

Petition urges teaching of evolution in schools

United Press International
AUSTIN — Science professors, religious groups and teacher organizations signed a petition sent Monday to the State Board of Education, urging the repeal of a rule that restricts the teaching of evolution in Texas public schools.

People for the American Way, a national anti-censorship group, organized the petition drive in advance of Board of Education meetings Friday and Saturday in El Paso.

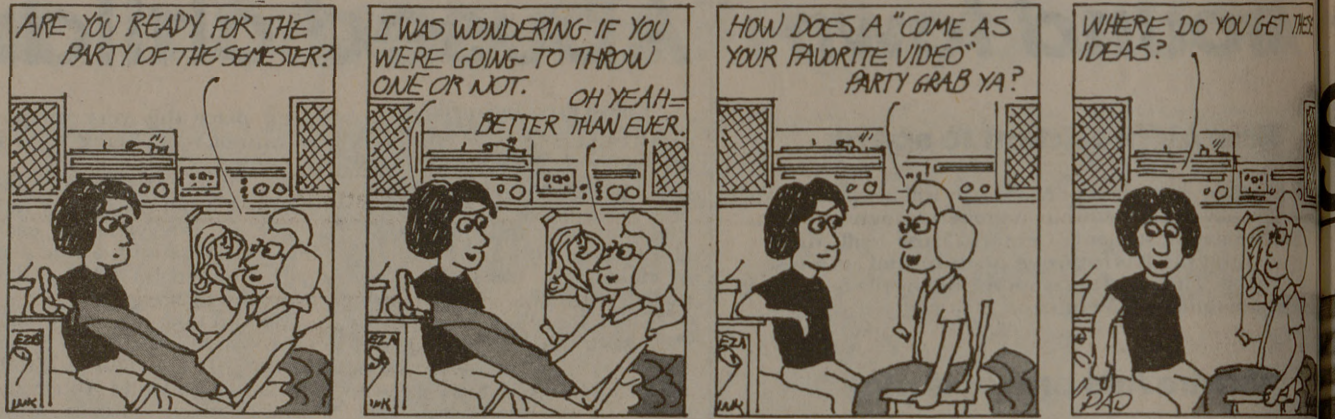
Board members will discuss in executive session, PAW's threat to sue the board if it fails to repeal the rule, which was deemed unconstitutional last month in an opinion by Attorney General Jim Mattox.

"The courts will be the next resort if the Board does not repeal the rules and comply with the attorney general's advice," PAW state coordinator Mike Hudson said Monday.

"Hopefully, the state board will demonstrate its concern for

the school children and its respect for the law and avoid unnecessary litigation that could cost the taxpayers of Texas hundreds of thousands of dollars."

The rule requires that evolution be taught as "only one of several explanations of the origin of humankind." Mattox said it was unconstitutional because it was motivated "by a concern for religious sensibilities rather than a dedication to scientific truth."



Up to 75 people held captive in Kerrville

Authorities search for slave farm hitchhiker

United Press International
KERRVILLE — Authorities

Monday searched for a hitchhiker, described as being "scared to death," who left a Hill Country ranch where six people were allegedly lured and forced into slavery, the sheriff said.

Kerr County Sheriff Cliff Greeson said the unidentified hitchhiker was run off the ranch about two weeks ago and related his story to a motorist who bought him a cup of coffee.

"He was scared to death," Greeson said. "We've got a few leads and we're going to try to find him." He said authorities may try to locate some 75 other

people who worked at the 3,500-acre cattle, goat and sheep ranch last year.

Officers armed with a search warrant Friday found five men and one woman, ranging in age from mid-20s to the late 40s, living in a barn at the secluded ranch about 75 miles northwest of San Antonio.

The six were being kept in protective custody Monday and declined to discuss their experience.

Wesley Ellebracht, 53; his son, Wesley Ellebracht Jr., 31; and the younger man's wife Joyce Ellebracht, 29, were charged with aggravated kid-

napping and were being held in lieu of \$100,000 bonds.

One victim said he was forced to burn the body of a dead worker, and authorities sent charred bones found on the ranch to Department of Safety labs for testing.

"Due to the condition of the evidence, we're going to have to use some more laboratory techniques to determine if the bones are human," said DPS spokesman Larry Todd. "We going to utilize the services of a forensic anthropologist and the analysis may require several more days. It's a very lengthy, scientific process."

Greeson said members of the well-known Kerr County family allegedly drove up and down Interstate 10 and picked up hitchhikers, "offering them a hot meal or something to get them in their pickup."

He said the victims were forced to dig ditches, cut firewood and made to live in an old barn with a dirt floor and dirty mattresses.

"If they tried to leave they would be chained up at nighttime," he said. "It was hard to run. I think there were some held at gunpoint. Some of them said they had cattle prods used on them."

