

Kid paralyzed, family accepts \$2.9 million

United Press International

EL PASO — The family of Christopher Lucas should receive \$2.9 million because an Army hospital and a pharmaceutical manufacturer made mistakes that caused the boy to be paralyzed from the waist down, a federal judge ruled.

U.S. District Court Judge Harry Lee Hudspeth ruled last week that medical personnel at William Beaumont Army Medical Center were negligent in treating Christopher, who was 14 months old at the time of the incident in 1979.

The Lucas family, now living in Salt Lake City, Utah, should be awarded \$2.5 million for past, present and future medical expenses and suffering, Hudspeth ruled after studying the case for more than a year.

Christopher's parents are Richard and Leigh Anne Lucas. His father runs a woodworking shop in Salt Lake City.

The Lucases should also be awarded \$400,000 in a separate claim against Wyeth Laboratories, the judge ruled. The lab manufactures Bicillin LA, the drug that Christopher was injected with in his buttock. The Lucases claim that the Bicillin package insert was inadequate because it failed to mention the risk of paralysis if it is injected in the buttocks.

The Lucases and the government presented evidence to Hudspeth during a non-jury civil trial in 1982.

Christopher's father, who was in the Army, and mother took him to the hospital for treatment of a sore throat.

During the trial, it was revealed that Christopher was injected with Bicillin LA, a product of penicillin used in intramuscular injections.

According to Hudspeth's judgement, medical personnel "inserted the needle to its full length" which, in a "child the age of Christopher Lucas, fell below the standard of care."

Because the needle was too long, it passed entirely through the child's muscle mass and pierced a blood vessel, which led to the swelling of the nerve tissue within the spinal column, causing the paralysis, Hudspeth ruled.

In addition, Hudspeth said that the injection was given in the lower quadrant of the buttock.

As a result of the injuries, Christopher is "a paraplegic for life . . . has permanent bowel and bladder problems, requires catheterization several times a day to clear his bladder, is in danger of kidney infection, and will have no sexual function," Hudspeth said.

White supports prison director

United Press International

Texas Department of Corrections.

AUSTIN — Gov. Mark White and the state prison board emerged from a closed-door meeting Thursday to reaffirm their support for acting prison director Dan McKaskle and reject the notion of imminent large-scale firings in the troubled corrections system.

White said he called the special meeting to get an update from the board and because of continuing news reports alleging mismanagement and possible fraud at the

had been approved at the meeting, but that the board decided to express continued support for McKaskle.

Asked if McKaskle's authority was in doubt, Gunn said: "I think probably it was in his mind." White also said he thought McKaskle would make an "excellent" permanent director of the TDC.

Gunn rejected the possibility of any widespread personnel changes at TDC, as some lawmakers have called for. "I don't foresee any great house cleaning," he said. "I'm

not even going to project a great change."

He also rejected rumors of imminent resignations by high-ranking TDC administrators as "a bunch of malarkey."

Gunn said he was not convinced that the list of fringe benefits uncovered by Keller was the one actually used in dispensing meat, eggs, milk and vegetables to prison employees.

"I assure you we are going to move quickly to check on this," he said. "But I don't believe it's a dual bookkeeping process."

Prior to the board meeting, White was questioned at length about the prison system's problems and his dealing with the TDC during his tenure as attorney general.

White said he had had "sharp disagreements" with TDC administrators and stopped just short of saying they had lied to him at times.

"I don't know if we ever called it that (lies). We had some misunderstandings that were severe and they won't happen again," he said.

A&M police beat

The following incidents were reported to the University Police Department on Wednesday.

THEFTS:
• A green, Murray ten-speed bicycle from the Legget Hall bike rack.

HARASSMENT:
• A student in Krueger Hall received an anonymous harassing telephone call from a male. She reported that she had walked out of her bathroom nude while her window blinds were partially open.

• A student in dormitory seven reported several obscene phone calls from an anonymous male. The student has received the calls since spring semester

began. University police are investigating these incidents.

ARSON:
• A motorcycle in the basement of Zachry Engineering Center was set on fire. University Police officers were able to extinguish the blaze. The preliminary investigation by the College Station Fire Marshall indicates the fire was deliberately set.

OTHER:
• A 1976, maroon Chevrolet Camaro was stolen from Parking Lot 51. University Police are investigating the report.

• The glass sunroof of a Chevrolet Camaro in Parking Lot 56 was broken.

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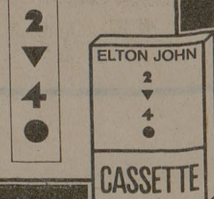
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