Rep. Finnell investigated

Lawmaker denies mishandling funds

nvestigators are looking into allegations that a Texas lawmaker, Rep. Charles Finnell, collected state money for car trips he didn't take and conducted personal and political business at state expense, a newspaper reported Tuesday

Two former aides to Rep. Charles Finnell, D-Holliday, said they have been contacted by authorities and asked to cooperate in the investiga-tion, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

Earlier, the two raised questions about the use of state funds by Finnell, who has adamantly denied any wrongdoing. House Speaker Gib Lewis also has defended Finnell.

Another former aide has been contacted by investigators, her husand told the newspaper.

Program

educates

teachers

way in Brazos County.

A program to strengthen edu-cation in the Bryan and College Station school districts is under-

The Brazos Elementary Sci-

ence Improvement Project offers

hands-on experience to princi-pals and teachers in both districts

in hopes of bettering teaching. Dinah Chancellor, BESIP coor-

dinator for the Bryan Indepen-

dent School District, said experiencing science seems to be the key

to developing a future in science.

of adults who want to be life-long learners," Chancellor said. "Our

"Ultimately, BESIP

educated set of adults

who will walk wisely into

Dinah Chancellor,

change doesn't happen unless the

She said attitudes and teaching habits need to be changed. BE-

SIP's purpose is to change these

attitudes and prepare youth for

"Ultimately, BESIP will make a

better-educated set of adults who will walk wisely into the 21st century," said Chancellor.

The first workshop for principals was Dec. 5, and the next will be Jan. 11 in Rudder Tower.

Workshops for elementary teachers and in-service workshops will be every Saturday beginning

in June and ending in February. These teachers will receive six

hours of advanced academic

for 60 elementary teachers from

both districts will be in June. The

workshops will provide teachers

with ideas they can take back to

Last year, BESIP was success-

ful as a rural project. This is the

first time it has been tried in Bra-

zos County.

BESIP is supported by Texas

A&M University, the Bryan and College Station independent

school districts and a grant from

the Texas Higher Education

Coordinating Board.

A two-week summer institute

training for college credit.

their classrooms and teach.

will make a better-

the 21st century."

forefront is a leader

the future, she said.

"We're not producing the kind

ees" and are untrue.

"If the district attorney's office is interested in this matter, they haven't told me or contacted me in any way," he said. "However, if they feel that it is necessary to make some inquiries, I would be happy to cooperate fully with that office

Travis County District Attorney Ronald Earle and Mike Lynch, head of Earle's Public Integrity Unit, did not immediately return a telephone call from the Associated Press.

The American-Statesman quotes sources familiar with the investigation as saying the probe focuses on allegations about Finnell that were disclosed in a Nov. 14 story by the

Finnell said the allegations come sano said Finnell had instructed her to fill out state travel forms to be reimbursed for driving on legislative

business, when she said he actually flew free with friends or family. She said Finnell also conducted personal business on state long-distance lines and that she typed envelopes and handled correspondence for Finnell's real estate business on

Fasano, who now works in New York, referred questions to her attorney, Charles Johanson of Austin. He confirmed that investigators con-

tacted her within the past week.
Charles Waters, Finnell's former administrative assistant, said he was contacted twice. He earlier echoed Fasano's allegations about the falsified travel claims.

A third former employee, Doro-

the American-Statesman reported. She refused to comment but her husband, Tim Green, said she declined to cooperate.

Finnell is a 20-year House veteran who heads the House Rules and Resolutions Committee.

The American-Statesman in October reported that Finnell, as chairman of the House General Investigating Committee during 1987 and 1988, spent the panel's entire \$40,000 budget, although the com-

mittee met only once.

Finnell said he did nothing wrong. He said he personally investigated hundreds of tips, then destroyed the records.

Speaker Lewis defended Finnell as "a dedicated and committed public servant who has made great sacrifices to serve the people of this

newspaper. In the story, former aide Lisa Fathy Green, also has been contacted, Ivie envisions master's program for SCOM, Theater Arts majors

Speech Communication and Theater Arts said he plans to help establish a master's program in the department. Robert Ivie, who received a doctorate in rhetoric and

communication from Washington State University, begins duties as department head Jan. 15. He takes the

"Since the department was founded, growth has been phenomenal."

