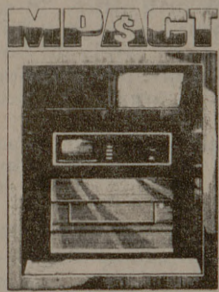


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34 oil workers flee sinking rig

GALVESTON (AP) — Thirty-four oil rig workers arrived safely on land Tuesday morning after their platform sank into the Gulf of Mexico, forcing them to flee in water-tight escape capsules. The workers on the rig E-302, owned by Keyes Offshore Inc. of Sugar Land, were evacuated Monday night in capsules from the rig, 82 miles south of Galveston, then transferred to the workboat "Casey Chouest" for transportation back to Galveston, Bill Keyes, president of Keyes Offshore, said.

The vessel radioed the U.S. Coast Guard at 1:17 a.m. that it had picked up the workers, Coast Guard duty officer Don Merwin said.

The research vessel "Geco Longva" relayed a distress call to the Coast Guard from the rig at 10:17 p.m. Monday, Merwin said. Coast Guard rescue ships were dispatched from Houston, Corpus Christi and Sabine.

The workers were pre-loading the 180-by-125-foot, triangular rig

when one of the 396-foot legs punched through the Gulf floor, Keyes said.

"It resulted in bending the three legs on the rig," he said. "The rig was about five feet above the water because we had not jacked up all the way."

Workers had been at the site about three hours before the accident, which happened in seconds, he said.

Crews were able to get out to the rig Tuesday morning to assess damage to the rig, company spokesman Bill Flores said.

"It appears to be salvageable," he said of the rig. "It doesn't appear as bad as it originally looked."

"It's a phenomena that this happened in the Gulf," Keyes said. "In certain areas, the sand will support the rig for a while and then it gives way."

Keyes said his company had jacked up another rig in an adjoining area with no problems and had gathered information on the present location, finding it suitable.

Mayor tells police where to find body before killing self

ADDISON (AP) — The death of Mayor Jerry Redding, who was under investigation for allegations of fiscal mismanagement, was ruled a suicide, the police chief said.

Redding was found by police Monday with a bullet in a wound to his right temple, Police Chief Rick Sullivan said. A handgun was found on the ground beside him, Sullivan said. His body was found near a jogging trail in this Dallas suburb.

Sullivan said Redding called them shortly after 3 p.m. Monday from his car telephone and told the chief to "get someone down here to find me."

"It was a casual call at first," said Sullivan, who got the call at his office. "He just said, 'What are you doing?'"

Sullivan said Redding asked him if he knew how to find the jogging trail, a short distance from Addison Town Hall.

"He said, 'All right, I want you to have somebody find me before somebody else does,'" Sullivan said.

"I said, 'Jerry, what are you talking about?' and he hung up on me. I tried to call him back, but he had killed the car and the phone wouldn't ring."

Redding, mayor for 13 years, was one of several town officials under

investigation for allegations of fiscal mismanagement at Addison Town Hall.

He was fired from Vernon Savings and Loan Corp. after federal regulators declared the Addison-based thrift insolvent. Regulators said the thrift was drained by runaway growth, risky loans and excessive compensation to some bank officials.

Sullivan, who found four notes at Redding's home, said there was no evidence the mayor's death was prompted by the investigations or his firing last spring from his job as an assets manager at Vernon Savings.

"The notes did not give some definitive answer as to why he did it," said Sullivan, who declined to reveal details. "Most of the notes' concerns were of the welfare of his wife, child, friends, mother and father."

City Manager Ron Whitehead said Redding had not seemed upset lately and said he doesn't know if Redding's suicide had anything to do with the investigations.

He said that figures from the state's comptroller's office show that \$100 million a year could be added to the state's economy by 1994 from pari-mutual gambling.

Police Beat

The following were reported to the University Police Department from Feb. 15 through Feb. 22:

MISDEMEANOR THEFT:

• Three backpacks were reported stolen from the Commons dining area. All were left unsecured.

• Five bicycles were stolen from various places on campus and six cars were broken into and had various stereo components stolen from them.

• A student reported that someone had stolen her black Yamaha Razz moped from where she had parked it in front of De-Ware Fieldhouse.

• Two drivers reported that the left side-view mirrors of their cars had been stolen while the cars were parked in the blue lot across from Zachry.

• While on patrol, officers observed that the right rear tire of a red, 2-door Nissan Sentra, parked in the red lot behind the Commons, was missing. Upon contacting the owner, the officers were advised that the tire was missing.

• A student reported that her wallet and checkbook were stolen from where she had left them unattended on the fifth floor of the Evans Library.

• Several signs were reported missing over the weekend, including the street signs at Lewis and Spence streets and the "No parking from here to the corner" sign that was on Jones Street.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION — FELONY THEFT

• A student reported that someone had stolen his 1980 Mazda RX-7 from where he had parked it in the fish lot. He later reported to the UPD that his roommate had borrowed his extra set of keys and driven the vehicle to San Antonio. No charges were filed.

FELONY THEFT:

• A student reported that while she was working out in the Read Building weight room, someone stole three rings from

her purse that she had left unsecured. She later reported that the rings were in her purse when she went to work out in the weight room but she did not check to see if they were missing before going to 24 Hour Gyms of Texas where her purse was left unattended in a common-use area.

CRIMINAL MISCHIEF:
• Someone reported that the convertible top of her 1987 red Ford was slashed while parked in the fish lot.

• Two residents of Schuhmacher Hall identified two other Schuhmacher residents as being involved in throwing water balloons at the residents of the dorm.

• In two separate incidents, residents of Schuhmacher reported that four windows had been broken out by some kind of projectile.

• It was reported that five cars, parked in the mall area between the old and new architecture buildings, were damaged on the afternoon of Feb. 14.

ELUDING AN OFFICER:

• While on patrol, an officer observed a driver run the stop sign at the intersection of Lubbock and S. Bizzell. The driver then tried to elude the officer but eventually was stopped between the 707 Texas complex and 708 Texas.

ASSAULT:

• A student reported that while she was walking through the Corps Quadrangle to Aston Hall, she was shoved against the wall by a man walking by, causing her to bump her head.

HARASSMENT:

• A resident of Dorm 5 reported that she had received several obscene phone calls between Feb. 12 and Feb. 14. She was advised of the procedure to obtain a telephone trace.

RECOVERED ITEMS:

• The oboe that was reported stolen from the Zachry Building on Feb. 2 was recovered under a stairwell in an unreported building.

Professor: Faculty behind underground newspaper

CANYON, Texas (AP) — West Texas State University trustees Tuesday questioned the faculty senate president about the anonymous publishers of an underground newspaper that has criticized the school's president.

Gary Byrd, a psychology professor, appeared before the regents during their regular meeting in the first such presentation by a faculty representative.

In response to questions from regent Dee Osborne, Byrd said he believed faculty members were behind the publication.

"I believe there are indeed the involvement of faculty in some form as well as others," he said.

"The individuals may believe that this is a way of creating awareness of a set of problems that they feel exist," he said.

The newsletter, called "The Key of The Prairie," appeared on campus last fall and contains editorial and letters highly critical of WTSU President Ed Roach.

"The Prairie" is the name of the school's student-run newspaper.

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