

Church pays back taxes on spread

CORPUS CHRISTI (AP) — Officials of the church founded by the late Lester Roloff have paid the back taxes owed to a school district in time to avoid an auction of a 550-acre spread where the evangelist operated unlicensed homes for youths.

Officials of the People's Baptist Church paid the \$75,250 owed to the West Osco Independent School District Monday in order to avoid the auction that was to be held Tuesday.

Roloff's successor had earlier criticized a Texas Supreme Court ruling that agreed that the school district had the right to tax the property despite the church's contention that it was exempt from taxes.

"The church does not belong to Caesar," the Rev. Wiley B. Cameron said. "Should we render money to Caesar, or (render) redeemed people now able to walk uprightly and not be a burden to the state?"

The Supreme Court ruled that the church had nullified its tax-exempt status by allowing a for-profit business to operate on the property.

Roloff, a dynamic radio preacher whose sermons were broadcast throughout the nation, died in 1982 when his private plane crashed.

State judicial candidate given public reprimand

AUSTIN (AP) — The State Commission on Judicial Conduct issued a public reprimand Tuesday of Dallas appeals court Judge Charles Ben Howell, a Republican candidate for the Texas Supreme Court.

Howell violated provisions in the Code of Judicial Conduct and "acted in a manner that brought discredit to the judiciary" by filing a lawsuit "in bad faith" against Homecraft Land Development Inc. and others, the commission ruled.

A lawsuit filed in bad faith is filed "with the knowledge that his actions were wrong and in intentional disregard to the rights of others," the commission said.

Howell, a judge on the 5th Court of Appeals in Dallas, did not return a phone call from the Associated Press.

He is running for the Supreme Court seat held by Democratic Justice Raul Gonzalez, a candidate for re-election.

A spokesman for Howell, who refused to allow his name to be used, said Howell would discuss the reprimand at a Wednesday news conference.

"The commission recognizes a judge's right as an individual to pursue or defend litigation," the commission said. "However, a judge should not disregard the rights of others by bringing lawsuits in bad faith."

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— The State Commission on Judicial Conduct

A public reprimand is the most serious action the commission can take short of filing a formal proceeding to remove or censure a judge, Flowers said.

Howell sued the company and others for trespass to try title in Dallas, the commission said. He later amended the action to include claims under the Deceptive Trade Practices Act. He appeared as a plaintiff and served as attorney in the case, the commission said.

Homecraft counterclaimed for a bad faith filing, the commission said. A jury found Howell had brought the suit alleging deceptive trade practices against Homecraft and U.S. Home Corp. in bad faith. The court found Howell's suit under the act was groundless, the commission said.

"The commission also noted that the discredit to the judiciary was so evident as to result in the presiding juror writing the trial judge after the case had ended, stating, 'The reason I am taking the time to write to you now is because the behavior of Judge Howell greatly disturbed me during the trial,'" the reprimand said.

"I honestly feel he has abused the system by bringing these ridiculous charges against the defendants . . ." the presiding juror wrote.

Howell was ordered to pay \$87,000 to Homecraft after the jury said he sued in bad faith. The judgment was reduced to \$75,000 by an appeals court.

Howell then appealed to the Texas Supreme Court and demanded that the nine justices disqualify themselves from the case. They refused and twice rejected his case.

The provisions of the Code of Judicial Conduct that the commission said were violated by Howell include one that says, "A judge should participate in establishing, maintaining, and enforcing and should observe high standards of conduct so that the integrity and independence of the judiciary is observed."

The other says, "A judge should respect and comply with the law and should conduct himself or herself at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity . . . of the judiciary."

Howell declined to appear before the commission to discuss the circumstances surrounding the case.

Man shoots himself in head after police surround him

DALLAS (AP) — A man suspected of robbing banks in five states shot himself in the head in Southern Oklahoma Tuesday as authorities surrounded his car after tracking him from an apparent foiled robbery attempt at a North Dallas bank, the FBI said.

Michael Allen Cadwell, 45, of Hallandale, Fla., was listed in serious condition at Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas. He was transported to Parkland from Ardmore Memorial Hospital in Oklahoma, police said.

Cadwell is a suspect in robberies of banks in Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, Tulsa, Okla., and Washington, D.C., Dick Newth of the Dallas FBI office said.

Cadwell shot himself in the mouth after being pursued by members of the Oklahoma Department of Public Safety at speeds that reached 115 mph, Patrol Lt. Gene Loman, who was involved in the chase, said.

Tuesday's events unfolded when Cadwell allegedly walked into the Savings of America Bank near Interstate 635 in Dallas about 10:15 a.m.

A bank employee summoned a security guard after allegedly recognizing Cadwell as the man who robbed the same bank on July 5, police said.

