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Published report says DEA built laboratory for dealer

HOUSTON (AP) — The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration gave suspected drug dealers the required chemicals and even built a drug laboratory for one target, according to a published report Monday.

Houston attorney Philip Greene told the *Houston Post* that DEA agents watched a suspected dealer in Dallas make and deliver methamphetamines and Quaaludes but did not intercept the drugs. The dealer, however, was arrested, according to Greene.

"If the point of the DEA is to get drugs off the street, they violated policy," said Greene, who specializes in drug cases.

"I'm saying our basic goal is to infiltrate drug dealers," Marion Hambrick, the DEA chief in Houston, said. "We can't expose what we do undercover."

The disclosure comes in the wake of a weekend report in the *Houston Chronicle* that the DEA has directed local law enforcement agencies throughout the country to stage phony drug seizures and generate false news reports to help agents gain the confidence of drug lords.

At least two large cocaine seizures in Houston actually were staged by DEA officials working in concert with local police agencies, the newspaper reported.

In August 1984 and again in September this year, newspapers and broadcasters reported authorities had made large drug seizures in the Houston area. Unknown to reporters, however, the events were staged, according to the *Chronicle*.

"They certainly go over the ethical line and come close to the line of legality," Houston attorney Dick DeGuerin said. "What I see is a trend. Because of the national anti-drug hysteria, the end has come to justify the means."

Hambrick said no record was kept of how many times the ruse was used, but insisted it was not a common occurrence.

"It's a rare technique," he said. "It is not the practice of the DEA to lie to the press. Nor is it asking other agencies to lie on its behalf."

Harris County Sheriff Johnny Klevenhagen, however, said that the success of the program has prompted its use across the country. He praised the scam bogus seizures as "productive in taking illicit drugs off the street."

According to the *Chronicle*, the staging of bogus seizures apparently began several years ago to resolve a dilemma for undercover agents posing as cocaine importers for Colombian drug lords.

Once the cocaine is smuggled into the country, it must be disposed of before reaching the street and without jeopardizing the ongoing undercover operation, federal sources told the newspaper.

Often the DEA operatives deliver the drugs according to instructions from Colombian exporters and keep the shipment under surveillance in hopes of intercepting it before it hits the streets. But the DEA sometimes ensures that drugs never reach the street by "dropping the load" bogus seizure.

Newspaper clippings gen by the tactic are used to p cover stories for agents, who explain the loss of the cocaine drug lords.

Jim Harrington, legal direc the Texas American Civil Lib Union, said the DEA tactic da the credibility of the entire cri justice system.

"The system only works beca is credible," Harrington said. cannot have a jury looking at a son and wondering if he was s to achieve some greater goal."

Harrington acknowledged abandoning the tactic may mea lice are less effective.

"It would also be easier if the lice could search houses and people without warrants," he "But we have a constitutional sys and this is what they are trying subvert."

Journalists say the scams ethical questions about govern deception of the news media an public.

Newspapers and broadcas tions do not have the resourc verify all information release law enforcement officials and take it at face value, Paul Paolo news director of KPRC-TV in H ton, said.

Care providers need state office

AUSTIN (AP) — A special task force studying rural health care problems has suggested in a draft report that the Legislature should create a state office to act as an advocate for financially struggling rural health care providers.

Such an office would be a central point for information and technical assistance and a liaison for rural health interests with state and national government agencies, Sam Gorena, executive director of the Special Task Force on Rural Health Care Delivery, said.

"The task force found a fragile system of health care in rural Texas," the preliminary report said. A final report is to be issued before the Legislature convenes in January.

Texas leads the nation in hospital closings over the past five years. Most of those have been in rural areas.

Forty-eight of the state's 254 counties have no hospitals, according to the task force.

The dwindling availability of care is a problem that affects everyone that travels an interstate (highway), Gorena said.

Gorena said the office being recommended would be limited to possibly one person. The preliminary report doesn't estimate how much it would cost to operate, but it lists state appropriations, gifts, grants and fees for services as sources of funding.

The task force, made up of lawmakers, health care professionals and other citizens, was established by the Legislature to report on medical availability in rural areas.

