Town looks back on teen-ager's abduction, indictment of officer

The Associated Press

GILMER, Texas — Robert and Cathy Carlson don't expect their 17-year-old daughter will ever be coming home.

She disappeared one rainy night two years ago and apparent-ly no one in this East Texas community of nearly 5,000 people has heard from her since.

The silence and the town's peace of mind were shattered last Friday when a grand jury indicted eight people, including Gilmer Police Sgt. James York Brown, on charges of kidnapping, sexually assaulting and imprisoning Kelly Wilson before she was stabbed to

The girl's body has never been found.

Residents of the close-knit community about 110 miles east of Dallas have been helplessly drawn into a scandal that is casting a shadow over an otherwise quiet town.

Brown's supporters maintain the 35-year-old lawman never would have gone along with such a diabolical scheme.

"I work with him and I don't believe it," said Becky Skinner,

hoods rather than ethnic groups.

voting," the suit says.

ic population.

The Associated Press

publicans seeks to halt the Texas March 8 congression-

al primary, claiming "racial gerrymandering" has

primary elections to be put on hold until the Legislature draws new district lines that cluster neighbor-

made U.S. House district boundaries in Texas illegal.

HOUSTON - A federal lawsuit filed by seven Re-

The suit, filed Wednesday in Houston, wants the

The plaintiffs are seven Republicans from Hous-

The current Texas map "represents an unconstitu-

Although the suit targets all 31 congressional dis-

Green's 29th District, sprawling from Spring

Washington's 18th District, created in 1970, con-

ton and Dallas who belong to a larger group called

tional effort to segregate the races for purposes of

tricts in Texas, it is aimed more specifically at districts

like those represented by U.S. Reps. Gene Green and

Branch through southeast Houston to Baytown, was

created for the 1992 elections to include much of the

area's growing but geographically dispersed Hispan-

tains mostly black neighborhoods in Houston's inner

city. It was redrawn for the 1992 elections to accom-

modate a new "Hispanic" district, leaving it about

the Texas Coalition for a Color Blind Texas.

Craig Washington, both Houston Democrats.

secretary for the Gilmer Police Department. "I would trust him with my own kids.

Brown's devotion to the case makes it hard to believe he was involved in her death, Kelly's stepfather said.

Kelly Wilson disappeared on January 5, 1992. Around 8 p.m., she left the video store where she worked to deposit the night's receipts, according to police reports and the store's manager.

"We drove by a couple of times that night," Carlson said. "Things

were busy so, we didn't stop."
Authorities say that Kelly apparently returned to the store. Police later found her car and her purse in front of the store. The tires on 1985 Dodge Charger had been slashed.

Michael Biby, 17, pleaded guilty to slashing the tires and served 90 days in jail. He insisted he knew nothing about the girl's disappearance and was not named in Friday's indictments.

Always at the center of the search for Kelly Wilson was Brown, who made the rounds of the town distributing fliers that display a smiling, girl who once was a member of the Gilmer High

Republicans try to stop March 8 primary

half black and running in patches.

Both districts were created under the Voting Rights

The U.S. Supreme Court signaled support for such

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor wrote that district

And in December, a federal appeals court threw out

But state Democratic Party executive director Ed

He also said it was incorrect to compare the Texas

The districts in Texas don't stretch hundreds of

The Texas lawsuit was filed by lawyer Paul Hurd

districts represented by minorities with those that

miles across the state. They represent people who

work, live and worship in one community," he said.

of Monroe, La., who worked on the Louisiana case.

a Z-shaped, majority-black district in Louisiana, using

Martin said the Texas congressional districts have al-

ready been cleared in court and the Justice Depart-

Act, which ended the practice in some Southern states

of weakening the power of minority voters by spread-

an argument last May when it ruled in a North Caroli-

na case that white voters' rights may have been violat-

maps deserve court scrutiny when they are "so

bizarre" that they appear "unexplainable on grounds

other than race." The new districts, she added, "bear

ed with the creation of two majority-black districts.

ing them into mostly white election districts.

an uncomfortable resemblance to apartheid.

the same reasoning as in the North Carolina case.

ment for compliance with the Voting Rights Act.

were challenged in North Carolina.

The lawsuit protests the moves

School dance squad.

Later, it would be a case already under investigation that would provide investigators with a crucial break in Kelly Wilson' disappearance.

On May 29, 1993, Eugene W. Kerr, 67, his wife, Geneva Kerr, 62; their sons, Danny Kerr, 41, and his common-law wife, Connie Martin, 27; Wendell Kerr, 45, and Wendell's wife, Wanda Kerr; Roger Holeman, 44, a former Gilmer police officer, and his girlfriend Tammy Smith, 25, were arrested on child molestation charges

Scott Lyford, a special prosecutor for Galveston, said it was dur-ing his investigation of the child molestation case that he first received evidence implicating Brown. The most damaging blow to Brown came from Martin.

'We have concluded that she is reliable based on other evidence in other cases," Lyford said Wednesday.

