

Over-abundant pollen sending sneezers to physicians

Associated Press

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NANTONIO - Doctors and gists in Central Texas are blam-nild, dry winter weather for the abundance of pollen that has ble sniffling and sneezing from Antonio to Austin.

Steven Findlay of the Allergy er in Austin said the problem get even worse in the next few

LIVINGSTON — A judge re-td Tuesday to grant a defense tion to move to another city the

of a former school principal ac-ed of killing a football coach over

ffections of a school secretary.

ate District Judge John Martin led the request for Hurley Fon-

t, whose attorneys claim cannot

lartin earlier said it might be dif-

tto find an impartial jury in the

East Texas town but rejected the

ion after nearly two hours of tes-

fair trial.

Associated Press

Trees fat with pollen have not a long, long time. This might be the been exposed to much freezing worst season." weather and precipitation this win-ter, and that is "the worst combination of events we could have," Find-

lay said. "The phone is ringing off the hook," Findlay said.

In San Antonio, Dr. William T. Kniker, an immunologist at the UT Health Science Center, said Mon-

The amount of the cedar pollen in San Antonio reached an all-time high Monday of 86,000 pollen grains per cubic meter - nearly eight times the previous record of 11,000 grains per cubic meter mea-sured here, officials say.

Health Science Center, said Mon-day, "This year is the worst season in said Grant Smith, who keeps track of

specialists.

San Antonio allergists reported waiting rooms bulging with patients for whom ordinary antihistamines could not provide relief.

"There are probably 50,000 to 60,000 people — this is a conserva-

getting fatigued, they're not able to work," he said. "It's an incredible situation. I don't remember it ever being like this." "Cedar fever" season usually be-

gins in mid-December and runs through March.

Austin allergist Lobdell Exline said pollen counts reaching 2,000 grains per liter of air have been re-corded, and Findlay said the num-

University News Service

Baylor University's aging studies in-

stitute have joined a national net-work of universities that plan to col-

year, trees "look like they're just bursting. A little breeze will cause a puff of pollen to come out. It looks like

they're smoking." Kniker said the pollen should be gone in about six weeks — at least until next year

ove triangle case to stay in East Texas town A&M, Baylor will join in research of aged

Scott Lawrence, a reporter with television station KFDM in Beau-mont, described what he said was "overwhelming interest" in Polk County, but added that much of the

news coverage is stating allegation as fact He also said some stories were slanted but didn't know if it was deliberate.

Most people he interviewed be-The network, known as CURA, lieved Fontenot was guilty, Law-

rence said.

University, Emory University, the University of Arizona, Arizona State University and the University of Texas A&M's medical school and

Southern California. The consortium is to receive mawork of universities that plan to col-laborate on research into aging, it was announced Tuesday in New York.

A&M Dean of Medicine Dr. Robfor Collaborative Universities for ert Stone represents the University

Peter Speer, an assistant district attorney handling the state's case, contended no prejudice existed.

"Every one of the jurors who said they could not set aside their opinion has been excluded. Mr. Fontenot can get a fair trial."

Fontenot, who is free on \$50,000 bond, has pleaded innocent to the murder charge, saying he was in Houston when the coach disap-

peared. Fontenot's attorney, Dick DeGuerin, sought the change of venue, cit-ing extensive pre-trial media cover-

age "There's a general public senti-ment unfavorable to the defendant," he argued. "Clearly, we have seen it's almost universal. When there's an

opinion, it's against Mr. Fontenot." But Peter Speer, an assistant dis-

tive estimate — who are being af-fected by what's happening today," Dr. Paul Ratner said. "People are getting sinusitis (in-

6,000 to 7,000.

pollen and molds in the air for local fected sinus passageways), they're bers are getting higher. A severe

year for cedar pollen has counts of "Last year, it never did get above the hundreds," Exline said. But this

felt they could be fair and imial," the judge said of prospec-

If the original 100 people sumned to the court last week for nideration as jurors, 68 re-med. Martin said more extensive nnaires would be distributed ose people and attorneys again ld quiz them.

he selection of a jury likely ld be completed in two or three s, he said.

fontenot, 48, the former princi-of Hull-Daisetta Woodson Junior

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to:

High School, is accused of killing Billy Mac Fleming, a coach and math teacher at the Liberty County school. "Every one of the jurors who said

Fleming was found shot to death in April

Investigators allege Fleming was judge. Fontenot's rival for the affections of trial." Laura Nugent, 36, a teacher's aide and school secretary both men had dated and wanted to marry.

Fleming was last seen alive April der the judge imposed on parties in Ten days later, his body was the case

found in a densely forested area southwest of Livingston in Polk County, about 50 miles away.

trict attorney handling the

"Every one of the jurors who said they could not set aside their opinion has been excluded," he told the "Mr. Fontenot can get a fair

Neither attorney would comment on Martin's decision, citing a gag or-

DeGuerin called five witnesses to the stand, including three reporters who differed on the amount of pub-

Cindy Horswell, a reporter with the Houston Chronicle, testified she did not question people about their thoughts on the case because such a random sampling could not be valid.

The third reporter, Greg Peak of the Polk County Enterprise, said only a few people would likely be prejudiced and that the trial wasn't the primary topic of conversation on everyone's mind.

Others testifying were Fontenot's brother, Walter, an attorney helping with the defense; and Joe Scott Evans, a lawyer from nearby Groveton

Research on Aging, is the first phase within the consortium and attended developed by a new private charita- the New York press conference outble organization, the National Foun- lining the group. dation on Aging.

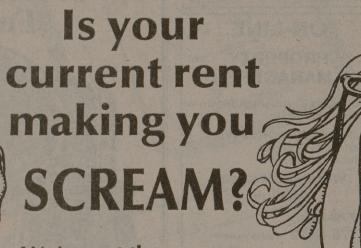
The foundation, according to a spokesman, was established to adof life for the elderly.

A&M and Baylor are the only Hopkins. Texas institutions among CURA's Average charter members.

Johns Hopkins University, Duke cans will be 65 or older.

The aging foundation was founded by Arizona businessman spokesman, was established to ad-dress issues arising from increased longevity and the declining quality of the chained by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Dr. Robert Butler, a prominent medical educator at Johns

Average lifespans for Americans have increased almost 30 years since Other charter members include the turn of the century and by the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, year 2030, one in every five Ameri-



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