

Texas A&M The Battalion

Vol. 87 No. 182 8 Pages

College Station, Texas

Wednesday, July 27, 1988

Teacher's home destroyed by fire

By Alan Sembera
Staff Writer

Firefighters were unable to save a College Station math teacher's home, which was consumed by flames Tuesday afternoon.

The two-story wood-frame house at 1307 Walton Drive was the home of Mary Leland, her mother, Mrs. T.W. Leland, and her son, Tom.

Mary has taught at A&M Consolidated High School for about 25 years. Her father is the late Thomas W. Leland, who was head of the business administration department at A&M from 1946-56.

No one was hurt in the blaze, but one of Leland's sons, Bob, cut his shoulder when he broke into the house to get everyone out.

Neighbors said he had been in the back when the fire started, and had to go around the house to get in.

The fire started when Bob Leland was stripping the linoleum floor in the kitchen, neighbors said. Fumes from the floor stripper may have come in contact with a pilot light in the garage, they said.

Fire officials said they can't determine how the blaze started until they examine the debris, but they did say the floor stripper made the fire spread more rapidly.

Capt. David Giordano, of the College Station Fire Department, said the flames were out of control when they arrived, and they couldn't enter the house.

This contributed to the extent of the damage, he said, because it was more difficult to put out the fire.

More than 25 men from the fire department responded to the fire, which was reported at 1:22 p.m.

That's a large number of men for this type of fire, he said, because the summer heat made it necessary for the firefighters to take more breaks to prevent heat exhaustion.

Nobody was hurt in the blaze, but one firefighter was taken to Humana Hospital for observation because of possible heat exhaustion.

Paramedics were at the fire to help cool the firefighters.

One of the paramedics, Jon Mies, said it was his job to monitor the condition of the firefighters.

"We try to keep them going on a regular break schedule," he said. "We really don't let them go longer than about 20 or 30 minutes."

Fire officials did not know the value of the home, or if anything valuable had been in the house.

Several cats are presumed to have been lost in the fire.



Photo by Jay Janner

Firefighters overcome by heat and smoke cool off in between shifts at the scene of a house fire Tuesday at 1307 Walton Drive.

House okays drought bill for \$6 billion

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House Agriculture Committee approved on Tuesday a drought relief bill totaling \$6 billion, including a \$145 million benefit pushed by dairy-state lawmakers for milk producers despite President Reagan's warning not to create "windfalls for some" or bust the budget.

"It is the duty of this committee to assure that there is an adequate supply of milk," said Rep. James Jeffords, R-Vt., as the panel adopted the provision to raise the price support for each 100 pounds of milk by 50 cents.

The committee approved the dairy plan 15-12 and then sent the entire \$6 billion relief bill to the House floor, where consideration is expected this week.

The bill already contained a provision to cancel a 50-cent cut in the dairy price support scheduled for Jan. 1. The further benefit for the politically influential dairy industry would actually raise the price support.

The move brought warnings that the bill could be headed for trouble.

Rep. Dan Glickman, D-Kan., said that provision "does tend to treat one segment of agriculture more favorably than other segments of agriculture."

"This amendment makes the whole bill more vulnerable when we go to the floor," Glickman said.

There also was speculation that the dairy increase, which would cost the government \$145 million over

two years by committee estimate, might trigger a presidential veto of the legislation.

No similar provision is contained in the Senate's drought relief bill, which also is expected to come to the floor this week. Farm lawmakers from the two houses are planning to meet in a conference committee next week to fashion a final version of the legislation.

The House panel acted despite a specific warning from President Reagan not to provide windfalls to special interests or run to excess with spending proposals.

"To put it very simply, we must not bust the budget," Reagan said in a letter to House Agriculture Committee Chairman E. "Kika" de la Garza, D-Texas. He also said that "creating windfalls for some will mean less for the truly deserving."

He urged de la Garza to avoid penalizing farmers who purchase federal crop insurance by providing equal benefits to those without it. And he called on the chairman not to "force farmers to do unreasonable things."

"No program should, for example, include any incentive for a farmer to plow under his crops," Reagan said.

Jeffords, whose home state is a major source of the East Coast's milk supply, warned that dairy herds would dwindle without the increase in the support level and cause a milk shortage that would be hard to rectify.

U.S. district judge may face impeachment on 17 counts

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House Judiciary Committee on Tuesday recommended 32-1 that U.S. District Judge Alcee L. Hastings of Miami be impeached on 17 counts of misconduct despite his previous acquittal at a bribery trial.

Hastings is the first federal judge to face impeachment after being cleared in a criminal court on the same charges. He also is the first black to be charged in impeachment proceedings.

In Miami, Hastings said that those who voted against him "acted in blind ignorance." He added that "I'm in a fighting mood. There's no way to remove a real warrior."

House approval of the impeachment articles — akin to an indictment — would send the case to the Senate for a trial on whether he should be removed from his lifetime judgeship. The House acts by a simple majority, but a conviction must be carried by a two-thirds majority of senators present and voting.

