

Convicted man slew for family

United Press International
LIPSCOMB — A man who claimed he killed an acquaintance under pressure from a drug syndicate which threatened his parents was convicted of murder Wednesday.

Michael Anderson, 26, was found guilty in the Feb. 19 shooting death of Robert Hall, 28, of Sayre, Okla. Anderson's defense was based on his claim that he committed the crime under duress caused by the threats to his family.

Anderson testified Tuesday that a member of a narcotics syndicate he identified as "The Family" ordered him to kill Hall or see his parents, Marvin and Sue Anderson, killed.

He claimed the drug syndicate wanted Hall and his wife, Donna, killed because they were to testify against another member of the drug ring.

He said he carried out the slaying after a series of bizarre, threatening incidents. He said his parents were followed, dogs

were killed at his residence, and snakes were placed on his porch.

Anderson showed no reaction to the verdict, which came after six hours of deliberation. However, a sister of the slain man, Brenda Brown of Amarillo, audibly chuckled when the verdict was read.

The jury began deliberations on Anderson's punishment following a plea by the prosecutor for the maximum sentence of life in prison. Defense attorney Harold Comer countered that Anderson deserved probation because he was trying to protect his family.

"This is not a killing without reason or a killing without some justification," Comer said. "He did have his family in mind when he killed Robert Hall."

Hall was shot in the head four times Feb. 19 as he, Anderson, and four others sat in a car.

Anderson surrendered to Lake Charles, La., police on March 3, about 24 hours after Hall's body was recovered in Anderson's back yard.



Cool but still sunny

staff photo by John Makely

Despite weather forecasts depicting a cold, rainy day, the sun shone and

the high temperature was 69 degrees. Colder weather is expected today.

Extra food for school lunches?

Lawman urges USDA reform

United Press International
EL PASO — State Rep. Mary Polk, D-El Paso, is recommending that excess U.S. Department of Agriculture food sitting idle in warehouses be redirected to school lunch programs and needy families.

The food is part of a giveaway program that originated as a means to cut USDA costs in storing millions of tons of commodities it buys to help support farm prices. Storage costs were run-

ning up to \$1 million a day.

Polk, chairman of the Texas House Committee on Human Services, has asked U.S. Senators John Tower and Lloyd Bentsen, both of Texas, to take immediate action to have commodities such as canned beef, tuna, vegetables and other foods diverted from feeding programs, or "soup kitchens," to other purposes.

In a recent letter to both senators, she said the food is not

being used effectively because of tight regulations that govern which soup kitchens are eligible to receive the commodities.

Under federal rules no program can qualify if it discriminates against any segment of society. That means that programs specifically intended to assist the disabled, the elderly, and school children or any other special group cannot receive the food.

Officials of the Texas Department of Human Resources and local food bank operators, who

have been distributing the commodities to needy people across the state, agree that due to regulations, Texas doesn't have enough eligible programs to use all the food allocated to the state.

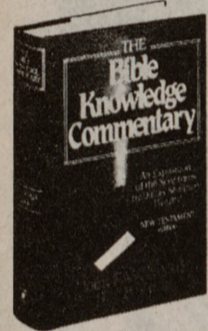
The program, which requires the food to be used by Dec. 31, has been heavily criticized throughout Texas during recent weeks.

Texas food bank operators have said that programs to distribute commodities to needy families have been poorly admi-

nistered by the USDA and the Texas Department of Human Resources.

The food bank operators have complained that government red tape has prevented them from distributing tons of commodities which have been sitting idle in their warehouses for months.

Polk's letter did not address problems with the giveaways to needy families but said the soup kitchen program needs immediate attention.



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Court rejects Dimples' bid

United Press International
AUSTIN — Dimples Jo Walker says her 20-year prison sentence should be overturned for two reasons: one, a knife is not a deadly weapon and, two, she never intended to kill Charles McGhee when she stabbed him through the heart at a Lubbock cafe in 1978.

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, however, took a dim view of her argument Wednesday and unanimously upheld her conviction on charges of voluntary manslaughter.

"The contention is somewhat disingenuous," the court said of Walker's first ground of appeal — that a knife is not a deadly weapon, "given that in the manner of the knife's use — to stab the victim through the heart — it proved quite capable of inflicting a deadly wound."

The court had similar words for her other ground of appeal; that she never intended to kill

McGhee. "The same stabbing in the heart that shows the weapon to have been deadly amply demonstrates appellant's intent," the court said. "We note further that the appellant was heard to say 'I hope he dies' as she left the scene."