Martin told authorities that she and her co-defendants were responsible for Kelly's murder. In exchange for her cooperation, Martin will not be prosecuted in connection with Kelly Wilson's case

Fraternity to sponsor Miss Black and Gold scholarship pageant Saturday

By Angela Neaves

Eleven Texas A&M women will compete for the title of Miss Black and Gold Saturday at 7 p.m. in Rudder Theater.

The pageant is the last event during Alpha Phi Alpha Week.

Brian Williams, a chairman of the Miss Black & Gold pageant and member of Alpha Phi Alpha, said the pageant is the fraternity's biggest event of

"The Miss Black and Gold pageant showcases talented African-American females," Williams said. "It also provides the winners with scholar-ships at the local, regional and national levels." The contestants were chosen on the basis of per-

sonal interviews and have been rehearsing for the pageant eight hours a day.

Contestants are judged in evening gown, talent

and modeling competitions. They are also judge on their answer to an impromptu question

Kathy Polk, a sophomore accounting major contestant, decided to compete in the pageant after

attending last year's pageant.
"I'm not a very talkative person, and Miss Blac
and Gold has made me more outgoing," Polk said I've also made eleven new friends

Another contestant, Audra Robertson, a ser

chemistry major, said she is really excited about competing in Saturday's pageant.

"All of us have progressed beautifully and but such a strong sisterhood through working on the pageant," Robertson said, "I'm more excited that

nervous about competing. I'm with friends."

The title of Miss Black and Gold offers con tants a chance to be role models for African-Am

can women and children, Robertson said, and courages them to continue their education and come community leaders.

Richards comes under scruting

Governor's office regularly shreds phone bill records

The Associated Press

HOUSTON - A spokesman for Gov. Ann Richards on Thursday branded "a tempest in a librarian's teapot" a newspaper report that Richards' long distance phone calls and those of her staff are destroyed as soon as the bills are paid.

'We have been operating under the same set of circumstances, the same rules, that (former Gov.) Bill Clements adopted in 1989. And we have been fulfilling the law," said Bill Cryer, Richards' press secre-

The Houston Chronicle reported Thursday that while other state agencies keep records of phone calls for at least three years, Richards' aides regularly destroy her itemized long-distance records after each

monthly bill is paid. Richards' staff says the action is legal under a law and procedure that outlines how state records may

'There is no conspiracy over here," said Cryer. "I doubt Ann Richards even know what that (records) retention schedule even looks like.

Richards, in Houston on Thursday, called the report "much ado about nothing."

"I think the whole deal was that a reporter

thought that we should keep our phone records longer than the archives people required either Bill Clements or me to do," she said.

"I've always said anybody can see anything we do in my office," the governor told reporters. "Unfortunately, I haven't got any secrets.

Cryer said that since Richards took office in 1991, the schedule for retaining the records had been reviewed twice by state lawyers and archivists

"They never raised an issue about whether those records were being kept. This is silly," Cryer said.

The Chronicle reported that a state archivist said itemized long-distance telephone records are supposed to be kept at least three years.

William L. Dyess, director of records manage for the Texas State Library and Archives, newspaper that archivists intended that item long-distance records be kept for three years.
"The billing detail in our opinion probablys

include the detail listing," Dyess said. However, Dyess conceded how confusion

the retention schedule could be made. There is a three-year record-keeping period 'billing records" and a billing verification de

tion allowed for "long-distance telephone logs" The only long-distance record now available the governor's state telephones at her office is Ot

November and December bills have not yet rived from the General Services Commission, who serves as the state government's telephone company A spokesman for U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchis contended that a political double standard is want

"Kay Hutchison has kept and turned over to and it the press and prosecutors the records of every single In the press and th telephone call made at the Treasury during her b deferr year term," David Beckwith said. "Yet she is prosecuted for destroying recombility while Democrat office holders are ignored, half halfs of

with said. Hutchison, a Republican, is scheduled for and a

Feb. 7 on ethics charges from her tenure as state to the pri She is charged with four felony counts of misthe res

ing state employees and equipment and of tame Univer ing with governmental records and physical dence in an attempted cover-up.

The state records-tampering law makes it a con if someone "intentionally destroys, conceals

moves or otherwise impairs the verity, legibility availability of a governmental record. Violation is a misdemeanor or third-des

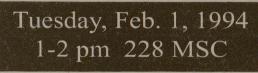
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TEXAS A&M AND 7#E NCAA: What is the relationship?



A roundtable discussion led by Tedi Zalesky-Ellison Director of Athletic Compliance Office

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ey Ags, want to be in the nation's largest yearbook? Answer one or all of the following questions and the winners with the best answers will be printed in the Aggieland! · What is the most embarrassing thing that has happened to you

while you have been at Texas A&M?

· If there was one thing you could change about Texas A&M, what

- Who is the best professor you have had? Why?
- What is the nicest thing anyone has done for you at Texas A&M?
- What is the worst thing anyone has done to you at Texas A&M?
- · What is the weirdest thing that has happened to you (or someone else) in a classroom?

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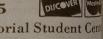
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