Eleven cases have reached an impeachment trial in the Senate, and

five officials have been removed — all federal judges.

The 51-year-old Hastings is accused by the committee of conspiring to solicit a bribe from two defendants who appeared before him — the charges that led to his acquittal in a 1983 trial — and of lying about the scheme to the jurors. The latter allegation was brought by judges from the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which covers Florida, and supported by the Judicial Conference, the policy-making body of the federal judiciary.

In Tuesday's committee votes, Rep. George W. Crockett Jr., D-Mich., opposed all but one of the impeachment articles, while Rep. Larry Smith, D-Fla., opposed one of the articles. Three separate votes of 32-1 sent the 17 impeachment articles to the House floor.

Smith, who is white, and Crockett, black, were among those who expressed the most anguish about the case. It was a wrenching experience, too, for Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., a black who is chairman of the

subcommittee that investigated Hastings.

Smith, who has known the outspoken Hastings for years, said, he "cannot shake the feeling" that "there was a bit of racism involved."

But, as he appeared near tears, Smith said racism could not be the "sole motivation" for the allegations, because there were "too many unique circumstances that can't be explained away by coincidence."

Crockett, a former city judge in Detroit, said anyone denying that racism was involved in the case "closes his eyes to conditions that still exist."

But the lawmaker said the issue is "whether he's competent to sit in judgment of his fellow man and brings credit to the judiciary." He said any judge who allowed himself to become involved in such a case "is too dumb to sit in judgment of anyone."

The judge's lawyer, Terence Anderson, said in Washington, "Judge Hastings hasn't fought for five years to hold on to a \$90,000 job. We're

fighting on principle."

In addition to the bribery and false statements articles, Hastings was accused of leaking federal wiretap information to the mayor of Dade County, Fla., Steve Clark.

William Borders, a Washington attorney, was convicted of participating with Hastings in the bribery scheme, but the judge was acquitted in a separate trial — a verdict that committee members said was inconsistent.

Conyers, who gave an extensive account of the evidence against Hastings, said he was initially "skeptical" of the allegations and wondered whether "racism could be the source" of the charges.

But Conyers, who said he joined the Judiciary Committee to remedy racism in the judiciary, said he looked "for a scintilla of evidence of racism" and "couldn't find any."

"Black public officials must be held to the same standard as all other public officials," he said.

Dukakis slams Bush for 'do nothing' attitude

Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis slammed George Bush on Tuesday for taking a "do-nothing" approach to Attorney General Edwin Meese's legal difficulties. Bush said if he wins the White House he will hold officials to an "exacting code of conduct."

Dukakis, who formally won the Democratic presidential nomination last week, also criticized Bush for not trying to block the arms-for-hostages deal at the center of the Iran-Contra affair.

Bush, who will receive the GOP nomination at the Republican National Convention next month, said that civil penalties as well as criminal sanctions should be used to punish ethical violations by government officials. He said conflict of interest laws should be broadened to include Congress. Departing from Reagan administration policies, Bush also endorsed the use of independent counsels to investigate wrongdoing.

Dukakis, boosted by the positive reaction from the Democratic National Convention, led Bush by 17 points in the latest Gallup poll of 1,001 registered voters conducted Friday through Saturday.

The survey, reported Tuesday by radio station WEEI in Boston, found Dukakis with 54 percent support to 37 percent for Bush. Nine percent were undecided in the survey, which had a margin of error of 4 percent.

The two would-be presidents debated ethics long distance as the current occupant of the White House told reporters that the rhetoric at last week's Democratic National Convention got "my Irish up."

"To hear the opposition talk, you

would think growth in our economy had come to a dead halt," President Reagan said.

The Federal Election Commission, meanwhile, voted to release \$46 million in federal campaign funds that Dukakis is entitled to as the Democratic nominee. The 6-0 vote came despite objections from a Republican group.

Traffic flow on Asbury to be altered

Traffic on Asbury Street, behind Hobby and Neely residence halls, will be reversed to flow one-way northbound beginning Aug. 3, Tom Williams, A&M's director of parking and transit, said.

The reversal is part of an attempt to alleviate some traffic problems from the intermittent closing of Ross Street from Heaton Hall to Langford Architecture Complex.

Parking officials are preparing for increased auto flow into and out of the Northside parking garage, which is scheduled to open Jan. 1, 1989, Williams said. Traffic on Ireland Street, now closed, will be reversed to a one-way southbound pattern when it is reopened later in the fall, he said. Behind the garage, an additional two-way street between Asbury and Ireland also will be opened under the plan.

Parts of Ross will be closed to lay down sections of utility piping for the Richardson Petroleum Engineering building currently under construction at the corner of Ross and Spence streets, he said. Parts of the street will be closed for two to four months, Williams said.

Williams said the closure of Ross would be handled in the same manner as the closure of Ireland Street, which was turned into a dead-end street rather than being closed completely. This will allow continued access to Parking Annex 7 and the random staff spaces on and behind Ireland, but motorists need to use more caution than usual in the areas being worked on, he said.

