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Burned dog may not be first victim of teen-ager

HOUSTON (AP) — A teen-ager charged with animal cruelty for allegedly setting fire to a prize-winning dog earlier this month may have committed similar acts before the June 2 incident, a prosecutor said.

"This case is appalling," Harris County Assistant District Attorney Kris Moore said Tuesday. "There's evidence that this may have happened more than one time, and that concerns me."

The youth, 15, one of two teenage cousins who admitted setting fire to the animal after getting the idea from a movie, was charged with animal cruelty Tuesday, Moore said.

If convicted, the youth, from the Clear Lake area, could face confinement in a Texas Youth Commission facility until age 21.

The two teens allegedly doused a 5-year-old English springer spaniel with charcoal lighter fluid and ignited it at a Pasadena apartment complex, she said.

The dying dog, which had won more than a dozen awards for obedience in statewide dog shows, hobbled home and was destroyed shortly afterward.

Assistant District Attorney Elizabeth Godwin said the youth, who was being held in a juvenile detention facility, "has a history involving the juvenile court."

Police have withheld the names of the teen-agers.

Godwin said the other youth, 16, also may be charged. Both came to the police department with their parents about a week after the incident to admit to the crime, officials said.

The incident prompted the dog's owner-trainer, Jimmy Fincher, 34, to move from Pasadena to Pearland, where he is raising a springer spaniel puppy donated by a Houston couple three days after the incident.

"At least something's being done about it," Fincher said of the criminal charge. "I'm just kind of glad to be out of Pasadena right now."

What's up

Thursday
KANM STUDENT RADIO: a disc jockey meeting will be held at 7 p.m. in 301 Rudder.

Friday
AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS ASSOCIATION: will show NASA video and use an observing telescope at 7 p.m. 404 Rudder.

Items for What's Up should be submitted to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, no less than three working days before desired publication date.

Medical board drops discipline procedure against Killeen doctor

AUSTIN (AP) — The State Board of Medical Examiners has decided against disciplining a Killeen physician who is accused of improperly treating two pregnant women.

In addition to the vote Tuesday not to discipline Dr. Harold Wood, the board declined to accept the gynecologist's offer to give up his medical license.

The decisions mean that Wood can continue practicing medicine in Texas.

However, his medical license still carries restrictions imposed last year by the board.

The board found that Wood not only failed to treat a patient with cancer, but never told her she had the disease, which eventually killed her.

The medical board discussed Wood's case for more than three hours.

The discussion focused on a recommendation by the staff that the gynecologist be disciplined for his recent treatment of two female patients.

The women contend that they had problems with their pregnancies or labor while under Wood's care.

In one case, the woman's baby died three days after birth.

The other woman suffered a gestive heart failure during labor.

Austin obstetrician-gynecologist Noble W. Doss Jr. testified that women's medical records do not show that Wood treated them properly.

Melanie Alsop, 30, the woman whose baby died, said after hearing that "justice wasn't done."

"They protect their own," she said.

Her attorney, Bill Oxford, said board members "ruled the way they could in view of the money."

Oxford, however, criticized the medical board for not forcing Wood to testify about discrepancies that were found between the medical records and Alsop's statements about the care she received from Wood.

The board placed the gynecologist on probation for 10 years beginning in November, but the board allowed him to continue practicing medicine.

The probation had been recommended by one board member met with Wood in a secret disciplinary session.

A legislative committee criticized the board for not holding a public hearing.

Brownsville probe crumbles as city worker gets acquitted

BROWNSVILLE (AP) — The Texas Rangers came into town last year hot on the trail of city corruption, but they are now on the defensive after watching charges from their probe disintegrate one by one.

The latest in a series of staggering blows to the eight-month investigation was the acquittal Wednesday of a city employee accused of forging endorsements on two \$100 checks used to pay for a department Christmas party in 1985.

Wednesday's verdict in the trial of Cayetano Ovalle, a Brownsville Urban System parts clerk, came a day after the felony theft trial of Mayor Emilio Hernandez abruptly ended when new evidence appeared strong enough to convince the special prosecutor to drop the case.

"I can't believe that the Texas Rangers were involved in this fiasco, because this has probably been the most one-sided investigation that anybody could have done," Albert Villegas, Ovalle's defense attorney, said after the jury returned the verdict.

Cameron County Attorney Benjamin Euresti declared the city probe over Tuesday after a judge dismissed the mayor's case before the jury had heard any testimony. He and Capt. John Dean of the Rangers'

San Antonio office agreed Tuesday there was no reason to continue the investigation.

Euresti originally asked the Rangers to come to Brownsville to look into charges of purchasing irregularities at City Hall.

A grand jury returned indictments accusing various officials and city employees of crimes including bribery, gift solicitation, witness tampering, official misconduct and forgery.

Named in the indictments were Mayor Emilio Hernandez, City Manager Kenneth Lieck, City Commissioner

"This has probably been the most one-sided investigation that anybody could have done."

— Albert Villegas, Ovalle's defense attorney

sioner Tony Zavaleta, Municipal Judge Kip Van Johnson Hodge and Brownsville Urban System parts clerks Rudy Garza and Ovalle.

Then it was discovered that the

grand jury foreman had a conflict of interest, and all the indictments were dismissed.

A new grand jury declined to indict Lieck and Hodge, and Special Prosecutor Sharon MacRae declined to seek a new indictment against Ovalle because of insufficient evidence. It found only enough evidence to indict the mayor, the two parts clerks and City Commissioner Susan

tin.

Then in May, the investigation took another blow when State District Judge Gilberto Hinojosa dismissed Austin's case before a jury.

Euresti then asked for dismissal of the gift-solicitation charges against Garza and Ovalle. Both had been accused of soliciting donations from city vendors to pay for a department Christmas party.

Remaining against Ovalle was a forgery charge for which he was acquitted Wednesday. His was the case in the probe to go to a jury verdict.

Only two cases stemming from the terminated eight-month probe remain to be tried, both against Hernandez. He faces a June 22 trial on a charge of aggravated perjury and a July 20 trial on forgery charges.

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