

State court strikes down parole law

DALLAS (AP) — Thousands of sentences could be affected by an appeals court ruling striking down a law requiring judges to inform jurors of state parole laws before deciding convicted felons' punishment, prosecutors said.

A panel of the 5th Court of Appeals in Dallas, acting on an appeal filed by a convicted armed robber, ruled 2-1 Tuesday that the law violates provisions of the Texas Constitution requiring separation of powers between executive and judicial branches of government.

"We're aware of the opinion of the Court of Appeals . . . and are extremely concerned about its application," said Rider Scott, chief felony prosecutor in the Dallas County district attorney's office.

Prosecutors said the decision, if upheld on appeal, could affect sentences handed down in thousands of trials held across the state since the law went into effect Sept. 1.

The statute requires judges to tell jurors, in general terms, of the existence of parole laws and effects of good-conduct time on the length of time inmates serve. The law also requires judges to instruct jurors not to consider how parole laws could be applied in individual cases.

A San Antonio appeals court recently overturned another case on similar grounds, ruling the law is unconstitutional because it misleads. Prosecutors asked the Court of Criminal Appeals in Austin to review that case.

The Texas Legislature passed the law in its last regular session as part of an anti-crime package.

State and Local

Gives home to exotic animals

A&M gets wildlife center

By M.K. Pfeifer
Reporter

The only Wildlife and Exotic Animal Center of its kind in the nation will be located on the Texas A&M campus this fall.

The center, which is a unique combination of museum and experimental laboratories, will feature animal displays and exotic live animals, and will offer classes and lab facilities to graduate students. The public will be admitted free of charge once a month and by appointment.

The museum displays full heads and torsos of many species of deer and antelope.

With each head is a map to show the region of the animal's natural habitat and some heads have silhouettes beside them to

show the students where to tranquilize the animal.

The University granted the College of Veterinary Medicine 20 acres and two old wood farm houses off Agronomy and F and B roads. The farm houses were renovated by graduate veterinary students into an office building and museum.

The program is funded totally from private donations made by such groups as the Exotic Wildlife Association and the Houston and San Antonio Safari Clubs.

The center will cost \$1.5 million. But Dr. Stephen Seager, director and professor of veterinary physiology and pharmacology, who did most of the fund raising, said he doesn't know where to get the last \$500,000 to finish the project.

Plans are in the works for the exotic animal center to handle even more live animals that it already does, Seager said.

The center already has an oryx antelope from Africa and a nilgai antelope from India.

Dr. James D. McCrady, head of the veterinary physiology and pharmacology department, said he believes wildlife management (the selective breeding and harvesting of animals in the absence of natural predators) is essential to the survival of exotic animals, and is therefore essential to train students in current wildlife management practices.

Seager said the center also presents an opportunity to experiment with the new market of exotic animal meat.

Student killed in riding accident

A 22-year-old Texas A&M student died Monday after sustaining head injuries that apparently resulted from a horse-riding accident.

Laura Chapin, of 602 San Benito St. in College Station, was found unconscious by a passerby in a pasture north of Emerald Forest off the Westinghouse Waste Water Treat-

ment Plant Road between 8:30 p.m. and 9 p.m.

College Station Police Lt. Irvin Todd said Chapin apparently fell or was pitched from her horse when she was riding Saturday night.

Todd said the police don't believe foul play was involved.

Chapin was taken to Humana

Hospital and then by Lifeflight helicopter to Hermann Hospital in Houston, where she died at 5:35 a.m., Todd said.

Chapin, the daughter of Gordon and Judy Chapin of Lampasas, was a second year veterinarian student at A&M.

Reagan 'not sincere' about ending apartheid

DALLAS (AP) — President Reagan is not sincere about ending apartheid in South Africa and does not speak for most Americans on the issue, the leader of the country's principal non-white activist group said.

The Rev. Allan Boesak, co-founder of the United Democratic Front, will be the keynote speaker today at the National Association of Black Journalists' annual convention begins.

Boesak, also president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, said Tuesday that "Reagan's racist attitude" toward blacks in South Africa makes him "sick."

"Whether Americans like it or not, one of the things that worries me most is that there is no consistency in his (Reagan's) policy, no logic," Boesak said.

"I believe the element of racism is so strong that it influences everything," he said.

A spokesman for the White House said Reagan declined comment on Boesak's remarks, which also criticized reports the Reagan administration is looking for a black to succeed Herman Nickel as ambassador to South Africa.

"It will not impress me to have a black ambassador defending Mr. Reagan's policy of constructive engagement," Boesak said, referring to the administration's attempt to persuade Pretoria to end apartheid.

"Why send a black ambassador to South Africa?" Boesak asked. "Is it because the majority there is black? Again, there is a subtle racist thing there. Whether a person is black or white is irrelevant."

"It is the policies that person must defend and carry out in South Africa; that's what matters."

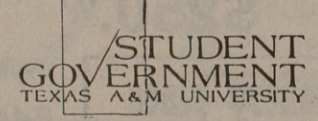
"Such an ambassador would suffer the same as the present ambassador. Black people will not speak to him."

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