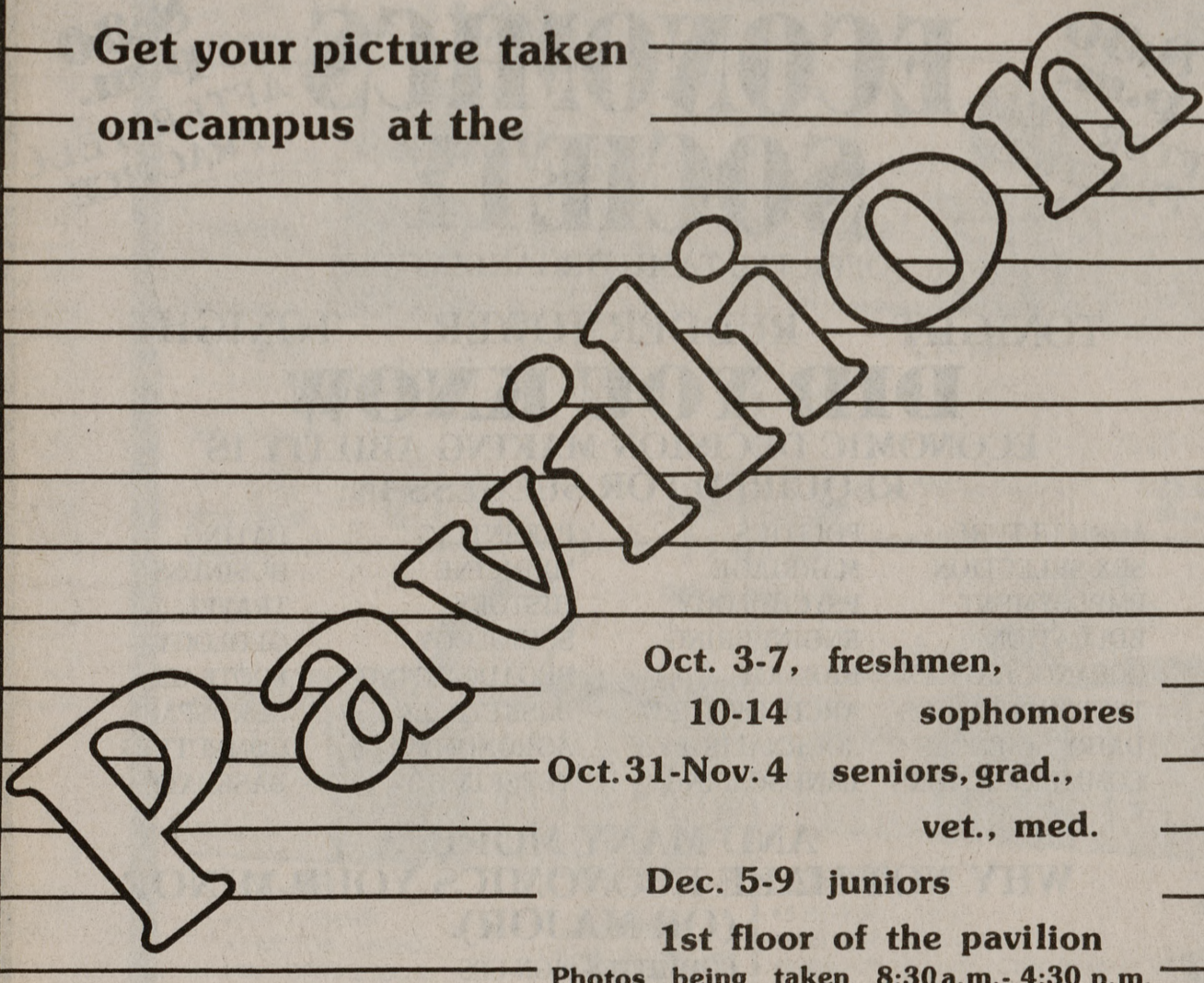
In other action Wednesday, the court reversed the capital murder conviction and life prison sentence of a Louisiana man convicted of raping and stabbing a North Texas woman. The court ordered a new trial on the lesser charge of murder.

The court said there was insufficient evidence to show that David Wayne Gilliam of Starks, La., had raped Nelva Bates Salmon before stabbing her to death in Tyler County in 1978.

A person can be convicted of capital murder in Texas only if the murder occurs in conjunction with another felony.

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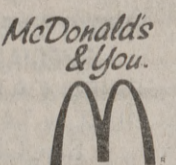
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