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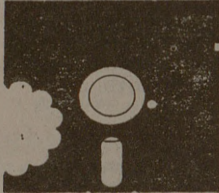
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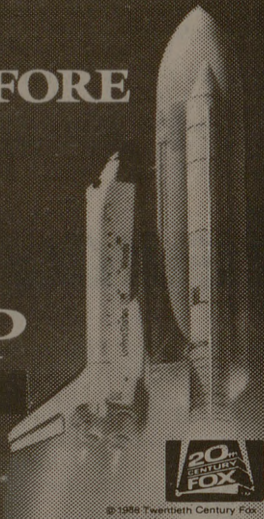
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Police robot

Addison using modern technology as public relations tool

ADDISON (AP) — This town's newest police officer was sworn in by Mayor Jerry Redding during a special ceremony at Bent Tree Country Club. His first official duty was to go to Trinity Christian Academy to be photographed for next year's city calendar.

It was an extraordinary beginning for an out-of-the-ordinary officer. He's 5-foot-5 and weighs 200 pounds. It takes two Sam Browne belts to circumscribe his 56-inch waist. He wears a badge, carries a .45 caliber automatic. But his weapon is unloading.

This rookie is a robot. They're called him APD2. APD is acronym for Addison Police Department. There is no APD1. Crime prevention Officer Gary Taylor says the "2" is a shameless ripoff from R2D2 of "Star Wars" fame.

"We'd like to have a contest in the schools to pick an official name for him," says Taylor. "But school's almost out, so he may be APD2 for a while."

APD2 was born and raised in Atlanta by 21st Century Robotics. Rather than leasing as most departments do, Addison bought him for \$17,750. "They were amazed we were making an outright purchase," says Taylor, adding that the funds came from the hotel-motel tax revenues.

In the end, it's possible that APD2 will bite the hand that bought him. One of his assignments will be to roam Addison's bars, asking patrons just how sober they really are. He doesn't expect them to get the answer all by themselves. He has a TV camera in his head and a screen on his chest, so they can look themselves over before they answer.

That, of course, could be provocative, says Taylor, adding: "Someone might put a foot through his screen."

When he's not beeping through the bars, APD2 will be assigned to rounds in local schools and hospitals, spreading cheer and tips about crime-prevention.

"He's a public relations tool, but you can do a lot of good with him," says Taylor.

When he isn't traveling in his custom fiberglass trailer, APD2 moves about on four wheels and carries videotape equipment capable of demonstrating 20 warning signs of drunken driving. Taylor provides the voice and guidance commands with a radio transmitter.

Taylor says APD2 goes over pretty well with most children, although some can be intimidated. Daphne Gray walks into the station with her 4-year-old son Billy. She's come over from Fort Worth to pay a traffic ticket.

APD2 rolls over and greets Billy. Billy clings to his mother's neck, peers at APD2 from the corners of his eyes, refuses to speak.

"Don't you know I'm your friend?" asks APD2 plaintively. No response. Ah, well.

APD2 came from the factory with a repertoire of one-liners and knock jokes designed to put at ease. (Knock knock. Who's there? Dishes. Dishes who? Dishes are open up.) Taylor is looking for local jokes as well.

And what entertainer can't do a little dance routine? APD2 is a rug to the "Miami Vice" sound, although Taylor admits "He's a hat quite often when he's dancing." Taylor wants to get the tracks from "Hill Street Blues" and "Beverly Hills Cop."

Taylor and APD2 communicate by radio signals that are similar to those used in cordless phones. As long as Taylor and robot are within about 400 feet of each other, everything is fine. He gets outside of that range, says, "He's liable to start transmitting signals out of the going bananas. He attacked the plants in the office one day."

In other words, nobody APD2 down to the corner for

Texas congressman backs Afghan government-in-exile

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas Congressman Charles Wilson said Tuesday Afghanistan "freedom fighters" probably will win the war against Soviet forces that occupy that country of 15 million people.

"Our big job in the United States and the western world is to arouse public consciousness as to the atrocities and the absolute brutality of the Soviet Union in this country," Wilson said.

He appeared at a news conference with representatives of the Texas Review Society and accepted a \$100 donation from that group to help Afghanistan establish a government-in-exile.

The University of Texas society

describes itself as a conservative student organization.