> - Robert Ivie, department head

position previously held by Dr. Kurt Ritter, who leaves in January to participate in a research project.

Ivie said the first item on his agenda is establishing a master's program. He said the program has been approved by the Board of Regents and is being considered by the Texas State Coordinating Board for Higher

"I will continue to strengthen the undergraduate program and the faculty to eventually have a strong enough department to offer a doctoral degree," he

The speech communication and theater arts department was formed in September 1985, and was only one year old when Ivie joined the A&M faculty.

"Since the department was founded, growth has been phenomenal," Ivie said.

He said 200 students were majoring in speech communication when he arrived, and now enrollment of speech communication majors has climbed to 650.

Ivie said that to meet demands of growth in the department, it is time to expand the programs offered.

The need for people with good communication skills is growing. Students receiving degrees in speech communication and theater arts are finding themselves mar-

'Bill, you squeaked by'

Commisioners reinstate Ross

BESIP coordinator LUBBOCK (AP) — County commissioners reinstated Bill Ross as justice of the peace after Ross accidenprincipals are our forefronts, and

tally quit. But just barely.

Ross announced at a news conference last Thursday that he was running for the Republican nomination

for county judge.

He renounced his candidacy a few hours later, after he learned of a clause in the Texas Constitution that says a county official with more than a year left on his term cannot announce for another public office without forfeiting his current job. end of 1990. He has held the job since 1982.

But despite his longevity, commissioners reinstated him by only a 3-2 vote. The two commissioners who voted against him said they wanted to accept applications for the job before choosing the best-qualified can-

Before the vote, County Judge Rod Shaw, the head commissioner, asked Ross if he was still a candidate

for county judge.
"Well, judge, that's kind of a

tough question right now," Ross answered. "As far as I'm concerned, I'm not."

Shaw, who is retiring at the end of this term, broke a 2-2 tie by voting to

reappoint Ross.
"Bill, you squeaked by," Shaw told

Ross after the vote.

The vote followed several days of squabbling over whether Ross had officially announced his candidacy.

Some suggested the announcement wasn't official until Ross had

paid his filing fee or hired a campaign treasurer.

Trees

(Continued from page 1)

sists of the mover digging around the tree and then using some kind of material to hold the soil around the tree. Some horticulturists believe the ball-and-burlap method reduces shock to the tree.

Dr. Fred Davies, associate professor of horticulture at A&M, said, 'Anytime you dig up a tree, you've lost 95 percent of its root system. That's very traumatic for the tree."

The box method "involves digging a large trench around the tree and then coming up underneath it with a box," Hodge said. "We feel it has a higher likelihood of success.'

Dr. Benton Story, professor of horticulture at A&M, said, "I don't believe anyone could transfer those

sure wish they would have put on their jackets and come down off the 8th floor so they could see proof that my method works.

> John Hoelzel, tree mover

big trees, But, if anyone could do it,

Hoelzel said he believes both methods are adequate, but the box-

you are away. That way you won't miss out on any of

your favorite programs or have the hassel of another in-

stallation when you get back. Just stop by our convenient

MSC location today or come by the MSC Dec. 6-8 or

and-burlap method would save the University money

He also said that by using his method trees can be moved long distances and can live up to three years without being planted.

"I brought a 60,000 pound tree with a 14-foot rootball diameter that has been alive for three years this way all the way from Dallas," he said. 'The Rudder oaks are only going to be moved 60 to 75 feet.

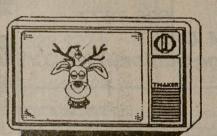
Hoelzel said he was upset to find out that the methods he learned at A&M are "not adequate."

"I have the best interest of A&M at heart and I sincerely believe I could move all 12 trees successfully.

"The project is scheduled to begin Dec. 18," Hoelzel said. "I hope the

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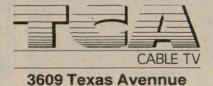
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\$100

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