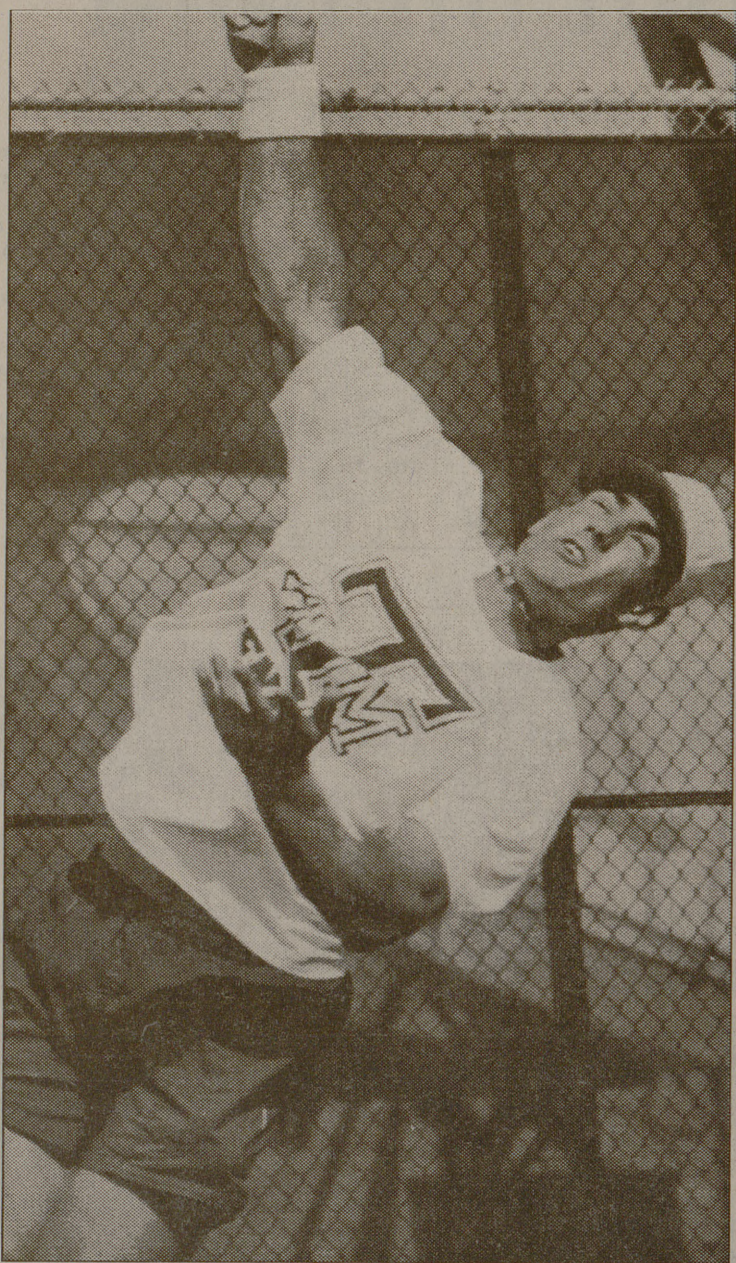


STATE & LOCAL

Raise your hand



Jenny Mayer/The BATTALION

Blake Arrant, a sophomore member of the tennis team, serves during a match against NE Louisiana on Wednesday.

Man ran escort service from state office

The Associated Press

AUSTIN — A Texas Department of Human Services employee was jailed Tuesday night on a charge that he ran a prostitution service on state time from an office computer. James Bunch was fired earlier Tuesday from his job with the state agency, which had furnished authorities with results of its investigation into suspicious telephone calls. Bunch, 45, was held at Travis County's central booking facility in lieu of \$5,000 bail bond set by a municipal court judge on the aggravated promotion of prostitution charge, said sheriff's officer Susan Bonilla.