Meese's former deputy testifies

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Justice Department criminal division chief William Weld testified on Tuesday that he resigned in protest last March after telling his boss, Edwin Meese III, that the attorney general had probably broken the law.

And Meese's former top deputy, Arnold I. Burns, said he quit the same day because of the "deep malaise" at the department, adding that Meese was living in "a world of Alice in Wonderland" about his problems.

Weld told the Senate Judiciary Committee that if Meese were an ordinary citizen, he probably would have been prosecuted for taking gra-

tuities from his longtime friend E. Robert Wallach.

Weld, who resigned March 29 to protest Meese's continued tenure in the face of a criminal investigation by independent counsel James McKay, said that he told Meese the day he quit that the statute barring the acceptance of gratuities in exchange for the performance of official duties "certainly would reach the conduct of Mr. Wallach and probably that of Mr. Meese."

Weld said he reiterated his views in April in a 40-minute meeting with Reagan and George Bush.

Weld said he concluded that the

attorney general had certainly violated federal ethics guidelines prohibiting public officials from committing acts which give any appearance of impropriety.

Before resigning, Weld said he decided that "if Mr. Meese were an ordinary public official, he would be prosecuted under the gratuity law."

"When I was the United States Attorney in Boston, we successfully prosecuted building inspectors who accepted gifts from friends who maintained they merely wanted to 'get in good,' or 'say thanks,' or 'expedite' an otherwise lawful official action," the former assistant attorney

general told the committee. "In short, I came to the conclusion that this set of facts was sufficiently serious that I felt I could not continue as chief of the criminal division at the Justice Department."

Weld and Burns, the former deputy attorney general, disclosed new details about their White House meeting with Reagan, with Burns describing Bush as becoming "florid, very upset." Burns said Reagan appeared "distressed" during what Weld described as a "very frank and candid" discussion in which Burns outlined how a "deep malaise" had set in at the Justice Department because Meese refused to step down.

Aircraft charter service opens at Easterwood

By Janet Goode
Senior Staff Writer

In the midst of a back-sliding economy, a new aircraft charter service has been opened for operation at Easterwood Airport to hopefully enhance and attract future growth of industries in the Brazos Valley, Ted Lezynski, director of operations of the service, said.

Lezynski said that when the economy took a turn for the worse, he saw too many pilots lose their jobs — and their planes — because they couldn't afford them. The new service gives them a chance to keep flying, he said, and hopefully will give the economy a boost.

"There's a joke in the airplane business," he said, "when the economy goes, things follow in alphabet order: airplanes, boats, condos, and then deer leases. But airplanes are always the first to go," he said.

AIR-SRV Inc. — a Houston based company — received certification from the Federal Aviation Administration June 29 and has been in operation ever since.

Lezynski said he began the service because he saw a need for a new "class" of charter plane in Bryan-College Station that would attract businessmen to the area. Lezynski said that when an executive comes to an area and is thinking about expanding there, one question he asks is, "What kind of air service will be available?"

The other charter service offered at Easterwood Airport is Executive Aircraft. David Haensly, a charter pilot for the service, said that Executive works with AIR-SERV in cross-referrals but otherwise remains independent.

Lezynski said that although this service was already established at Easterwood, he still saw a need for another type of charter service. Lezynski said the AIR-SERV plane is larger (carrying up to seven people), is air-conditioned, pressurized, and has seating in an executive style with chairs facing each other.

"I stepped into a different class, so we don't really compete with each other," Lezynski said of his service.

"They (Executive Aircraft) have a single-engine aircraft that is good for sight-seeing and short trips. I'm just trying to attract a different market."

Lezynski said that in addition, AIR-SERV can arrange for aircraft charters in any type of plane through their networking system.

The service can also assist in bidding.

"The University requires three bids before they can charter an aircraft and I can give them this information over the phone," Lezynski said. "For example, a fellow from the forestry department called and said his department required that he call three charter services and find out who would do it for the least amount of money. I had all the information right at my desk."

AIR-SERV operates a twin-engine Golden Eagle which is a class of aircraft that has not been previously available for charter in this community. Lezynski said that right now the twin-engine plane is really just a "test bed." Lezynski said he is financially in the position to add any aircraft to the fleet that will help

satisfy customer needs.

Right now, Lezynski said their main clientele consists of businessmen who recognize the value of their time.

"When ever someone asks me about costs, I say commercial airlines are cheaper — unless you are considering time."

AIR-SERV can operate anywhere in the continental United States and costs \$1.80 per mile, \$25 for the "wait" fee, and an additional \$100 per night for the pilot.

Lezynski said he hopes the service will expand to accommodate hospital patients, sports fans and many other areas of interest.

Besides the three commercial airlines that fly from B-CS to Houston or Dallas, other aircraft at Easterwood include three owned and operated by Texas A&M.

Lezynski said that although nothing concrete has been done, he has been talking with University officials and eventually plans to work with them in fulfilling their needs in this area, also.