

Haltom officer fired for 'neglect of duty'

HALTOM CITY (AP) — One police officer was suspended and a probationary officer was fired for not dispatching a car to a home where a homicide victim's body was later found, Haltom City Police Chief Tom Cowan said.

Cowan said Tuesday that dispatcher Sandra Snow, a four-year veteran of the police department, was placed on indefinite suspension Jan. 10.

Doris Burleson, a probationary dispatcher, was fired the same day, Cowan said.

The action was taken when investigators discovered a 911 call had been placed Dec. 15 from the house where three days later a neighbor found the body of Floyd Elvin Stice, 44.

Snow violated personnel rules covering "inexcusable neglect of duty" and breached the city's general code of conduct, Cowan told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. Snow told Haltom City officials she plans to appeal her suspension, according to Cowan.

Burleson was fired for not satisfying the requirements of the job, Cowan said.

Originally, Snow and Burleson were placed on administrative leave with pay Dec. 30, Cowan said.

Burleson told the Star-Telegram her job on Dec. 15 was to write down calls and relay them to the dispatcher for cars to be sent out.

After the initial call, which Burleson described as "real short," she attempted to call the number back.

"The guys I talked to didn't sound up-

tight. There was no stress," Burleson said. "It sounded like a party group. I could hear several people in the background. No one was screaming or shouting. There was no stress. Nothing that would trigger suspicion."

Snow could not be contacted Tuesday by the Associated Press.

Two sisters, Sherry and Rebecca Clouse, have been charged in the case with voluntary manslaughter, according to Lt. R.W. McQuery.

Train hits bus, kills 41 in Sri Lanka

AHUNGALLA, Sri Lanka (AP) — A train collided with a bus taking children home from school Tuesday and dragged it 50 yards. Police said 41 people were killed and 72 injured, and the death toll might rise.

School books, shoes and pencils were strewn along the track and inside the demolished bus.

"Bodies were scattered all over and children were screaming," said a Buddhist monk who helped carry victims to ambulances and other rescue vehicles.

Witnesses said the driver of the bus, which was carrying about 120 people, tried to cross the track ahead of the train but his engine stalled.

Police said the driver escaped with minor injuries and five children riding on the steps jumped to safety. No one on the train was hurt.

Hance sworn in as Railroad Commission chief

AUSTIN (AP) — A Republican and a Democrat were sworn in Tuesday as members of the Railroad Commission, with Republican Kent Hance being named chairman of the agency that regulates the Texas oil and gas industry.

Hance, whose trips to OPEC summit meetings last year won him worldwide publicity, is the first Republican to win election to the commission in its 98-year history.

Voters in November chose Hance to finish the final two years of the term to which GOP Gov. Bill Clements appointed him in 1987, replacing Democrat Mack Wallace, who had resigned.

Jim Nugent, a 10-year commission veteran, was elected to a full six-year term.

After both men were sworn in, Nugent announced that he and fellow Democratic Commissioner John

Sharp had chosen Hance as the agency's new chairman.

"In spite of his being a Republican, he got elected," Nugent said with a grin. "In spite of his being a Republican, the two Democratic members of the Railroad Commission have seen fit to select him as the next chairman of the Railroad Commission."

Hance, a former congressman

from Lubbock who switched parties after losing the 1984 Democratic U.S. Senate nomination, lost the Republican gubernatorial primary in 1986.

He has been rumored to be interested in another state job — possibly governor — when his Railroad Commission term ends in 1990, but Hance said Tuesday that it was too soon to speculate about any future race.

"I'm enjoying being on the Railroad Commission and that's all I'm concentrating on right now," Hance said. "It's too early for people to be doing all that stuff" to prepare for 1990.

In introducing Hance to a Texas Senate chamber crowded with well-wishers for the swearing-in ceremony, Clements hailed the expanding role Republicans play in state government.

