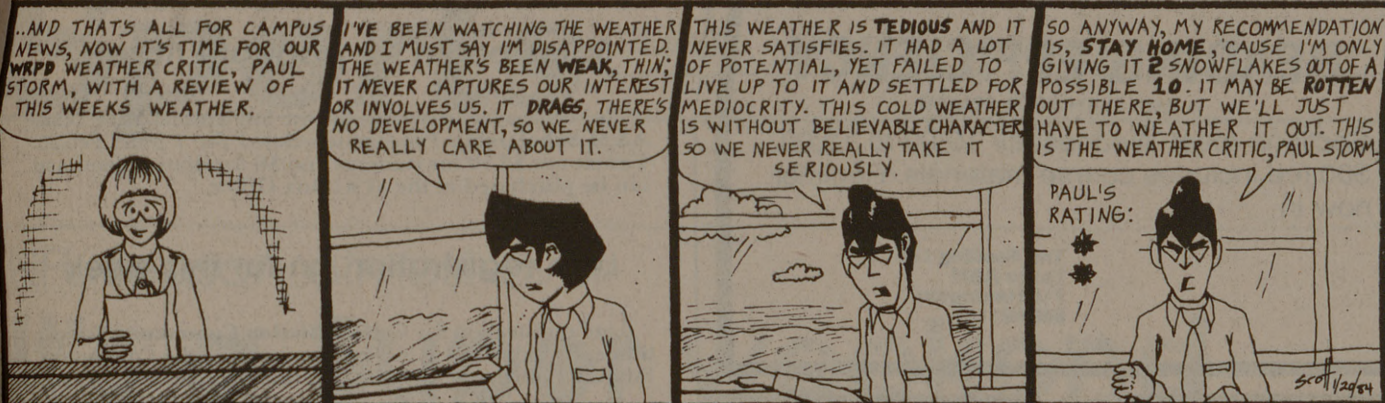


Warped

by Scott McCullar



Jailhouse wedding postponed

**United Press International**  
HOUSTON — Convicted killer Richard Wilkerson planned to be married Thursday, but was transferred to Texas death row before he could exchange wedding vows.  
Wilkerson was transferred to the Ellis Unit in Huntsville before his fiancée, Rene Maldeaux, 18, arrived for the wedding.

Wilkerson, 19, was sentenced to death for the July 1 robbery-killing of the manager of the Malibu Grand Prix speedway and video arcade. A jury convicted Wilkerson of stabbing Anil Varughese 42 times and sentenced him to die by lethal injection.  
Maldeaux said she did not believe her boyfriend is guilty.

Cooking did not remove EDB

**United Press International**  
AUSTIN — Significant residues of the potent cancer-causing chemical EDB remained in three of seven grain-based food products, even after they were cooked, the Texas Agriculture Department said Thursday.  
Assistant Commissioner Ron White said the cooking tests were performed by the state at the request of the federal Environmental Protection Agency. "All of the product contained EDB residues before cooking and three contained detectable amounts of the chemical after being mixed and cooked exactly as directed," he said.  
The tests did not determine, said White, how EDB residues were changed during the cooking process or whether the carcinogen contaminated the air during cooking.

In an additional 22 tests of grain-based foods, he said none of four ready-to-eat breakfast cereals contained the chemical. Tests also proved negative on samples of corn chips, eggs, oranges, corn meal, flour and corn oil.  
But White said EDB did turn up in several dog food samples. "While these tests showed that all EDB residues do not cook off, as some have claimed, they also proved that an overwhelming majority of grain-based products can get to market at a competitive price and be completely free of this dangerous chemical," he said.  
Traces of EDB — ethylene dibromide — were found earlier this month in products taken

from Texas supermarket shelves. The chemical has been widely used as a pesticide in the grain and citrus industries, although its use has been restricted by the EPA.  
Despite calls from Texas Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower and environmentalists that contaminated products be removed from stores, state health Commissioner Robert Bernstein, has said he needs more information about EDB before issuing a removal order or setting standards on how much is safe for human consumption.  
After similar findings in December in Florida, health officials there ordered the tainted products removed from Florida grocery stores and set a state-

wide minimum exposure standard.  
The Texas Health Department said last week it could find no traces of EDB in 22 samples of public drinking water supplies from around the state.

Phone calls reporting deaths probably made by prankster

**United Press International**  
SAN ANTONIO — A woman claiming to work at a hospital turned the usually harmless pastime of prank telephone calling into a cruel joke this week, telling people their relatives had been seriously injured or killed, police said Thursday.  
Police Lt. Jack Summey said the rash of prank calls began last weekend, when a San Antonio woman was asked by an alleged

hospital employee for permission to cooperate on her mother. The woman was told that her mother had been seriously injured and her father killed in an automobile accident, he said.  
Summey said between 40 and 50 calls have been made, mostly by a woman claiming to work at Humana Hospital in San Antonio. But some of the more recent calls could be the work of copy cats, he said.  
"It's a difficult investigation,"

Summey said. "We're dealing with an unknown source that randomly picks people from the telephone book. There's no way to trace the calls unless you get an idea of where the source is."  
He said police investigated the possibility the caller is a disgruntled hospital employee or a mental patient.  
"But right now, we have no real concrete or valid suspects," he said. "I hope it runs its course."

Energy in '84: Slow recovery

**United Press International**  
HOUSTON — The energy-oriented engineering and construction industry should bottom out and begin a slow recovery in late 1984, an industry expert said Thursday.  
"It will bounce around the bottom for most of 1984. The energy industries are in the early stages of a recovery, but it'll be a long time before that turnaround truly impacts on the engineer-constructor," said Donald C. Vaughn, president of M.W. Kellogg Company.  
Vaughn, speaking at the 20th annual Houston Outlook '84 economic conference, said he sees a "continued delay in new plant construction as producers work off inventories and build up utilization rates which are still in the 70 percent range in U.S. refineries and the 50 to 60 percent range in Europe," Vaughn said.

"The number of new worldwide engineering and construction manhours available to our industry in 1984 will be fully a third less than they were three years ago," he said.  
Vaughn said the "boom days" are over for energy-related engineering and construction firms. He said the industry will likely get most of its business in makeover work, updating plans and making them more energy-efficient and versatile.  
In Houston, the site of Kellogg's world headquarters, the engineering and construction industry "is probably less than half the size it was two years ago" and will "remain lean" to stay competitive.  
"When the recovery begins later this year or early next, it will be a gradual one and it will reflect dramatic changes in our

industry. We no longer compete only with domestic and European contractors, but with Far Eastern and Middle Eastern companies (with) lower operating and labor costs," he said.  
Vaughn predicted engineering construction firms will become more involved in the earliest stages of projects, assisting in site selection and financing.

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