

Aid to help fight money-laundering

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Texas has a reputation for being one of the biggest money-laundering meccas in the United States, with hundreds of millions of dollars of illegal cash being converted to "clean" money each year.

And that's something state and federal law enforcement agencies want to change. At a congressional hearing in San Antonio on Thursday, Assistant U.S. Treasury Secretary Ronald K. Noble will announce that his agency is providing a grant to help Texas authorities combat money laundering.

"Texas will be the first state in the nation to receive this assistance because of the magnitude of its money-laundering problem and because Texas has made outstanding efforts to fight money laundering," says Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez, the San Antonio Democrat who chairs the House Banking Committee.

Neither Gonzalez nor Treasury Department officials would discuss the size of the grant prior to Thursday's Banking Committee field hearing, which will examine whether new federal legislation is needed to stem money laundering.

Several factors contribute to Texas' emergence as a money-laundering capital: its proximity to Mexico; a flourishing drug trade along the border; and the border money exchange houses.

"Miami and Los Angeles for a long time were large money centers, but now South Texas has become a major money center in its own right," says Vincent Klink, resident agent in charge of the U.S. Customs Service office in McAllen.

He attributes the problem to the ease with which foreigners can cross into Texas and exchange huge bundles of cash at the money exchange houses, known as casas de cambio.

"In reality, most of them are money-laundering fronts," he says.

Customs agents have witnessed people flying into the McAllen airport with duffel bags stuffed with \$1 million in cash — money they legally report as belonging to a particular casa de cambio, Klink says.

While the money is legally reported when brought into the country, it may not remain legal if federal agents can prove it derived from an illegal source.

Klink and other law enforcement officials say most of the "dirty" cash is profit from drug

or weapons sales. The owners of the money want to launder it so they can invest in the United States, they say.

"It makes good sense to invest your money here; and drug dealers, like other businessmen, are trying to invest their money rather than have it sit in Mason jars buried in their back yard," Klink says.

While the money keeps coming in, no one seems to be able to specify how much — in large part because the illegal cash typically is laundered through several steps.

"They do a long, complicated paper trail shifting money from various businesses — legitimate businesses — and then get the money into banks," says Ron Dusek, spokesman for Texas Attorney General Dan Morales.

Says Steve Yost, spokesman for the Internal Revenue Service's Houston district office: "It's big business, but I don't think anybody feels comfortable quantifying it."

"All we can track is those cases we are made aware of. We are fairly certain we might be doing a better job than we've ever done before ... but doing this type of investigation is akin to trying to get a drink from a fire hydrant — it's just a little overwhelming."

The Texas Legislature in May approved leg-

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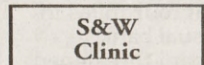
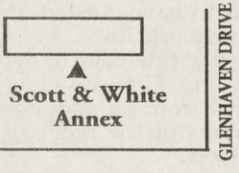
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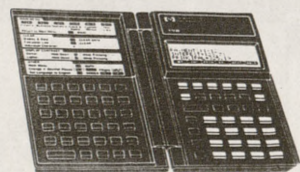
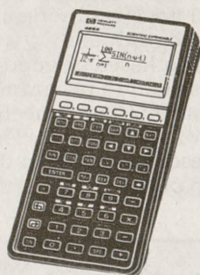
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Campus News Briefs

Clark chosen for Research Fellow

Carolyn Clark, assistant professor of educational human resource development at Texas A&M, has been appointed a 1993 Research Fellow for the Project for the Study of Adult Learning.

Clark was chosen after the selection committee reviewed her proposal entitled "Changing Course: Initiating the Transformational Learning Process."

Clark specializes in adult learning, adult development, feminist issues in education and qualitative research methods.

M.E. department selects new head

Dr. G.P. Peterson, Tenneco Professor of Engineering at Texas A&M, has been selected to head the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

Peterson, the author or coauthor of more than 70 refereed journal articles and one book, was named by the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C., to be director of its thermal transport and thermal processing program.

Fike picked for professorship

Dr. John L. Fike, Jr. was recently named holder of the Victor H. Thompson III '64 Endowed Professorship in Electronics Engineering Technology at Texas A&M.