Court documents obtained by the Austin American-Statesman show that police suspected Bunch of running Aimes Escorts for at least two years. Bunch, a 23-year DHS employee, had held a \$32,000-a-year job as a Medicaid program evaluator, said Mike Jones, a Department of Human Services spokesman. Police have records and computer disks containing lists of escort service employees and customers who used the escort service, according to a search and arrest warrant affidavit. Two weeks ago, the state agency gave police a computer printout listing customer information and names of female employees of the escort service, said Senior Sgt. Jack Kelly of the

Austin Police Department's vice detail. He said charges could be filed against service employees and customers discovered through the investigation. But authorities ask them to testify against Bunch in exchange for not being charged. State officials also provided police with correspondence between Bunch and the woman believed to have bought the escort service from two years ago, Kelly said. He said the correspondence was taken from DHS's mainframe computer. A police affidavit from two men said they paid \$50 to Aimes Escorts and \$120 to prostitutes for sex arranged through the escort service.

Davidian attorneys play 911 call in courtroom

The Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — A Branch Davidian's frantic plea to "call it off" filled a courtroom Wednesday as defense lawyers played a recording of the 911 call a Davidian made as a deadly shootout erupted with federal agents. "There are 75 men around our building and they're shooting at us at Mount Carmel," said Wayne Martin, a top lieutenant to David Koresh. "Tell them there's children and women in here and to call it off."

More than once during the call, Martin referred to gun battle as an attack. "They're attacking us again! . . . They're attacking," he frantically shouted. An hour of the call was played for jurors in the federal trial of 11 Branch Davidians accused of murder and conspiracy to murder the four Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms killed in the Feb. 28, 1993, shootout. Six cult members also died. If convicted, the cult members could face up life in prison. The gun battle at the Davidians' Waco-area home began a 51-day standoff between the religious

group and federal authorities that ended with an April 19 fire that destroyed the compound. Koresh and 78 of his followers died during that blaze. Defense lawyers, who opened their case Wednesday after 24 days of testimony from more than 120 prosecution witnesses, contend Martin's phone call bolsters their position that the Davidians were trying to protect themselves during the gun battle. Lt. Larry Lynch of the McLennan County Sheriff's Department spoke with Martin in the call, which began at 9:48 a.m., about three minutes into a gun battle.

"Tell 'em to pull back," said a Harvard-educated attorney, Lynch as gunfire sounded in the background. Later, Martin said: "Tell 'em get off our roof, to get away from our doors, to get away from our windows." "If they don't back off, we're going to fight to the last man," Martin said. Lynch asked Martin about wounds inside the compound and repeatedly said he wanted to contact ATF agents to arrange a cease-fire, which was negotiated after 45 minutes of shooting.

Attorney demands retrial due to sleeping jurors

The Associated Press

STEPHENVILLE — While several jurors were accused of napping during a murder trial, the defendant's attorney stayed alert. A hearing was scheduled Wednesday before a state district judge on a new trial for Raymona Rhnea Dowthitt, whose attorney is challenging the verdict of the sleepy panel. Mikki Joy, an Erath County clerk, said the motion for new trial was on Judge Don Jones' docket. But by mid-afternoon, the hearing had

not started. Dowthitt was convicted Dec. 8 for the November 1991 shooting death of her husband. She was sentenced to 15 years in prison. The woman's attorney, Brenda Vickers, said she caught three jurors sleeping at various times during the proceedings. "I'm putting five people on (to testify), including myself, to say they saw jurors asleep," Vickers said Tuesday. Vickers, in a Jan. 7 affidavit, contended that "at least one, sometimes two, and on occasion three, separate jurors were asleep."

Jones had denied Vickers' request for a retrial about whether any of them slept during the trial. District Attorney John Terrill said he filed affidavits from several jurors asserting they did not sleep during the proceedings. Terrill said it's the first time in his 20 years as Erath County district attorney he has seen a verdict challenged based on such allegations. "I'm not too worried at this point, but we hear the evidence and what they have to say," he said.

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