The search warrant was issued after a worker escaped the ranch March 28 and called authorities in Lampasas.

Leona Ellebracht, 81, mother of the elder Ellebracht, denied the charges.

"It's a lie from top to bottom," said Ellebracht, who runs a store at Mountain Home (son) always wanted to do a good deed. Those people were happy out there. They were given money and food, and a good meal like meat, bread and milk. They ate the same things my kids ate."

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Discover better music through chemistry

United Press International
ST. LOUIS — A chemist says he has rediscovered a long-forgotten chemical treatment to make a common fiddle sound like a Stradivarius, although a group of music critics say only time will tell.

A St. Louis string quartet performed Sunday with its own instruments, then played those of Joseph Nagyvary, a chemist at Texas A&M University. Nagyvary claims to have reproduced the wood treatments of Antonio

Stradivari and other great violin makers.

The American Chemical Society, which is meeting this week in St. Louis, arranged the informal contest.

"I noticed a more uniform blend, a more characteristic blend," said Kent Perry, a professor of violin at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville and one of four judges for the event.

"I can only give praise to their overall quality," added David

M. young, owner of a Stradivari violin and a chemical engineering consultant.

Fewer than 500 of Stradivari's 1,500 instruments survive.

Stradivari lived from about 1644 to 1737 in Cremona, Italy, where he developed a style for the violin that set the standard. Craftsmen long have tried to copy his techniques.

Nagyvary, 49, is a native of Hungary who began playing the violin as a child and fled his homeland when the 1956 rebel-

lion was crushed by Soviet troops. He came to the United States in 1964.

He said Stradivari's "secret" was in the use of wood-preservation methods common to his era that were abandoned by woodworkers later in the 18th century. He said the old method opens up wood cells, affecting the instruments' vibrations in ways that newer preservation methods do not.

"Preservation techniques have improved, but acoustics

suffered," he said.

Nagyvary said he was claiming to make instruments good as Stradivari, if only cause violins improve with age. But he said his method was superior to other contemporary techniques, and said his instruments are concert-worthy immediately.

"No one ever would have instruments that are weeks old for a concert, are," he said.

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Former First Lady says wildflowers are good for the economy, soul

United Press International
WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — Lady Bird Johnson told gardening enthusiasts Monday the nation's wildflowers can provide an economic boost to the country and "feed the soul."

The former first lady and longtime conservationist addressed the 38th annual Williamsburg Garden Symposium and talked about her work at the National Wildflower Research Center in Austin.

Mrs. Johnson opened the center 15 months ago on her 70th birthday. At the time, she said she decided to "throw my hat over the windmill" and donate land and money to fund her dream. Actress Helen

Hayes co-chairs the center with Mrs. Johnson.

So far, Mrs. Johnson has invested more than \$125,000 of her own money and built a laboratory where scientists hope to find ways to propagate some of the nation's 25,000 species of wildflowers.

Mrs. Johnson talked of her girlhood in Texas, when she said "my favorite pastime was to walk through the woods" and view the changing panorama of wildflowers and grasses.

"I have a love affair with nature that I have never ceased to savor," she said.

She said wildflowers are a "free gift of joy" and "can feed the soul."

Although she admits it is easier to convince citizens of the aesthetic value of wildflowers, she said the Texas Highway Department has also reaped economic benefits by preserving the plantings.

She said the highway department mowed right-of-ways four times a year at a cost of about \$32 million dollars. But now officials are experimenting with a modified mowing operation to allow wildflowers to bloom and then go to seed.

The mulch from those plantings is then transferred to other areas for seeding.

"We can plan to keep some of this bounty in public places," she said. "We need the gallant

persistence of these plants."

Although Texas is a pioneer in wildflower research, she said other states such as Georgia, Oklahoma and New Mexico have expressed interest in the highway program.

Her daughter, Virginia lady Lynda Robb, said the Texas Highway Department also had discussed the lower project with her and research center officials.

Mrs. Johnson expressed hope that this year's Texas winter, followed by drought, would not end the center's first experimental crop.

"My heart lies in those 27 plots," Mrs. Johnson said.

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Missing girl found unharmed

United Press International
DALLAS — A 5-year-old girl reported missing from a family outing at the city zoo was discovered unharmed at a babysitter's home Monday and police charged the child's father with making a false report, officials said.

Delfino Guterres was held at

the city jail Monday and the child, Reyna Guterres, was reunited with her mother.

Guterres told authorities Reyna was last seen at a balloon stand at the Dallas Zoo at about 4 p.m. Sunday, but during a lie detector test Monday, he broke down and told officials he knew

where the child was, police said.

"We treated it as a bona fide legitimate criminal case for hours," said police spokesman Ed Spencer.

"She was found at about 8 p.m. Monday at a babysitter's home and turned over to family over custody," Spencer said.

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