, may have been a "fireball," or a large meteor.

The switchboard at the state Office of Emergency Services in Conway began lighting up shortly after 10:30 p.m. when the light was seen. Residents and law enforcement officers from around the state called to report the phenomenon.

OES officials said the first report came from the Conway Fire

Department in central Arkansas. Reports then came in from Springdale in the northwest, Hope in the southwest, Pine Bluff in the southeast and Jonesboro in the northeast part of the state.

Similar reports were received in northeast Oklahoma and Memphis, Tenn., officials said.

A National Weather Service meteorologist in North Little Rock said a meteor shower had been forecast between 7 p.m. and midnight Friday, but Engle said a meteor shower probably could not have produced the bright light and "rumbling" sound reported to emergency officials.

"Usually the shower meteors don't ever have such a bright object as that," he said. "Shower meteors usually aren't very

bright. It might be what we call a sporadic or bolide meteor or fireball. It would not be directly connected with any shower."

Engle said it would be difficult to determine if the light was caused by a meteor unless pieces of it were found. He said reports of the rumbling sound accompanying the light could indicate the sonic boom of a meteor traveling through the atmosphere.

"The large meteors like the fireballs quite often will make it through the earth's atmosphere and hit," he said.

Meteors generally can be seen when they burn entering the atmosphere at an altitude of "about 100 miles or so," Engle said, and the meteors usually quit burning and cannot be seen at about 20 to 40 miles up.

# Relatives must wait to sue nursing home for neglect

**United Press International**  
**GALVESTON** — Relatives of several elderly patients who died at the Autumn Hills nursing home in Texas City nearly five years ago were told they must wait longer for a court ruling to determine if they may sue the home for damages.

State District Judge I. Allen Lerner said Friday he would not rule immediately on the constitutionality of a law that protects nursing homes from lawsuits

more than two years after alleged mistreatment occurred.

Lerner told attorneys he will wait until the Texas Supreme Court rules in another case on the same issue before he decides whether to allow the relatives to seek damages for alleged mistreatment and neglect of the patients.

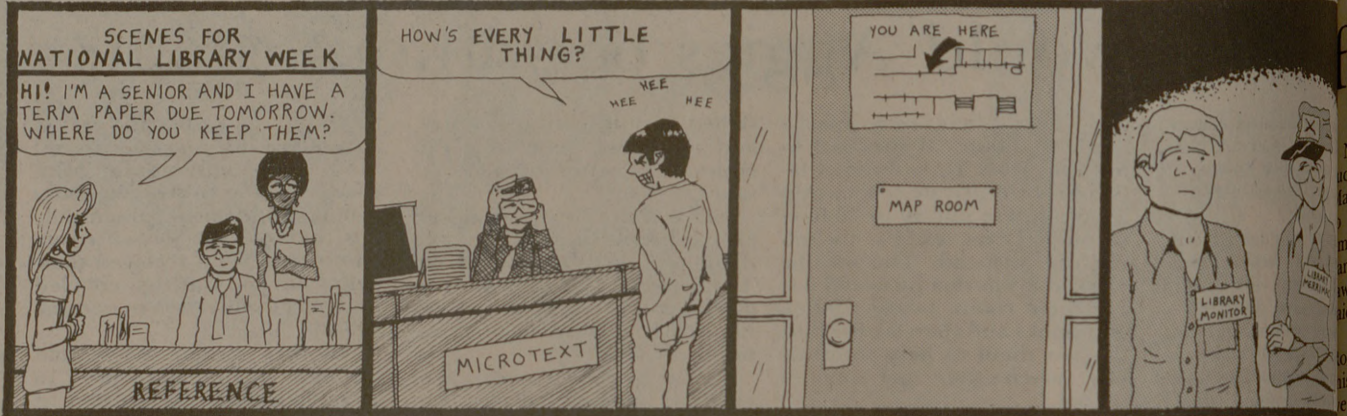
Galveston attorney Bob Moore is seeking class action status for a lawsuit filed on behalf of one elderly woman who died

at the Texas city facility March 1, 1978.

Moore told Lerner relatives of many other elderly people who died under the care of Autumn Hills could not have known within two years of the deaths that they might have grounds for seeking damages from the Autumn Hills Convalescent Centers Inc., which owned the Texas City home.

Moore argued the two-year statute of limitations should not apply in this case.

## Warped



by Scott McCullough

## Fornication law enforced

# Probationers given choice

**United Press International**  
**NEW ULM, Minn.** — A Minnesota judge is sentencing minor offenders to a life sentence — marriage.

For the past 20 years, Judge Noah Rosenbloom has made marriage a condition for probation. When the judge learns an individual seeking probation is living with a girlfriend or boyfriend, he gives the probationer three choices — get married, move out or go to jail.

Rosenbloom, 58, sees three or four such cases each year. So far, no one has chosen jail, he said.

The judge claims his policy makes sense, as the first condition of probation is obeying all laws. Fornication, sex between a man and an unmarried woman, is a misdemeanor in Minnesota, although the law generally is not enforced.

Rosenbloom said his policy is

more than just a strict reading of the state law.

"It is part of public policy in this country that legitimate births are far preferable to illegitimate births, and that abortion is a terribly heartrending problem in this society," the judge said.

Rosenbloom has never had to use "the ultimate sanction," sending a reluctant bridegroom to prison.

"Usually without making the people get married," he said. "It's a kind of a catalyst."

Hennepin County Public Defender Bill Kennedy takes a view of Rosenbloom's policy. "Sex is here to stay, whether or not the judge is aware of it," he said.

To Kennedy, Rosenbloom "a different kind of Capote who wears a black robe and a black bow and arrow, shotgun."

# People flock to image on door

**United Press International**  
**JASPER, Ala.** — Thousands of people are flocking to a hospital to see a wooden door on which an image — reportedly resembling Jesus Christ — appeared as a man stood before

it praying for his son's life.

Hospital authorities confirm the door appears to have changed in appearance but refuse comment further. Some who view it say they see nothing but the grain of the wood.

Nonetheless, more than a thousand people came to Walker County Medical Center Thursday to see the image and, although the number dropped Friday night, a security guard said it still averaged as many as 50 an hour.

The image on the door to the third-floor surgical recovery room apparently was first seen by Joel Naramore a week ago Friday as he prayed for his son Charles, 16, who was critically injured in a motorcycle accident.

Shirley McGough, a hospital employee, said she witnessed the incident.

"When he looked up he saw the face, and he said, 'My son is going to be all right now,'" said McGough.

Doctors soon came out and told him his son was in stable condition. His son since has been transferred to the University of Alabama -Birmingham Hospital, where his condition is still critical.

Jim Armour, administrator of

the hospital, said something deed seems to have happened on the door.

"I believe it is different," he said. "I have a housekeeper who says that door, and she says it looks like that before."

Some said the face bore a resemblance to artists' conceptions of Christ. Others said it is to the image on the Shroud of Turin.

"We're bracing for a weekend, putting in a security guard," Armour said. "Anticipation of more people."

He said the flow of people had not disrupted the routine, and he did not plan to turn anyone away.

"The crowds have been orderly," said hospital administrator Viva Kennedy. "They've been in line patiently. Some laughed, kind of nervous. Others have wept. The Catholics making the sign of the cross."

"One man put both hands on the door and wept," he

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