Wilson, who has been to Afghanistan four times since 1983, said Afghanistan was "brutally invaded by the Soviets six years ago, and much to the Soviets' surprise and to the surprise of the world, the Red Army has met with an absolutely fierce and frantic resistance. The fighting has been the severest the Red Army has faced since World War II. Their losses have been enormous."

Because so many Soviet forces are tied up on the Chinese border and in Eastern Europe, "they have the serious problem of having to draft the sons of the bureaucrats in Leningrad and Moscow to fight in Afghanistan,

which none of them want to do," Wilson said.

He said the Afghans fighting the Soviets "control 80 percent of the country, and in all probability will win the war."

"The Soviet response to this has been brutality beyond anything we've seen since Hitler's gas ovens at Auschwitz. . . . This is truly the first case of organized genocide the world has seen since 1940s."

He said an effort will be made to raise "a couple of million dollars" to establish a headquarters for the Alliance of Freedom Fighters on the northwest frontier of Afghanistan, with counsels in Paris, London, New York and Los Angeles.

TEA disputes no-pass, no-play survey

AUSTIN (AP) — The state education commissioner disputes a national survey that says Texas' controversial no pass, no play rule is "overkill."

The Texas Association of Secondary School Principals asked executives of counterpart associations in other states for details of their laws on eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities, and 43 responded.

"Texas has shown overkill in legislation dealing with no pass, no play," the association concluded.

"Practically all states require a stu-

dent to pass only three, four or five courses to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities," it said. "These states take into account extreme conditions not under the control of students that sometimes affect student achievement."

Only Hawaii and the District of Columbia require youngsters to pass all their courses, the survey indicated. Four states leave eligibility decisions to local districts, and some California cities have rules as strict as those in Texas.

But state Education Commissioner Bill Kirby downplayed the

survey and said the no pass, no play rule — which bars students from extracurricular activities for six weeks after getting a failing grade — is a model other states are adopting.

"I don't know that I would use the word 'overkill,'" he told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. "But I think Texas is way out front in that. Other states are talking about following Texas' lead."

The high school principals will be quizzing both Gov. Mark White and former Gov. Bill Clements about it June 13 as they move toward an endorsement in the governor's race.

Insurance rates spark debate in high court race

AUSTIN (AP) — An expected controversy facing the 1987 Legislature — soaring liability insurance rates — has sparked a sharp exchange between Democratic runoff candidates for a seat on the Texas Supreme Court.

State Sen. Oscar Mauzy, a Dallas attorney, has accused San Antonio Appeals Court Judge Shirley Butts of tipping her hand on how she would rule on personal injury suits if she wins a seat on the state's highest court.

Butts says Mauzy's heavy support from many attorneys who file personal injury suits would render him unable to issue fair decisions.

Long legislative hearings with competing testimony from insurance industry representatives and the legal fraternity indicate there will be efforts in 1987 to put a limit on personal injury lawsuit awards and a limit on attorneys' fees in such suits.

"She's on the take from the insurance lobby," Mauzy said recently. "She's bought their story, hook, line and sinker. . . . It could affect her future decisions when punitive damages are involved in a tort law case."

In a telephone interview from Laredo, Butts said, "That is entirely untrue. I would never comment on how I might rule on any case."

"What I have said is that insurance companies are pointing fingers at lawyers and reinsurance companies, and defense lawyers are pointing fingers at plaintiffs' lawyers."

"Everybody is pointing fingers at someone else," Butts said. "I think something should be done about it. I think it is up to the Legislature to do what it sees the state needs."

Mauzy said, "In effect, what she has done is comment on more than 30,000 cases pending in the courts of Texas where punitive damages are

asked. There is no doubt in my mind she is a candidate for the insurance companies."

"She should run for the Legislature and wants to change tort law. It's up to the Legislature to change the law, not the courts."

Butts said she is not accepting contributions from groups in the insurance industry.

"I have contributions from both plaintiffs' defense attorneys," she said. "I do not favor either one. I seek to be impartial."

Mauzy said most of his contributions from long-time backers.

"They have never asked me for a vote, have never made a single promise, and I try to keep it that way," he said.

The liability insurance crisis and proposed tort reform have received little attention in other two Democratic runoff races for the highest court.

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