

Committee recommends video textbooks to board

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas school districts could use state textbook money to teach science through "videodiscs" — like compact discs with pictures — under a recommendation Tuesday from a state committee.

The State Board of Education in November will consider the unanimous recommendation of the State Textbook Committee, which endorsed the videodisc science program for use beginning in the 1991-92 school year in elementary grades.

If "Windows on Science" wins final approval, Texas would be the first state to adopt a videodisc-based curriculum as an alternative to recommended textbooks, according to the Warren, N.J.-based Optical Data Corp.

"I think this will become a model throughout the country for literally redefining the textbook industry."

—William Clark, company president

The state of Texas has made some history in education today," said Ron Reed, a vice president of Optical Data.

The program is "a better mousetrap," said William Clark, the company's president. "I think this will become a model throughout the country for literally redefining the textbook industry."

Rather than relying solely on a book to provide information, the program uses still and moving pictures to illustrate scientific concepts and principles. It also outlines "hands-on" activities for students to use.

For example, a videodisc program on weather and air includes video of a Minneapolis tornado captured by a television photographer.

It uses graphics to illustrate weather occurrences, and shows how students can make a "differential temperature tester" with rulers and thermometers to mea-

sure heat from various materials.

Reading and writing assignments also are included. The program, available in English and Spanish, stores more than 54,000 separate images on one side of a single 12-inch videodisc. The company says a teacher can move quickly from one subject or picture to another, operating the system on a television or video monitor with a remote control.

Designed for use in grades 1-6, the program costs \$495 to \$595. Schools also would have to purchase a laser disc player to use it, at a cost of about \$400.

About 400 Texas schools already are using "Windows on Science" as a pilot project, the company said. More than 4,000 schools nationwide are using videodiscs, it said.

Reed said he would expect a number of schools to consider videodiscs as their only science resource, but others to use textbooks for some students and videodiscs for others.

"Change is a slow process," he said.

Act Now

The Crime Prevention Unit of the University Police Department offers the following information about how to keep thieves from stealing things from your car.

Any luggage, packages, purses, cameras or anything of value sitting in your car are just "begging to be stolen."

Take the time to lock these valuables in the car's trunk, or better yet, take them inside with you.

Mount CB radios, stereo components, radar detectors and telephones out of sight. Whenever possible, take these possessions with you.

Use slide-in-and-out mounting and a portable antenna for easy removal.

If you own a truck, a lockbox with a case-hardened padlock can be installed in the truck's bed and valuables can be stored there.

Be smart and keep your possessions safe by making it difficult for a thief to take your belongings.

Immediately report any suspicious activity in or around automobiles to the University Police at 845-2345.

For more information about auto burglary prevention, contact the Crime Prevention Unit at 845-8900.

Law firm hits jackpot in antitrust case fees

HOUSTON (AP) — A law firm that spent nearly six years and 200,000 hours on a railroad antitrust case divvied up a \$100 million jackpot Tuesday among all its employees — even those in the mail room.

The sum is the latest and largest portion of more than \$200 million in legal fees paid to the victorious attorneys. It also is the largest amount ever collected in a single case by Vinson & Elkins, the city's largest law firm.

"This is the end of a long haul," said J. Evans Attwell, managing partner of the 73-year-old firm. "We went down a long road for this one."

All of the estimated 1,600 employees in the firm, which includes 201 partners, benefited from the windfall, Attwell said.

"The money came in and we paid it out," he said. "I believe this is a red-letter day. I don't think there has ever been a day here quite like this."

The settlement would amount to more than \$900,000 for each of the firm's 201 partners if the total sum were divided evenly, lawyers said. But senior partners will collect more than the junior members of the firm, possibly creating several instant mil-

lionaires.

The fees were generated in a case filed by the ETSI Pipeline Project, a group of companies that tried to build a coal slurry pipeline from Wyoming to Texas and Arkansas.

The pipeline, which would have carried powdered coal and water, was abandoned in 1984. ETSI then sued five railroad companies, charging them with illegally trying to block the pipeline by refusing to allow it to cross railroad rights of way.

Lawyers for ETSI also alleged that the railroads used "judicial and administrative processes to disrupt, delay and ultimately destroy the project."

