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# Court reporter says testimony resulted in firing

CONROE (AP) — A key defense witness in a hearing on death row inmate Clarence Lee Brandley's request for a new trial said she was fired from her court reporting job by the judge she testified against.

Mary Johnson, 49, a six-year employee of State District Judge John Martin, said Wednesday she received a letter Monday informing her she no longer had the position. Martin's letter, dated Jan. 29, made the firing effective Jan. 31.

"I feel the reason I was fired by Judge John Martin is for testifying about the truth concerning the matter on death row in the Brandley hearing and that's the only reason I was fired," Johnson said. "They could have reassigned me to another court."

Martin confirmed that Johnson had been fired, but would not discuss his reasons or her testimony since Brandley's appeal has not concluded.

Brandley, a black janitor at Conroe High School, was convicted in 1981 of the Aug. 23, 1980, rape-slaying of 16-year-old Cheryl Ferguson at the school, where the white girl's volleyball team was practicing.

Johnson testified during the October evidentiary hearing in Galveston that Martin set Brandley's first execution date on Jan. 16, 1986, to coincide with her birthday and that of District Clerk Peggy Stevens. She also said Martin told her his treatment during the hearing by defense attorney Mike DeGeurin would determine whether he granted probation to a woman convicted of perjury in another county.

That woman was being defended by a partner of DeGeurin's brother.

Martin denied both accusations under oath.

The hearing resulted in a judge's recommendation Oct. 9 for a new trial for Brandley. The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals in Austin has yet to decide the issue.

State District Judge Perry Pickett, who presided over the hearing, said in his recommendation that Brandley's conviction and death sentence were marred by racial prejudice, perjured testimony, intimidated witnesses and a biased investigation.

Brandley, 37, said Wednesday he was frustrated at remaining on death row but continues to have faith in the judicial system.

# Prisoners' privacy might be violated by copying records

AUSTIN (AP) — Although the state has stopped using prison inmates to microfilm records of former prisoners, inmates still copy other records, including those of juvenile offenders and probationers, the *Austin American-Statesman* reported Thursday.

The newspaper quoted officials as saying they will review whether any personal or sensitive information is being compromised by the microfilming.

The director of the Harris County adult probation office began an inquiry this week into whether its use of the Texas Department of Corrections microfilming center violates a federal court order prohibiting inmates from having access to sensitive information about other prisoners.

Lawrence Coleman said he would take the matter to the committee of judges that oversees the office.

The office has a contract with the corrections department to microfilm the files of all offenders discharged from probation, about 20,000 people a year.

Coleman said having prisoners copy the files of revoked probationers who are serving prison terms might violate the court order.

Several hundred inmates at four

prison units work on various microfilming and data-entry projects. Prison officials said they have more than 40 contracts for work with state agencies and city and county governments.

The microfilming industry at the prisons is thought to be one of the largest in the nation.

Ron Jackson, director of the Texas Youth Commission, said he will ask the agency's board to review the practice of having all files on discharged youths copied by inmates.

About 2,000 juveniles are committed to the Youth Commission each year, and about the same number are discharged.

But, Jackson said, many end up in adult prisons in a few years. The files contain social histories, psychological information and school records.

"Those inmates are capable of doing anything," Jackson said. "Some of them are pretty smart. I assume inmates are smart enough to isolate a particular name and reuse it."

The criminal records of juveniles are confidential by law, and, "in essence, we're losing confidentiality with inmates having access to them," Jackson said.

