

Police chief clarifies hiring stance

DALLAS (AP) — Police Chief William Rathburn, in what he calls a clarification of a previous statement, says homosexuality should be used to disqualify someone from the force since it is addressed in the state penal code.

Rathburn's latest statements were made in a memo sent to the Dallas City Council Saturday.

The council is expected to debate a controversial policy Wednesday that bans lesbians and gay men from the Police Department.

The Dallas Morning News reported Sunday that Chief Rathburn's memo cites Section 21.06 of the state penal code, which makes sexual relations between people of the same sex a misdemeanor.

The law was declared unconstitutional in 1990, but state District Judge Paul Davis' ruling is

Homosexual officers violate state law, Rathburn says

being appealed.

"While I am aware of no evidence to suggest that gays and lesbians are unable to perform the duties of police officers, I do not think that the Dallas Police Department should hire individuals who have a significant history of, or acknowledge an intention to continue, committing deliberate, frequent violations of the law," Chief Rathburn said in a statement to the City Council.

"As long as homosexual conduct remains a violation of Texas state law, I think that the department should treat disqualification based on Section 21.06 by the same standard as it treats most

other Class C violations, he continued.

Council member Chris Luna, who is leading the fight to overturn the ban, said the memo appears to be a change from Chief Rathburn's statements two weeks ago.

At a Jan. 9 news conference, the chief said he was unconcerned about the sexual orientation of his officers.

Luna said he will ask City Manager Jan Hart and Acting City Attorney Sam Lindsay to determine whether Chief Rathburn was pressured to change his statement.

"I can tell you straight out no

one influenced me," Chief Rathburn said. "This is what I believe."

During an interview Saturday, Chief Rathburn said his memo — and his statements from the news conference — are consistent with comments he has made regarding the hiring of lesbians and gay men since becoming the Dallas chief, the Morning News reported.

He said his personal beliefs about sexual orientation should not be a factor in the department's hiring policy.

"Whether an officer likes Section 21.06 or agrees with it is immaterial," he said. "As long as it is the law, he has to respect and obey and enforce the law."

But Luna disagrees that the chief is only clarifying his views. The council member called Chief Rathburn's memo "a major variance."

Grand Prairie voters pass tax increase to fund track

(AP) — Residents across the state voted their pocketbooks in tax rollback, sales tax and bond elections over the weekend.

Grand Prairie voters passed a half-cent sales tax increase Saturday to fund a multimillion-dollar bond \$65 million package for construction of a top-class race track.

A total of 6,868 voters supported the increase, while 6,336 opposed. Almost 35 percent of the city's 38,000 registered voters turned out.

Raising the city sales tax to 7.75 cents on the dollar would fund the track expenses, to be coupled with at least \$30 million in developer financing.

"It is super," Mayor Duane McCuffey said. "I really feel that Grand Prairie has made a rite of passage. I feel that we are pro-active for development and for growth."

The Texas Racing Commission is expected to approve a Class 1 track for North Texas this year. Track sites in Dallas and Parker County also have been proposed.

Airline objects to rail project

Former aerospace executive accuses Southwest of deception

WASHINGTON (AP) — Southwest Airlines is conducting a "highly deceptive" campaign against a proposed \$5.5 billion high-speed rail project in Texas, a former aerospace executive charges in a new book that hit stores last week.

Dallas-based Southwest has filed two lawsuits in state district court to derail the bullet train project, which would link Dallas, Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport by 1998. Austin and San Antonio would be added in 1999.

Texas would be the first state in the nation to have such a rail line — joining the ranks of France, Japan, Germany and Italy.

Southwest opposes the 200-mph train system, saying it is unneeded, slower than airplanes and eventually would become a burden to taxpayers.

But Joseph Vranich, author of "Supertrains: Solutions to America's Transportation Gridlocks," contends train systems have been penalized by federal policies that funnel monies to highways and airports.

Laws that favor tax-exempt financing for airports over high-speed rail need to be changed, says Vranich, a former Boeing and Grumman aerospace employee who later worked for Amtrak and the High Speed Rail Association.

Vranich says Southwest's contention that aviation isn't subsidized is an "infuriatingly false claim."

But Jim Parker, Southwest vice president and general counsel, attacks several of Vranich's examples of airline subsidies and calls the book a "propaganda piece for high-speed rail interests."

Parents find lost record of remains

FORT WORTH (AP) — For six years following Melissa Jackson's 1983 disappearance, her parents remained in the same apartment complex so she could easily find them.

But it was Laura and Leslie Jackson who found their teenager, who was misplaced all along by a Grand Prairie police computer.

Until last summer, the Jacksons never knew that their daughter's remains, discovered by police

in 1986, were being kept in the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office.

"It's a relief. I know where she's at," said Mrs. Jackson. "But I'm lost without her."

On Saturday, nearly six years after Melissa's bones were found by construction workers March 9, 1986, in Bedford, the Jacksons held a memorial service for their daughter.

With the remains found, police are now tracking a bigger mys-

tery: Who killed Melissa and another young woman whose body was found 800 yards away from where the Jackson's daughter was found?

An autopsy showed that Melissa was stabbed to death.

"The odds of two skeletons being found 800 yards apart and not being put there by the same person are so small I wouldn't even want to speculate," said Bedford Detective Biff Schuessler.

Health Center urges breast self-exams

Salina Eubanks
Special to The Battalion

Breast cancer is the number-one killer among women under age 50 and the number-one cancer diagnosed in women in the United States.

Approximately one out of every nine women will develop breast cancer. Each year, more than 43,000 women die of breast cancer, and approximately 175,000 new cases are reported. Most breast cancer cases occur in women, but around 900 men are diagnosed with the disease each year.

Although these are sobering statistics, there is good news. Eighty percent of breast lumps are non-cancerous. Also, through early detection and treatment, over 87 percent of breast cancer patients can be saved.

Knowledge of the risk factors associated with breast cancer, awareness of possible symptoms, and practice of breast self-examination are keys to early detection and treatment. The importance of early detection cannot be overestimated.

The major risk factors include age (35 to 45), and any history of breast cancer in the family, especially concerning one's mother or sister. However, eighty percent of women with breast cancer have no risk factors.

Appropriate breast care includes regular periodic self-examination and also regular examination by a physician. These steps toward early detection should be taken by all women, regardless of the ab-

sence of risk factors or symptoms.

Self-examination should be performed monthly by all college-age women. This practice is important because most breast cancers are discovered by the women themselves. A professional breast exam is recommended every three years for women ages 20 to 40.

In regard to self-examination, breast cancers are hard and non-painful. Lesions with constant or periodic pain are almost always noncancerous. However, any suspicious change should be reported promptly to a physician.

Mammography is another procedure vital to early cancer detection.

A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast which can find cancers too small to be felt by a woman or a physician. A baseline mammogram should be performed on a routine basis between the ages of 35 to 39.

A tumor takes approximately six to eight years to become large enough to be detected by mammography. A cancer large enough to be felt by a woman or her physician is probably eight to ten years old. However, at this point, a significant percentage of these lesions have not begun to spread (or metastasize), making a cure possible.

If you would like to learn more about breast cancer, and how to perform an effective breast self-examination, please visit the Health Education Center in Room 16 in the basement of the A.P. Beutel Health Center, or call 845-1341 or the American Cancer Society for more information.

IN ADVANCE

The Physical Plant will take suggestions from students, faculty, and campus workers on how to improve safety on the Texas A&M campus. Suggestion boxes will be located in the O&M Building, the Memorial Student Center and the Langford Architecture Center. The Physical Plant will work to implement any viable suggestions to better work, traffic, environmental, and student safety at A&M.

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