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7 children trapped, killed in El Campo fire

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the Williams house had been nailed shut, leaving no escape routes. There was no explanation for it, but temperatures in the area had been cold recently.

Myers said the investigation indicates the fire started near the front door where a kerosene heater was found to contain a foreign substance, possibly paper or cloth. "It looks like maybe the kids might have been playing or something, and stuck something in there, and the fire got outside the heater and possibly on the floor there," Myers said.

Elliott said no charges had been filed in the case. District Attorney Danny Shindler said, "We're certainly looking at the possibility of presenting information to a grand jury." He said that will depend on what the police and fire investigators find. Killed were Monica Williams, 8; Jeremy Williams, 7; Veronica Williams, 6; Jason Williams, 3; Claressa Williams, 9 months; Demetris Johnson, 3; and Nathan Johnson, who

would have been 2 months old Friday. Williams also has a 10-year-old son, Xavier, who was staying with his grandmother at the time of the fire, officials said.

Myers said firefighters found the bodies of five children in the front room and two more in the back room. He said El Campo authorities would be aided by the state fire marshal's office in Corpus Christi.

Wharton County Sheriff's deputy Ricky Miller noticed smoke coming from the house during a routine patrol and alerted firemen. Larry Carter, 20, said he was awakened by what sounded like two small explosions and his uncle, Curry Long, told him, "Jackie's house is on fire and the kids are in there."

Carter, whose home is located behind the Williams' house, said he ran to the burning house but could not get inside to help the children. "I tried to help but they kept telling me to get back," Carter said. Carter said he thought the explosions came from kerosene heaters used to heat the home.

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"Why not get a jump on it? Spring break is just around the corner."

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Women in B-CS say child care is rewarding

(continued from page 1)
with her life has been worthwhile. "I've had children for up to four years at a time before they go off to nursery school or kindergarten," she says. "I had six that grew up together, and we still keep in touch. I not only got to see... all those things parents want to see, but I also see other people's children in the same stages."

Debbi Swick of Bryan says a registered home allows her to be maternal during the day, but she doesn't have to deal with the sleepless nights of actual parenthood. "I've been taking in children for 3½ years and have two children of

my own," Swick says. "I have no desire to have any more babies, but this way I can still get that maternal feeling with young children during the day."

"Sometimes you do feel your sanity slipping away, but I'll stay with it for at least three more years. I blended into day care slowly — part time — but unless you do it full time, it's hard to get the most out of the business."

Both Swick and Palasota say the schedule for the children in their homes is not a set one like those of licensed day care centers. Supervised play is the usual activity.

"There is no real structure," Palasota says, "it's just a home."

"Day care centers have more of a school-type atmosphere, but I think it's less personal with 10 to 15 children per person."

"In a center, there has to be structure. With as many kids as they have, the staff has to keep them busy. And some parents want that early structure where kids can learn their ABCs and their numbers. I worry that once they get into kindergarten with all that knowledge already, they'll be thoroughly bored."

"Still, there is more security for the parents, leaving their child in a center. They feel more secure with trained personnel and a licensed facility. And it is good for parents to be

cautious. Regarding regular homes, I'd advise them to always get references and be sure of the decision."

Muneer Hyder, director of Kiddie Castle day care centers, says that from her experience, children are less disciplined when they are in her day care centers from their homes. And aside from discipline, Hyder says, centers do have much more to offer.

But whatever the decision, Carol Eubanks of the Human Resources Department, the important thing to remember is the safety and well-being of the children. That, she says, is always the priority.

Ways to celebrate Valentine's Day change

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universal, the custom of Valentine's Day evokes a different picture in everyone's mind.

Jeanne Ferris, a sophomore from Harlingen, said she thinks of Valentine's Day as "a special day to tell your special someone that they are special — to let him know I'm thinking of him."

Money, or lack of it, seems an ever-occurring problem for college students. The high cost of flowers and other traditional Valentine's gifts forces some students to be creative.

Michael Miesch, a senior from Irving, said, "Originality stems from poverty."

He said last year he got out his trusty construction paper and his crayons and made a card. In it he wrote his "special someone" a poem.

Not everyone is quite as creative, and many people stick with the trusty store-bought card.

Brad Weir, a senior from Dallas, said he feels cards are a "good thing."

"These pieces of paper tend to make people's days — they make mine," he said. "Valentine's Day is a really cool day for people who have someone special, but how unbelievably depressing for those who have no one."

Three traditional gifts — flowers,



candy and cards — still continue to be sent to loved-ones.

Local florists say Feb. 14 is their biggest day of the year. Roses are still the hottest selling love tokens, but once the roses are gone the desperate lovelorn will settle for just about any cut flower.

The florists also said that Texas A&M students send a large number of green plants to grandparents and parents.

Another big-selling item is the stuffed animal. The selection ranges from the plain doll, to those bearing hearts and sayings such as "I love you."

In recent years, along with changing attitudes and a new balancing of sex roles, the list of not-so-traditional gifts has grown. Department stores and gift shops

carry a variety of gifts from chocolate-covered golf balls to boxer shorts covered in hearts.

Susan O'Leary, a junior from Houston, said she feels it's hard for women to find something to send to men.

"What can you really buy a guy?" she said. "Underwear with hearts, or maybe make him heart-shaped cookies."

Whatever the gift, the thought is still one of love, caring and usually even romance.

"I think Valentine's Day reminds us that romance still lives in our fast, callous world," Weir commented.

With the right amount of money, and time, what would be the perfect Valentine's date?

Libby Schimmer, a senior from Dallas, said she'd spend it in a cabin in Colorado.

Miesch said he would drive to the coast and drink champagne.

Do lovers do such romantic things on Feb. 14? That remains between the lovers.

No matter the reason, the gift or the reaction, maybe we should all take a lesson in thinking from Steve Ablard, a junior from Houston.

He said he feels Valentine's Day, like Mother's Day, is stupid.

"Why one day of the year? If you love someone you should let them know everyday."

Judge denies bond to 4

(continued from page 1)

million 1981 Cessna Comanche but it had not been filed with the Federal Aviation Administration authorities said.

Mershan, 45, of Miami, told authorities he was a co-mandant for Eastern Airlines and then said he was a pilot.

Others arrested were identified as Douglas R. Carro, 31, of Palm Springs, Calif.; Juan Morales-Andrade, 29, of Guaymas, Ariz.; and Jorge Aristizabal Archila, 28, of Bogota, Colombia.

Celestino R. Vargas, a special agent of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms in Corpus Christi, testified that the men were en route to Colombia to pick up a load of cocaine.

Aristizabal told authorities he was contacted by a friend in Colombia and instructed to go to the United States and guide some plots to Colombia. Aristizabal flew into Miami earlier this month and eventually was introduced to Mershan, Vargas testified. Both men then flew to California and studied maps of Colombia and the best way to get in and out of the country and avoid detection, the agent testified.

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Applications Accepted: February 3-28, 1986

Test Administered: in March 1986

For More Information:
Contact the nearest Federal personnel office, procurement faculty advisor, or college placement office. Or call the Federal Acquisition Institute at (202) 523-5968.

NASA Contacts: John Duncan, Personnel Office 713-483-6364
John Thiel, Procurement Office 713-483-5811

NASA Johnson Space Center personnel will be on campus February 21, in room 404 of Rudder Tower, to provide information to students who wish to drop in and get a better understanding about a Federal Contract Specialist Career.

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