The professorship was established in 1989 thanks to a \$500,000 donation from the late J.R. Thompson in honor of his nephew, Victor.

Fike's research interests include algorithms and heuristics for network design and analysis in telecommunications.

College receives funding gifts

The Texas A&M College of Engineering received a series of gifts last week.

Anderson Consulting Firm donated \$20,000 to endow two scholarships in the Department of Industrial Engineering and Computer Science.

Lockwood, Andrews & Newman, Inc. in Houston pledged \$25,000 to establish the Frank H. Newman, Jr. '31 Scholarship in Civil Engineering.

The American Petroleum Institute in Houston pledged \$12,500 to the Department of Petroleum Engineering.

Hewlett-Packard in Palo Alto, Calif. donated telecommunications test equipment valued at more than \$49,000 to the Electronics Program in the Department of Engineering Technology. The equipment includes an HP Network Advisory series 486 mainframe with options and accessories.

A donation was also received from Kate Conner, widow of Harold D. Conner '67, who established an honorary scholarship in the Department of Civil Engineering.

The Department of Civil Engineering was also remembered in the will of Anna Lee Fischer of Austin. She donated \$109,469 to the department.

Broussard funds M.E. scholarship

Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Broussard '44 recently donated \$82,110 to Texas A&M University.

Some of the money will be used to establish the Mr. & Mrs. Douglas E. Broussard '44 Scholarship in Mechanical Engineering. The remaining \$15,000 will establish the Douglas E. Broussard '44 Endowed Diamond Century Club membership.

Mr. Broussard is a registered Professional Engineer in Texas and served in the U.S. Army during World War II.

New treasurer takes office

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — Former Longview Mayor Martha Whitehead, Gov. Ann Richards' pick as the state's new treasurer, will be sworn into office Tuesday.

Whitehead, who was Longview's mayor since 1991, has promised to make the Treasury more efficient and says she will run for the office in 1994.

Richards appointed Whitehead, 52, a Democrat, on June 18 to succeed Republican Kay Bailey Hutchison, who was elected June 5 to the U.S. Senate.

"She is a dynamic leader," Richards said. "As the mayor of Longview, she has proven that she knows how to make government work."

A native of Pittsburg, Texas, Whitehead is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Southern Methodist University with a master's degree from East Texas State.

She was elected to the Longview City Council in 1987 and 1990.

She has served as vice president of the Good Shepherd Medical Center, and has served on the East Texas State Board of Regents and the Texas Municipal League board. She and her husband, lawyer R. Laughton Whitehead Jr., have three children.

Whitehead's appointment gives Democrats six of the seven top statewide offices.

She said she will seek election to a full, four-year term as treasurer next year.

Crime Stoppers

On Wednesday, June 23, between 5 and 5:30 a.m., The Wellborn Grocery Store located on FM 2154 in Wellborn was the site of an attempted burglary. The owner stated the suspect(s) drove a vehicle around to the rear of the store and back to the front and began ramming into the two metal doors in the front entrance of the store. The suspect(s) then attempted to break the lock by pulling the metal doors from the bottom. The glass entry doors behind the metal doors were both shattered and the metal doors were destroyed. The suspect(s) were unable to gain entry into the store. The damage was estimated at \$2500.

Brazos County Sheriff's Investigators have no suspect(s) or vehicle information on this crime.

This week the Brazos County Sheriff's Department and Brazos County Crime Stoppers need your help to identify the person(s) responsible for the attempted burglary. If you have any information call Crime Stoppers at 775-TIPS. When you call you will be given a special coded number to protect your identity.

If your information leads to an arrest and grand jury indictment Crime Stoppers will pay you up to \$1,000 in cash. Crime Stoppers also pays cash for information on any felony crime or the location of any wanted fugitive.

Correction

The July 1 issue of The Battalion incorrectly reported that high school teachers are visiting Texas A&M to learn about cloning dinosaur DNA. Although experimentation in cloning at the University is being done, no actual dinosaur DNA is being used. The Battalion regrets the error.

The Battalion

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