

Mother charged with killing baby

United Press International
JEFFERSON — Jury selection begins Monday in the trial of a woman described by attorneys as retarded and severely depressed who is charged with murder in her three-month-old daughter's death.

25-year-old Sherry Allman, who was found first found mentally unfit to stand trial for the Nov. 10, 1982 murder of Sherry Lynn, spent three months undergoing treatment at Rusk State Hospital.

At a second competency hearing last week, doctors from Rusk said that medication and treatment had improved the woman's mental condition to the point that she could understand the charges against her.

A defense psychiatrist testified that Allman suffers severe depression, was mildly retarded

"I couldn't get her to stop crying," the statement said. "I tried to spank her to get her to stop crying. I don't know how many times I hit her, but at 5:30 p.m. I hit her the last time pretty hard and knocked her off the couch and into the coffee table."

and has multiple personality defects. She also was capable of developing hysterical amnesia under pressure, Dr. William Wilkerson Jr. said at the hearing.

The scheduled murder trial in the death of Sherry Lynn begins after police first attributed the infant's death to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

But Harrison County District

Attorney Sam Baxter — a tough pursuer of child abuse cases — insisted on an autopsy of the tiny child. An examination revealed that the child had been battered throughout her short life and beaten to death.

Those results and reports that other Allman children had died in infancy prompted Baxter to contact officials in Missouri where the Allmans once

lived. Authorities there reopened investigations into the deaths of three other Allman babies.

A Kansas City, Mo., grand jury eventually indicted Allman for second-degree murder in the 1976 death of 4-month-old Marvin Neal Allman, who was smothered with a pillow.

No indictment was returned in the 1978 death of 1-month-old Joseph, who Allman claimed accidentally smothered when she rolled over him in her sleep. The grand jury did not investigate the death of another Allman baby who died following a premature birth.

In the death of Sherry Lynn, examiners concluded that the baby was killed by a series of blows to the head. The infant had suffered a fractured skull, broken neck, three broken ribs

and arm injuries.

Defense attorneys contend she was mentally incompetent at the time, and want Judge Ben Z. Grant to block the confessions from being used in court. Grant has yet to rule on the request, but was expected to do so before jury selection began.

Allman said in her statement to investigators that she began hitting Sherry Lynn when the infant would not stop crying.

"I couldn't get her to stop crying," the statement said. "I tried to spank her to get her to stop crying. It was making me nervous and she kept crying. I don't know how many times I hit her, but at 5:30 p.m. I hit her the last time pretty hard and knocked her off the couch and into the coffee table."

Reagan bars press from conference

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Reporters were barred from President Reagan's Oval Office broadcast on his political plans and from the White House reception that preceded Reagan's announcement. But cameramen were welcomed.

Photographers were summoned to take pictures of Reagan and Vice President George Bush before the reception for 200 guests, including GOP chairmen, Cabinet members and top White House aides.

Later, the president and vice president joined the Republican chairmen for more pictures.

Reporters' requests to question the president for a few minutes were repeatedly turned down.

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Around town

Retail studies to sponsor symposium

A **Retailing Career Fair Symposium**, sponsored by the Center for Retailing Studies, will be Jan. 31 from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 701 Rudder. A shuttle bus will run from the Blocker Building to Rudder Tower five minutes after the end of each class period for those attending the symposium.

Among others, topics to be discussed include "How to prepare for the retail job search," "Interviewing the Interviewer—what to look for in a company" and "Opportunities in international retailing." Speakers will represent companies such as Mervyn's, Safeway Stores, Color Tile Supermarkets, Palis Royal, H.E.B., Grocery Company, Foley's, Tandy Corporation/Radio Shack, 1776 Corporation and IKEA.

Admission is free and is open to all students.

Defensive driving course offered

A **defensive driving course**, conducted by the Brazos Valley Safety Agency will be Tuesday and Wednesday at the Ramada Inn. The class will meet from 6 to 10 p.m. on Tuesday and 8 to 12 p.m. on Wednesday. Students must attend all eight hours. Those interested can pre-register by telephone at 846-1904 or 846-9271 or at 5 p.m. at the Ramada Inn before the classes.

The purpose of the defensive driving class is basic driver improvement. By taking the class the driver can obtain a 10 percent reduction in insurance rates and traffic fine dismissal. Fees for the class are \$20 per student payable at pre-registration.

Order graduation announcements

May and DVM Graduates must order the graduation announcements before Feb. 8. Announcements can be ordered in the MSC Student Finance Center, room 217 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Deadline for law scholarship news

Applications for the **Joseph Milton Nance Tuition Scholarships in Law** are now available. The scholarships are awarded to Texas A&M students planning to attend Baylor University School of Law.