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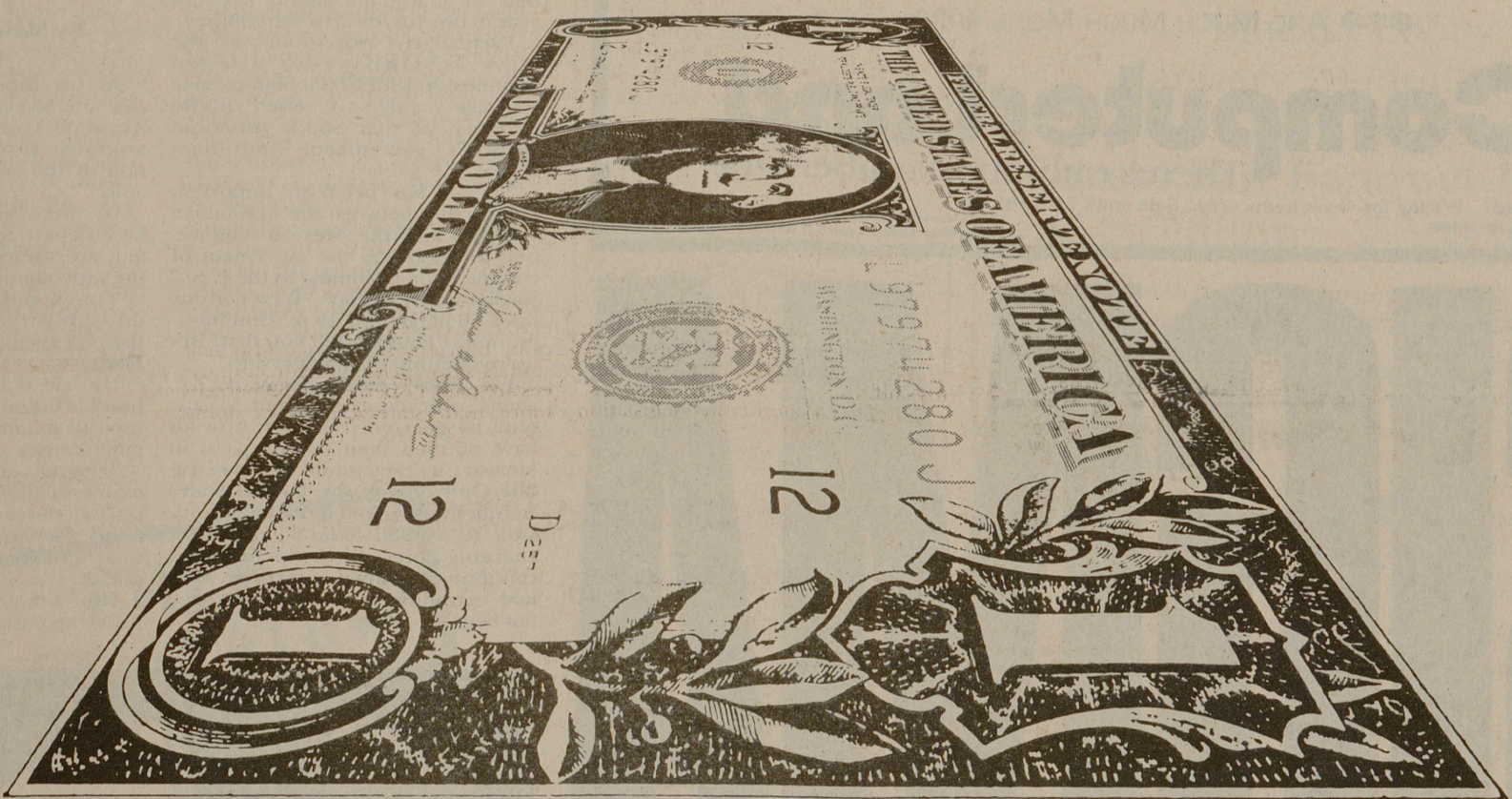
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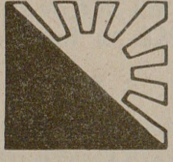


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