Later, four of the railroad companies — the Union Pacific, Chicago and Northwestern, Burlington Northern and the Kansas City Southern — settled out of court.

The Santa Fe Railway Co. fought the case, but lost a judgment that would have cost the railroad \$750 million. Santa Fe, rather than appeal, opted to settle out of court and pay ETSI \$350 million.

The five railroads, in total, agreed to pay more than \$650 million, with one third going to Vincent & Elkins.

Man pleads guilty to killing wife

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — An Air Force sergeant formerly stationed here pleaded guilty to killing his wife, who had threatened to reveal her husband's role in a military test-cheating scandal.

Master Sgt. William Lipscomb, 34, entered the plea Monday at court-martial proceedings at Langley Air Force Base in Hampton, Va. He now faces a mandatory life sentence.

Lipscomb also pleaded guilty to an obstruction of justice charge.

He was arrested in July 1989 at his home near Langley and later was

charged with the murder of his wife, Kathleen, whose nude body was found in June 1986 in a San Antonio ditch. She had been strangled with a cord.

Kathleen Lipscomb had filed for divorce and threatened to reveal her husband's role in a test-cheating scam, officials said. William Lipscomb had threatened to disclose an alleged affair between his wife and a doctor.

Her body was found three days after she moved out of the couple's San Antonio home. The body had

been stuffed in a burlap bag and placed inside a military footlocker.

"He told the military judge of two motives," said Capt. Bruce S. Ambrose, an Air Force prosecutor. "One was to keep custody of his children, to prevent her from getting custody through the divorce they were going through, and two that she was having an affair. We believe there were other motives."

Ambrose said Lipscomb had threatened to kill his wife if she exposed his test-cheating operation.

Former teacher receives 10 years for molestation

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A former elementary school teacher has been sentenced to 10 years in prison for molesting a 9-year-old boy found in a bathtub at the man's home.

State District Judge Susan Reed denied a request for probation by John Charles Howard, 44, and sentenced him to prison.

He had pleaded no contest two months ago to an indictment stemming from an April 1989 incident in

which police said they found a second-grader in Howard's bathtub. Authorities said Howard had been taking photographs of the boy.

Howard accepted a plea bargain for a 10-year term.

In exchange for the no-contest plea, prosecutors agreed to dismiss an aggravated sexual assault indictment against the defendant.

Teens charged with murder face lawsuit

HOUSTON (AP) — The father of a slain Vietnamese youth has sued the two alleged skinheads charged with killing him and may later add the paramedics who treated the boy as defendants, an attorney said.

Hung Truong, 15, died this month after allegedly being chased and beaten by Derek Hilla and Kevin Allison, both 18. Police have said the attack was racially motivated.

Fire Department paramedics called to the scene of the attack examined Truong and released him after he declined treatment. Hours later they were called to the home of one of Truong's friends and transported the boy to Ben Taub hospital, where he died.

Peter Segelke, an attorney representing Truong's parents, said Monday that future defendants likely will include the paramedics.

Paramedics and police officers have been criticized by residents in the west Houston area where the attack occurred, and an attorney representing Hilla for failing to immediately hospitalize Truong or notify his parents.

Houston Fire Chief Robert Clayton has called for an investigation into the paramedics' handling of the situation.

Police Beat

The following incidents were reported to the Texas A&M University Police Department between Aug. 9 and 13:

BURGLARY OF A BUILDING:

• A resident of Wofford Cain Hall reported someone stole his General Electric VCR, Sony portable radio, an unknown brand of CD player and two Sanyo stereo speakers.

BURGLARY OF A VEHICLE:

• A man reported someone entered the custodial department's Daihatsu Hi-Jet vehicle located in Parking Area 28 and removed the knobs on the air

conditioner and the gear shift.

CRIMINAL MISCHIEF:

• A female A&M student reported someone used a sharp metal object to scratch the paint on the hood of her 1990 Chevrolet while it was in Parking Area 30.

• During checks of campus property, a security officer discovered that a Sega Afterburner videogame and two pool tables located in the MSC Bowling and Games area had been damaged.

MISDEMEANOR THEFT:

• A College Station man reported the theft of his wallet and \$60 from a room in the Aerospace Engineering Building.

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