# Boxing during police training causes injuries to DPS recruits

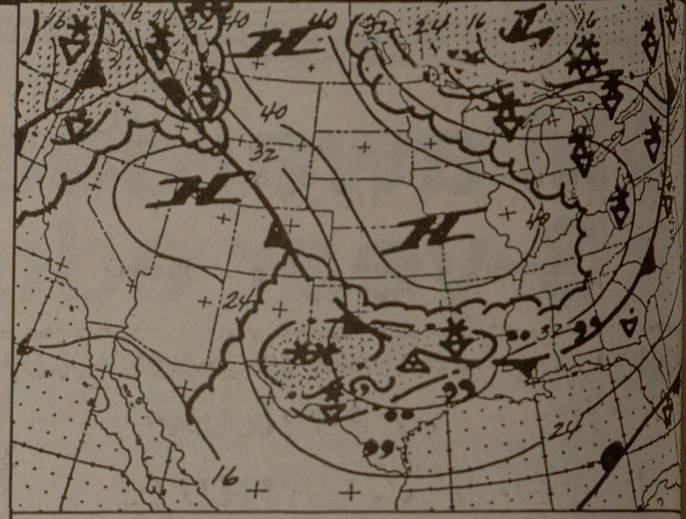
AUSTIN (AP) — A Department of Public Safety recruit from Abilene was hospitalized in critical condition Thursday with injuries suffered while boxing during a training session.

Joel Lopez Cordova, 25, underwent surgery at Brackenridge Hospital after being injured Wednesday during "half-speed sparring" with another cadet at the DPS gym, DPS spokesman David Wells said.

Cordova was struck on the right cheek and staggered slightly before he started hitting a punching bag, Wells said. The recruit then became ill and collapsed in a rest room.

Wells said recruits of similar size are matched for the sparring. "It's the type of sparring where they try to learn balance, and their hands up in case someone's trying to strike them," he said.

## Weather Watch



**Key:**

- ☁ - Lightning
- ☔ - Rain
- ❄ - Ice Pellets
- ☁ - Fog
- ❄ - Snow
- ☔ - Rain Shower
- ⚡ - Thunderstorms
- ☂ - Drizzle
- - Freezing Rain

Sunset Today: 6:04 p.m. Sunrise Saturday: 7:12 a.m.

**Map Discussion:**  
 A trough of low pressure over the eastern half of the United States and an area of high from eastern Montana to southern Missouri will remain intact; thus, a series of low pressure troughs will drag new waves of arctic air to southeast Texas and the Gulf Coast with snow or snowshowers from the Great Lakes into the central Appalachians. Also, expect snow in southeastern New Mexico and West Texas with a threat of freezing drizzle from the Texas Hill Country to northeast Texas.

**Forecast:**  
 Today: Overcast and cold with a high of 38 degrees and intermittent drizzle or light rain. Winds will be northeast at 10 to 18 mph.  
 Tonight and Saturday: Continued overcast and cold with a low temperature of 27 degrees Saturday morning. Expect intermittent drizzle or light rain, possible in the form of freezing drizzle or rain from midnight through noon Saturday. The high temperature will be 34 degrees with east-northeasterly winds near 10 mph.

**Weather Fact:** Winterization — the preparation for operations in conditions of winter weather. This applies to preparation not only for cold temperatures, but also for snow, ice and strong winds.

Prepared by: Charlie Brown  
 Staff Meteorologist  
 A&M Department of Meteorology

## Salutes

**Faculty/Staff**

**Dr. Richard A. Frederiksen**, a professor of plant pathology, has been elected fellow of the American Phytopathological Society.

**Dr. James F. Courtney**, a professor of business administration, has been named first holder of the Tenneco Professorship in Business Administration.

**Students**

Five students have been awarded spring semester scholarships from the College of Liberal Arts.

Jeanne Coignet of Lake Jackson, a junior English major, Janet Reed Schaefer of Lake Jackson, a junior English major, Kristi Scales of Wiley, a speech communication major, Tom Connelly of Midland, an economics major, Tom Connelly of Midland, an economics major, Sammie Williams of South Lake, a speech communication major, Catherine Thomas Evans of South Lake, a speech communication major, Ella C. McFadden of South Lake, an economics major, Steven C. Caberto, a counseling psychology graduate student, has been accepted to attend the U.S. Air Force clinical psychology internship program at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base Ohio.

*Salutes is a community service provided by The Battalion to list students, faculty and staff who have received honors and awards (such as scholarships, fellowships, etc.). Space is limited and is provided on a first-come, first-served basis. There is no guarantee that your submission will run. Submissions may be refused if they contain incomplete or incorrect information. If you have any questions, please call The Battalion at 845-3315.*

# Pantry raid tonight



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