

# Billionaire's family buys unused Fort Worth land

## Perot hopes to develop land near new airport

FORT WORTH (AP) — Dallas billionaire Ross Perot's family has become the largest owner of undeveloped land in Tarrant and Denton counties, most of it tied to plans for development around Fort Worth's Alliance Airport.

The Perot Group donated 380 acres for the \$31 million airport, which Fort Worth officials hope will transform the rolling pastures between the city and Denton into a planned mix of industry, offices, shopping centers and homes.

Records show the Perot family owns 16,331 acres in the two counties, easily surpassing the holdings of established ranchers, developers and wealthy investors, the *Dallas Morning News* said.

Appraisal district officials in Denton and Tarrant counties have valued the Perots' holdings at \$121 million, but Ross Perot Jr. told the *Morning News* that figure is low.

"We paid more than that," he said, but he wouldn't say how much. "I'd just say more."

In Denton County, The Perot Group owns 9,638 acres with a market value of \$33.7 million. In Tarrant County, the Perots' 6,693 acres are valued at \$87.3 million.

The airport area investment is risky, but could reap big dividends if Alliance becomes a major transportation hub for manufacturers and distributors.

"Driving through a Las Colinas or an Irvine Ranch in California is a lot like what it'll look like," says Ross Perot Jr., managing partner of The Perot Group. "It'll have a very comfortable, clean feel."

He said the family hopes its \$100 million-plus investment will be a good hedge against inflation if it pays off.

The Perots' position as the largest identifiable land owner in Tarrant County was determined by analyzing a computer report, commissioned by the *Dallas Morning News*, from the Tarrant Appraisal District.

The report, listing some 10,000 individual owners of undeveloped land in Tarrant County, shows that the Perot family has amassed more land than any other single individual, family or business.

For the development to succeed, the Perots must lure industry to relocate in the industrial park they're building adjacent to Alliance.

The family is negotiating with several companies.

# Murder suspect caught after escape through ceiling of cell

ARLINGTON (AP) — An escaped murder suspect was recaptured after he disappeared from his cell by prying up a ceiling panel.

On Friday, William Kevin Birkett, 21, went through the hole, crawled to a plumbing shaft, descended and escaped, police said.

Police recaptured Birkett on Saturday after a phone caller tipped them to his whereabouts. Tactical officers converged on a vacant second-

floor apartment after tossing a stun grenade through a window and arrested Birkett without injury.

Birkett was being held without bail on a Ruston, La., murder warrant, said Arlington police spokesman James Hawthorne.

The suspect also was charged with an Arlington robbery, unlawfully carrying a weapon, unauthorized use of a motor vehicle and parole violation.

Arlington police had received a CrimeStopper's tip that Birkett had robbed a pizza deliveryman and during that investigation found that Ruston police had issued an arrest warrant for the man, Hawthorne said.

Birkett is charged with capital murder in connection with the Dec. 30 stabbing death of a 55-year-old man in Ruston, 65 miles east of Shreveport, Ruston Police Chief Don Hamman said.

## In Advance

### A&M Focus on Performing Arts this week

By Fiona Soltes

STAFF WRITER

The performing arts will come to center stage this week during the second annual Texas A&M Focus on the Performing Arts Week.

Eric W. Trezell, program adviser to MSC OPAS, said this year's FOPA week contains many smaller events planned around larger happenings.

"We don't have a certain set week every year," Trezell said. "This just seemed to be a good week, with the Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra performing, the annual Run for the Arts, and the performance of 'My One and Only.'"

Trezell said some of the smaller events are different than last year, but the idea behind the week has remained the same.

"The week helps let the students and faculty know what OPAS does," Trezell said. "We want to provide exposure to the performing arts."

The events will begin at noon Monday with a Century Singers open rehearsal in the MSC lounge, followed by After Class, a men's quartet, at 1 p.m. at Rudder Fountain. A symposium on Musical Opportunities at A&M will be at 7 p.m. in 402 Academic Building.

Tuesday's events start with the

Miss TAMU Pageant talent presentations in the MSC Lounge, followed by a performance of the Reveliers at 2:30 p.m. That evening, the Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra will present "First Chair Encores" in Rudder Auditorium at 8 p.m., in which four principal players — flute, oboe, trumpet and harp — will play solo pieces with orchestral accompaniment.

As usual, there will be the weekly Brown Bag Lunch Special at noon Wednesday in 402 Academic Building. At 8:30 p.m., the A&M Consolidated High School drama department will perform in 228-9 MSC.

Thursday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Stark Series will present a group of performing ensembles in the MSC Lounge. Immediately following at Rudder Fountain, MSC OPAS will celebrate Handel's birthday.

On Friday there will be a Gershwin Surprise at noon in the MSC Lounge and an MSC OPAS presentation of "My One and Only" at 8 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium.