This year the number of scholarships awarded has been increased from two to three. Deadline for applications is Feb. 8. Students interested should contact Hilary Jessup, Academic Counseling Office; or Dr. J.M. Nance, Department of History.

Graduate student's photos available

Photo proofs and order forms for pictures taken at the **Graduate Students' Council's** party for new graduate students are now available in the graduate student's Council cubicle on the second floor of the Pavilion. Each 4x6 print will cost \$1.75. Orders must be turned in by Tuesday, Ken Fredeen in room 20 of the Teague Research Center.

To submit an item for this column, come by The Battalion office in 216 Reed McDonald.

Astronauts ready for Spacelab-4

United Press International
WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — Four Space Shuttle astronauts will begin training at Wake Forest University next week to learn procedures for a set of experiments on weightlessness on a 1985 shuttle flight.

The experiments designed at Bowman Gray Medical School will test the cardiovascular system of rats and could help explain why astronauts feel head congestion in space and have trouble keeping stable after returning to Earth.

"With weightlessness the body fluids are not held in the feet by gravity," explained Dr. Phillip Hutchins, a physiologist who designed the experiment. "The fluid migrates back up here and redistributes in the head and chest."

"We don't know exactly what happens, but obviously there is an effect on the cardiovascular system. The heart is pumping out more blood, probably causing changes in the small vessels in the extremities."

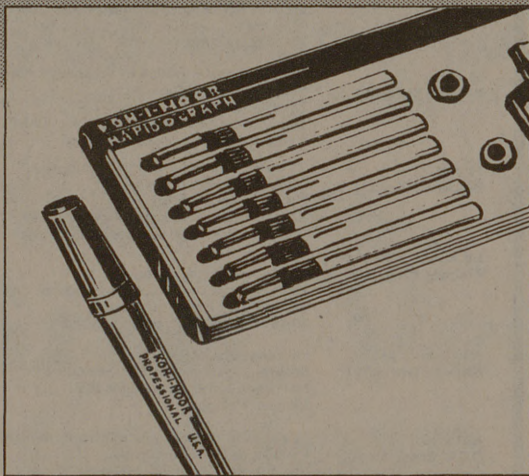
"You have reduced blood flow in the legs, so you have more content in these vessels of greater capacity," he said. "This makes you feel funny."

Hutchins said the extra built up during weightlessness is expelled by urination. Therefore the astronauts return to Earth with a load up on fluids to fill vessels that begin re-expanding under the pull of gravity.

The astronauts will be conducting the experiments on Spacelab-4, the first space station dedicated to research in life sciences in space.

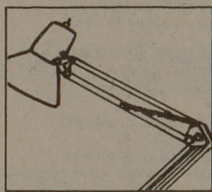
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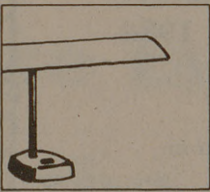


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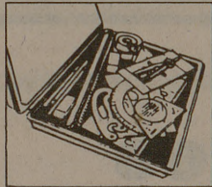
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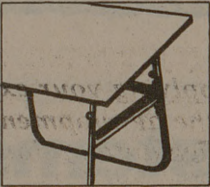
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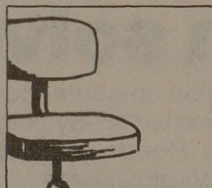
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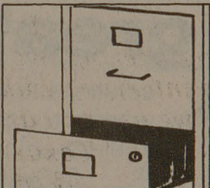
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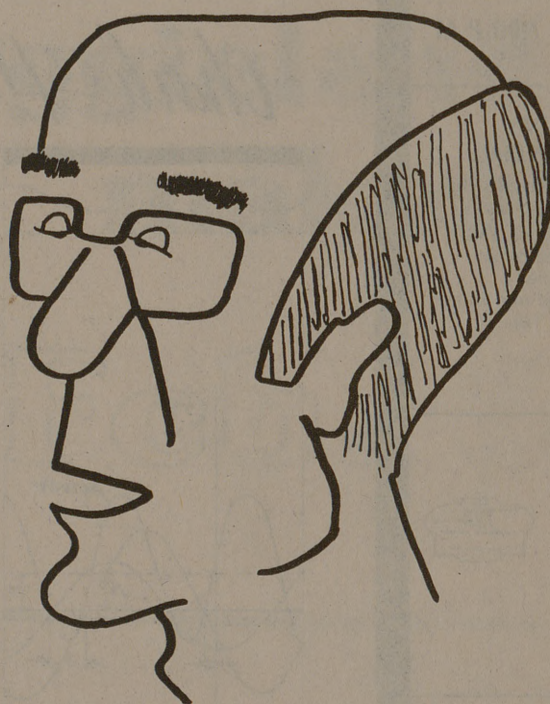
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