

Emergency postpones Lucas' pre-trial hearing

United Press International
GEORGETOWN — A pre-trial hearing scheduled for today for confessed mass murderer Henry Lee Lucas was postponed because the judge hearing his case was called away on an emergency.

Lucas, 47, is awaiting trial on charges that he killed an unidentified female hitchhiker in 1979. His pre-trial hearing was rescheduled for Jan. 13 because District Judge John Carter could not attend Tuesday's hearing.

Lucas has told police he killed as many as 150 people — mostly women — during his wanderings across the country. In addition to the Williamson County murder, Lucas faces seven other murder charges — six in Texas and one in Louisiana.

Drug trafficking studied

United Press International
CORPUS CHRISTI — The chairman of a congressional committee drawing up a new narcotics control and abuse program said Monday that traffickers are operating "with impunity" in South Texas and that no one seems to be doing too much about it.

Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., said after hearing 6 1/2 hours of almost non-stop testimony from federal and local law enforcement officials and agency personnel involved in prevention and treatment of drug abuse. "It's a shocking example of what's happening throughout the country," he said.

Rangel, chairman of the committee, and other members of the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control hotly questioned panels of federal and local law enforcement officials. Their questions dealt with why concerted steps are not being taken to combat the more important role that the "Texas Connection" has begun playing in international narcotics smuggling now that a crackdown has been launched in Florida.

Nueces County Sheriff James Hickey testified that his agency has made only 25 narcotics arrests this year, which he termed "less than 1 percent, very slight." He said narcotics are being sold on the streets of Corpus Christi with little hindrance from law enforcement.

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Hickey, Corpus Christi Police Chief Bill Banner and Brownsville Police Chief Andy Vega, under heated questioning from committee members, all said they need more personnel, better training and more money if they are to put a dent in the increasing supplies of heroin, cocaine and marijuana being smuggled into and through their areas from Mexico.

Rangel and Reps. Solomon Ortiz, D-Texas; Kent Hance, D-Texas; Sam Hall, D-Texas, and Benjamin Gilman, R-N.Y., were particularly harsh in their questioning of five federal agency heads responsible for intercepting narcotics along the Texas-Mexico border and along the 500-mile long Texas Gulf Coast.

Donald F. Kelly, regional commissioner of the U.S. Customs Service headquartered in Houston; U.S. Attorney Daniel K. Hedges of Houston; Rear Admiral William H. Stewart, commander of the Eighth Coast Guard District and coordinator of the new National Narcotics Border Interdiction System; J. William Carter, deputy regional chief of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, and Marion Hambrick, agent-in-charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration in Houston, all initially said their agencies were doing adequate jobs.

But after Rangel and the other members got through asking them heated questions, they all agreed that they needed more men and money to have any significant effect on the problem.

Under questioning by Rangel, Kelly said his agents have confiscated only 7 pounds of heroin over the past four years in Corpus Christi, where earlier testimony indicated 1,250 to 1,500 heroin addicts reside and where seven drug overdose deaths occurred from January to October.

"Heck, we seize more than 7 pounds on the corner where I live, annually," Rangel shot back.

Gilman said he was disturbed about "overlapping intelligence gathering" by the various federal agencies. "Why do we need separate intelligence gathering if the NNBIS is doing such a good job? Why isn't this coordinated in one single group?"

Hall said he was concerned, also, that despite testimony that U.S. officials were receiving cooperation from Mexican officials, the number of narcotics arrests in Mexico were decreasing at the same time drug smuggling from Mexico was increasing.

Rangel and Gilman said nationally it is estimated that 30 to 50 percent of all crime is narcotics-related but that the three local law enforcement heads testifying were committing only 3 to 6 percent of their personnel to drug cases.

Rangel said that narcotics agents estimate 34 percent of all the heroin in the United States comes from Mexico, but nothing is being done to halt increasing amounts of the drug being brought across the border by individuals and in vehicles.

Southwestern Bell may appeal PUC's recommended rate plan

United Press International
AUSTIN — Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. will likely join the Public Utility Commission's consumer counsel in appealing a PUC examiner's recommendation that it receive a \$653.3 million interim rate hike, a spokesman said Monday.

Since the proposed rate plan would fall heaviest on long-distance carriers, there were indications that appeals would also be filed by specialty companies such as MCI, Sprint and U.S. Telephone.

Southwestern Bell spokesman Dale Johnson of Dallas said Monday that his company's lawyers and executives are reviewing their options in terms of the recommendation made public last Friday by PUC Administrative Law Judge Jacqueline Holmes.

"We're going to have to make one (decision) pretty quick," Johnson said. "The fact that it (Holmes' recommendation) is \$320 million less than what we indicated strongly that we needed indicates the strong possibility of an appeal," he said.

The company is seeking a permanent \$1.32 billion rate hike to buffer the effects of the Jan. 1 divestiture of its parent company, American Telephone and Telegraph Co.

The PUC is not expected to rule on that request, which has been pending since June, until next spring.

But Holmes' recommendation on temporary rates would go into effect Jan. 1.

Johnson said Southwestern Bell will probably make a decision on whether to appeal to the three-member utility regulatory commission by the middle of this week.

The increase recommended by Holmes is about \$250 million less than the amount the company claims it will lose in long distance revenues when it is separate from AT&T.

Aside from some intrastate service, most long-distance service will be taken over by AT&T and other long distance specialty companies.

PUC public counsel Jim Borek promised earlier that he would appeal Holmes' plan because essential rate-payers would eventually pay for the entire rate hike.

Any appeal filed by Bell or other parties to the rate case apparently would not be taken up by the commission until Dec. 22.

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So, if you decide to buy a new telephone, take the time to stop by your neighborhood GTE Phone Mart and see if your particular line has any special limitations. It could possibly save you a lot of frustration and money.

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Bodies can't be identified

United Press International
PANHANDLE — One of two women killed by gunshot wounds to the head had a motorcycle T-shirt and four tattoos, Carson County Sheriff Connie Reed said in asking the public for help identifying the bodies.

The two bodies were discovered Friday morning along a fence beside a rural blacktop road about 7 miles north of Groom. Reed said he planned to release drawings of the victims to the media early Tuesday.

One victim was found with her hands and feet tied and her clothing partially removed, Reed said. He described her as white, 5-foot-6, 140 pounds with dark medium-length hair and brown eyes.

She had a scar on her left shoulder and another on her left leg. She also had the following tattoos: the letter R in blue on her upper back, the number 69 in blue located inside her left leg just above the ankle, a heart outlined in blue on her outer left arm and the word Harley outlined in blue on her left index finger along with a faded letter that Reed said was probably an h or m.

The victim wore a black T-shirt saying Ivey's Cycles Acc. Ponca City, Okla., with a Harvey-Davidson emblem. She also had pinstrip jeans and blue and white tennis shoes, Reed said.

The second victim was white, 5 feet 6 inches, between 140-150 pounds with brown hair and eyes. She had a small mole on the left side of her lip and wore a purple blouse, blue jeans and white socks. She was barefoot, Reed said.

Willie Nelson's mother dies of cancer at 70

United Press International
YAKIMA, Wash. — Myrle M. Harvey, the mother of country singer Willie Nelson, died of cancer Sunday at the age of 70 at Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital, where she had been a patient for some time.

The mother of the well-known country singer was born and raised in Pindall, Ark. She moved to Yakima in 1974 after living many years in Eugene, Ore.

Harvey is survived by her son, Nelson, of Austin; a daughter, Syble Young, also of Austin; a sister and brother, eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Her husband died in 1977.

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