

Oswald's window closed to public for repair

United Press International DALLAS — Visitors will no longer be able to peer out the window from which Lee Harvey Oswald allegedly fired the shots that killed President John F. Kennedy.

Dallas County commissioners, who meet on the first floor of the Texas School Book Depository, agreed Monday to allow the county historical commission to erect a transparent plastic shield in front of the window.

Historical commission members sought the shield to protect the window and adjacent floor and walls from further wear.

Currently the sixth floor is closed to the public, but reporters and researchers are admitted, said Shirley Caldwell, director of the historical commission.

The sixth floor was not closed to the public until 1979, and the wood floor in front of the window is worn.

However, the number of visitors to the floor is expected to increase with the approach of the 20th anniversary of the assassination and the 1984 Republican National Convention.

The historical commission plans to erect a plastic shield about 14 feet from the window where Oswald allegedly fired the shots that killed the president on Nov. 22, 1963.

The shield will be the first step in plans for a museum exhibit on the site.

Lawmaker says higher taxes needed for teacher salaries

United Press International AUSTIN — Texans should consider increasing taxes on their natural resources by as much as 10 percent to provide money for the salaries of public school teachers, a state lawmaker said.

Sen. Carl Parker, Democrat, told 700 members of the Texas State Teachers Association Monday that Louisiana is an example of how petroleum could be taxed to im-

prove the quality of public education in Texas.

"The state (Texas) receives \$1.3 billion from crude oil pumped from the ground," he said. "That's a 4.6 percent tax on each barrel, yet our neighbors to the east, Louisiana, pump a third less oil than we do but take in nearly \$1 billion dollars. So if we raise taxes to 12.4 percent on crude oil, Texas could receive over \$3 billion."

Parker, who is chairman of the Senate's Education Committee and on the governor's newly appointed select panel on education, also suggested taxing gasoline by 10 percent.

"The overtaxed Texan is a myth, and Texans are taxed less than (people in) 45 other states. There is no cheap, easy solution to improving public education," Parker said.

Immigration service claims

Illegal aliens built fortune

United Press International PROSPER — Ernest "Sonny" Mahard and his wife Helen run one of the biggest egg farms in Texas and, if federal immigration officials are correct, they built a modest business into a booming one on the backs of illegal laborers.

The Mahards and their company, the Mahard Egg Co., were indicted in June by a federal grand jury in Del Rio on charges of conspiring to transport illegal aliens from Mexico to their farm in Prosper, 40 miles north of Dallas.

The company pleaded guilty Monday to all 10 counts in the indictment: eight felony counts and two conspiracy counts. In exchange, prosecutors agreed to drop charges against the Mahards as individuals. The firm can be fined up to \$36,000.

William Chambers of the Immigration and Naturalization Service said the Mahards, who took over the operation

from Mahard's father, Ernest Mahard Sr., paid "coyotes" from \$200 to \$350 per worker to transport the aliens.

"Since January of this year, we have arrested 179 illegal aliens on their premises," Chambers said.

Chambers said he did not know how many illegal workers were funneled through what he called the Mahard pipeline.

"I feel just sure that they have been using illegals and exploiting illegals for their career," Chambers said. "I have no doubt in my own mind that his success has been based on cheap labor."

The Mahards refused comment. So did their attorney, Emmett Colvin, a Houston criminal lawyer.

But some townspeople came to their defense.

"They're honest as the day is long," said City Marshall V.C. Spradley. "They're the nicest people you'd ever see in your life."

"I sure don't hold it against

him," Spradley said. "I know he gave them housing and bought their groceries and stuff and paid them every week."

"You certainly can't get a white person to do what Mahard had them do out there, some of them inside, some of them outside, some in manure," Spradley said.

The prosecutor handling the case, Asst. U.S. Attorney Dan Maeso of San Antonio, said he could not estimate of the number of illegals brought into Texas on Mahard money.

The Mahards' problems with immigration officials date back 16 years, when officials raided their property and found illegal aliens working there.

"Sixteen years ago they had illegal aliens arrested from their places of employment," said another INS agent, John Kaplinger. He said they did not have many then.

Officials at the Dallas office of the Department of Labor

refused to comment, saying it was against policy to discuss a case under investigation.

Maeso said his office requested investigations by the Labor Department and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration because of the workers' living conditions.

The Mahard egg farm was founded by Ernest Mahard Sr., the late father of Ernest "Sonny" Mahard. Residents of Prosper say Sonny built his father's modest business into a multimillion dollar company and made it one of the state's biggest egg producers.

The value of the Mahard operation in 1982 was estimated at \$6.2 million, the Municipal Advisory Council of Texas reported. Tax records for Collin and Denton counties, where the bulk of the Mahard land holdings lie, indicated Sonny Mahard has accumulated about \$40 acres.

Mahard's mother Betty controlled 336 acres from the original Mahard holdings started by her husband.

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PC. BUCKET

Police say woman blew herself up

United Press International HOUSTON — A woman, 32, living alone in an apartment Tuesday blew herself up in the process of making a pipe bomb, police said.

Neighbors said they believed Anna Leah Cook to be a quiet, peaceable resident who lived only with cats before a blast from her second-story balcony at 3:40 a.m. rocked adjoining units.

"She was in the process of making a pipe bomb, and it exploded," Police Homicide Detective J.M. Roescher said.

Cook may have been holding the pipe bomb because it tore "a large hole in her upper chest," Roescher said. She was fully

clothed and wearing a plastic glove on her right hand.

Police were unsure of a motive.

"Bomb making books were found in her apartment. However, no terrorist or radical materials were found," Roescher said.

Cook was working on the explosive device in a storage closet outside the apartment on the balcony. The blast ripped out the patio door, but damage was confined to the one apartment.

Detectives talked to the woman's ex-husband and to a boyfriend. The ex-husband lived a few blocks from Cook's apartment, they said.

Nursing home hearing set despite compliance

United Press International AUSTIN — Health officials said Tuesday a Mesquite nursing home, where 12 patients died because of alleged neglect, is complying with state orders to increase its nursing staff but still faces a hearing that could result in the loss of Medicaid payments.

Hal Nelson, general counsel for the Health Department, said Trailwood Manor was abiding

by an agreement reached with Attorney General Jim Mattox to hire three full-time registered nurses and to beef up other aspects of care at the home.

But Nelson said a hearing on a proposal to decertify the home for Medicaid benefits by the end of this month would go ahead on schedule Friday.

"Our reports say they have indeed beefed up the staff even beyond what we recommended, so we are not going to be seeking any court relief at this time," Nelson said. "Right now, it looks positive, but this does not change the decertification hearing. That stands on its own."

Mattox visited the facility earlier this year to investigate reports that 12 people had died under questionable circumstances. His report showed the deaths occurred because "necessary intervention was not taken (in) instances of acute illness and sudden changes in patient conditions."

His agreement with the home required it to add three nurses, keep at least one nurse on duty full time, add more supplies and hire personnel the nurses might deem necessary.

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