The task force, which conducted a dozen hearings statewide and received testimony from 250 people, examined shortages of rural medical personnel, regulatory restrictions on rural hospitals, the availability of emergency services and trauma care, financing and liability insurance for rural medical personnel.

In the draft report, the task force calls for rural communities to form health care networks for purchasing and planning advantages.

It also proposes adjustments to state Medicaid and federal Medicare reimbursement formulas.

Texas ranks 2nd on Forbes 400

DALLAS (AP) — Texas ranks second among all 50 states in the number of headquarters of the Forbes Magazine 400 largest private companies, the magazine is reporting in an upcoming issue.

Forty companies on the 1988 Forbes list are based in Texas. Dallas has 23, the most in the state.

Houston has six, while three are based in San Antonio and two are headquartered in Fort Worth.

Austin, Coppell, Lubbock, Sulphur Springs, Temple and Tyler each are the headquarters for one of the top-400 private companies, the magazine said.

Forbes listed the rankings in its Dec. 12 issue.

Texas ranked behind New York state, which has 68 company headquarters.

California placed third, with 34 of the firms' headquarters.

The magazine also ranked individual cities.

New York City led the list, followed by Chicago in second place and Dallas in third.

Houston, the other Texas city in the top 10, shared sixth place with Detroit and Minneapolis.

Texas-based companies making the Forbes list this year that were not on it in 1987 are Tracor in Austin; Southland, Cullum Co., Epic Healthcare Group, MorningStar Foods, Placid Oil, Dr Pepper-Seven Up and Hallmark Electronics in Dallas; White Swan and AFG Industries in Fort Worth and Safeway Texas Division in Houston.

Forbes reported that total revenues of the 400 largest private companies in the nation increased about 17 percent, from $449 billion to $523 billion in the past year.

Cat instinct can be hard habit to fix

The Brazos Animal Shelter, the Student Chapter of the American Veterinary Medical Association and *The Battalion* are combining their efforts to promote responsible pet ownership.

The goal is to promote knowledgeable pet care, kindness, public health and civic responsibilities by publishing weekly articles.

The following article was written by Professor Bonnie V. Beaver of A&M's Department of Small Animal Medicine and Surgery in the College of Veterinary Medicine.

One of the hardest things to do is to convince a cat that certain spaces are off limits and that certain behaviors are not appropriate. The problem behavior often is one which is normal for a cat but unappreciated by their owners. The variety is endless and will range from jumping on tables and counters to climbing the owner's leg as if it were a tree.

Throwing a shoe or yelling "No" works occasionally to control the behavior, but the undesired behavior may occur when the owner is gone. Punishment also tends to make the cat learn to avoid the owner, and most people really want a well-behaved but friendly cat, not one that runs when it sees them.

The solution to the misbehaving cat is to find a punishment that will be associated with the behavior, not with the owner. In other words, the environment should punish the cat. It is also important to understand that normal behaviors will continue to occur, so they must be appropriately directed.

Cats like high places and will tend to jump onto shelves, sofas, counters and tables. The owner should choose those which are unacceptable and those which are all right for the cat to be on. If the cat has recently arrived in the home, the lesson is easiest to teach by keeping tables and counters bare of food that the cat can get. Food would be a reward and would encourage the behavior to happen again.

A sofa can be made uncomfortable with boxes, a plastic cover or books. Petting, warmth and softness encourage the use of acceptable locations. Thus, making an area physically uncomfortable decreases the desirability of staying there.

Remote control punishment is another useful technique for cats but timing is very important. A squirt gun or plant sprayer works well for many problem cats. Initially, owners may want to carry the sprayer with them throughout the house so that when the cat climbs their leg or attacks them it is instantly doused.

The owner also can hide and wait for the cat to jump on a restricted piece of furniture or scratch something behind the scratching post. When the problem occurs it is punished instantly. The owner does not say anything, so now the act of getting on or scratching the furniture is causing the punishment, not the presence of the owner. As the frequency of the problem decreases and the number of locations decreases, the squirt gun or plant sprayer can be left near the problem area.

The key to "No" training is threefold. First, normal behaviors will occur, but can be modified. Second, the lesson is most effective if the environment is negative rather than the pet/owner interaction. Third, a punishment should occur as soon as the behavior starts.

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