Cadwell allegedly fled the bank, but not before the bank employee got a description of his car, police said.

The FBI circulated a description of the vehicle to local police departments in North Texas and Southern Oklahoma, Newth said. About 11:45 a.m., Oklahoma authorities said they spotted a vehicle matching the description traveling on Interstate 35 about 15 miles north of the Texas border.

The vehicle left the interstate about nine miles south of Ardmore, and tried to flee on county roads, Loman said.

Loman said about five patrol cars surrounded the vehicle when it pulled into a driveway, and as officers secured the area they heard a gunshot. Loman said he saw blood coming out of the car and realized Cadwell shot himself.

Police said Cadwell had shot himself in the mouth with a .38-caliber revolver.

Hopeful track operators seek licenses

AUSTIN (AP) — Thirty-five prospective track operators have expressed interest so far in seeking licenses for pari-mutuel horse and dog racing, the Texas Racing Commission said Tuesday.

The non-binding letters showed interest in seeking licenses for all three classes of horse tracks as well as for greyhound tracks that will be allowed in Galveston, Nueces and Cameron counties.

Nancy Fisher, deputy secretary of the commission, said the agency had received five letters of intent from people wanting to build major, Class 1 horse tracks which are allowed in the Houston, San Antonio and Dallas-Fort Worth areas.

Under the state's new racing law, dog racing will be allowed only in three counties, and Fisher said seven letters of intent had been received from Cameron County, three from Galveston and two from Nueces.

In a related development, Assistant Attorney General Bill Conover, in a letter released Tuesday, said that since the state racing law prohibits the Racing Commission from limiting the number of Class 2 tracks licensed, another method could be considered to avoid "oversaturation" of race meetings.

In a letter to Comptroller Bob Bullock, a Racing Commission member,

Conover said the panel should study creating a "racing circuit" plan like those used in states such as California to avoid the problem.

Fisher said the circuit concept has been under study by Texas racing officials.

Hance sets tentative date for non-OPEC meeting

DALLAS (AP) — A proposed meeting of non-OPEC oil producing nations and states has been set for Nov. 10 in Austin. But the organizer, Railroad Commissioner Kent Hance, hasn't yet heard whether any of the officials he invited will attend, an aide said Tuesday.

"Hopefully by Friday we'll have a much better idea," Hance's administrative assistant Glen Hunt said. Hunt declined to say which nations and states have expressed an interest in attending the session.

He said officials in Hance's office decided Monday to set the Nov. 10 meeting date after leaders of the invited nations and states found it difficult to determine when most could attend.

Ten oil-producing nations, a Canadian province and nine states were invited to the meeting, according to Hunt.

Letters proposing the meeting were sent Oct. 11 to non-OPEC nations, most of which had been asked to a meeting in Vienna, Austria, in April by members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

The non-OPEC countries invited to the Texas gathering include Angola, China, Egypt, England, Columbia, Norway, Oman, Malaysia, Mexico and Canada. The Canadian province of Ontario also was invited, as were the states of Wyoming,

Texas, Alaska, California, Colorado, Louisiana, New Mexico, North Dakota and Oklahoma.

"Due to the current developments in the price of oil and OPEC interest in cooperation from non-OPEC producers, I feel it is imperative that the non-OPEC producing countries meet to discuss the strategic considerations surrounding the future of our industry and respective economies," Hance's letter said.

"Price stabilization is an issue which will not disappear until we take action," the letter said.

Hance said the meeting should come before OPEC convenes Nov. 21 in Vienna.

Since he was appointed by Gov. Bill Clements last year to a seat on the Railroad Commission, which oversees the oil and gas industry in Texas, Hance has made highly publicized trips to OPEC meetings.

He says major financial institutions send representatives to the sessions, and he contends that states such as Texas should have officials there, too.

But Hance's notion has been criticized by his opponent in the Nov. 8 election. Hance and Democratic state Rep. Clint Hackney are vying for the remaining two years of the Railroad Commission term to which Hance was appointed.

Hackney has said Hance shirked his commission business to attend the OPEC meetings.

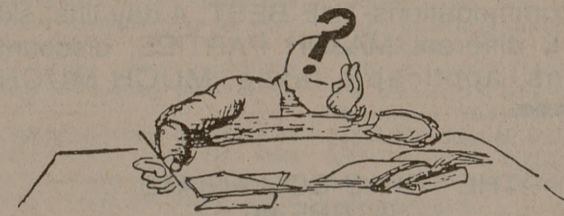
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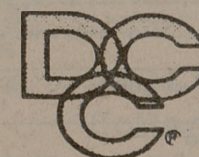
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