The week of events will be completed with the eighth annual Run for the Arts Saturday. Sponsored by MSC OPAS and TAMU Roadrunners, the one mile race begins at 9 a.m. and the 5K race begins at 9:30 a.m., both from G. Rollie White Coliseum. Musical groups will perform at various points along the run to encourage the participants.

### Greek Week proceeds to benefit United Way

"Paint the World Greek" is the theme for Greek Week, Feb. 13-18. Texas A&M fraternities and sororities will get together to participate in various activities scheduled during the week.

Proceeds from T-shirt sales, can collections, cover charge at Zephyr's and a percentage of drink sales at The Edge will go to United Way.

Scheduled events are as follows:

Monday, Feb. 13 - Banners displayed on fraternity and sorority houses will be judged.

Tuesday, Feb. 14 - Fraternity members will serenade sorority members on sorority row at 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 15 - There will be a presentation on Greek life at A&M in 212 MSC at 7 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 16 - Greek's night out at Zephyr's.

Friday, Feb. 17 - Greek members and children from the local Boy's and Girl's Clubs will meet at Post Oak Mall at 5:30 p.m. They will be grouped together and the Greek members will treat the children to dinner and games. The groups will then get together and watch cartoons. Then it's Greek's night out at The Edge.

Saturday, Feb. 18 - Fraternity and sorority members will participate in athletic games at Southwood Valley Park at 11 a.m. A torch run will precede the events. An awards ceremony will proceed at 5 p.m. Awards will be given for athletic events, academic achievement and Who's who in Greek organizations.

### Professor dispels myths about Nicaragua

MSC Political Forum will present "Nicaragua: Myth or Reality?" at 8:30 tonight in 206 MSC.

Dr. Albert L. Michaels, professor of history at the State University of New York at Buffalo, will speak about U.S. foreign policy and how it has been influenced by myths about Nicaragua.

Michaels, whose trip was sponsored through the Office of the Provost, is an expert on U.S. foreign policy, Latin America, and mass media and foreign policy. He has done extensive research

in Mexico, Bolivia, Peru and Costa Rica.

Michaels is an honor graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, where he received a bachelor's degree in history in 1959, master's degree in history in 1962 and doctorate in history in 1966. He is the author of several books and articles on Latin America and Mexico.

A question-and-answer period will follow the speech. The event will be concluded with a reception in 205 MSC. Admission is free.



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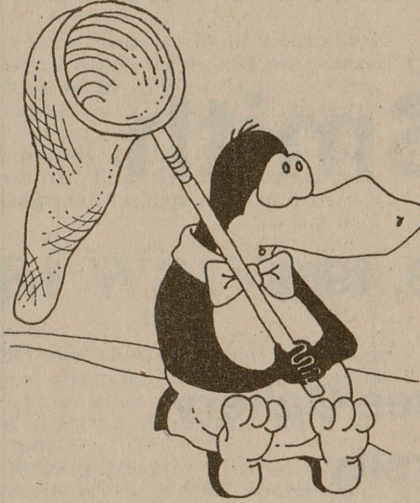
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## House sets hearing for worker's bill

AUSTIN (AP) — A bill to overhaul the Texas workers' compensation system — a system described as "broken" by the House speaker — is set for hearing in a House committee Monday.

House Bill 1's primary sponsors are Bryan Republican Richard Smith and Rick Perry, D-Haskell. House Speaker Gib Lewis is among more than 50 members who signed on as co-authors soon after the bill was introduced.

"The problem with the current system is that rates are too high and benefits are low," Rep. Steve Wolens, chairman of the House Business and Commerce Committee said.

"Our objective is to make sure that rates become low and benefits become high, and that there is a fair procedure for claimants and for employers," Wolens, D-Dallas, said.

The committee will look at whether House Bill 1 would accomplish those goals in the system, which pays employees injured in work-related accidents, Wolens said.

He said he expects the panel to hear this week from experts on workers' compensation; from the five professional groups — doctors, lawyers, insurance, business and labor — with a particular interest in the issue; and from the public.

Among other changes, the bill would increase benefits for injured workers from a maximum of \$238 a week to the statewide average weekly wage, currently \$416; revamp the system's governing board; address workplace safety; and prohibit lump sum settlements until an employee has returned to work for six months and has not received medical treatment for three months.

In addition, instead of a workers' compensation case getting a completely new trial at the district court level, the district court action would be treated as an appeal of the agency action.

The measure comes after a one-and-a-half-year study of the workers' compensation system. Premiums for workers' compensation have increased more than 100 percent since 1985, and another 19 percent increase took effect Jan. 1.

Also Monday, a subcommittee of the Senate State Affairs Committee is scheduled to continue a probe into the State Board of Insurance.

The board has been at the center of controversy recently after investigative reports uncovered management flaws in the regulation of the insurance industry.

Criticism was triggered by the collapse of National County Mutual Fire Insurance Co., a Dallas-based firm with 125,000 policyholders. An investigation indicated the insurance agency failed to act promptly in trying to save the company, despite repeated warnings.

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