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Prof. Dave Woehr

OR

POLS 322: West European Politics and Government
Prof. John Robertson

For More Information, Contact:

Prof. Joe Hutchinson
337 ELAC
845-0584
E-mail: jmhutch@archone.tamu.edu
Office hours:
MWF 3:00-4:40
Thursday 11:00-12:00
or by appointment

Prof. Dave Woehr
209 PSYC
845-2097
E-mail: DWJ@psyc.tamu.edu
Office hours:
Thursday 8:30-9:30 / 11:00-12:30
or by appointment

Prof. John Robertson
2096 Bush/Academic West Bldg
845-2511
E-mail: robertson@tamu.edu
Office hours:
Tues/Thurs 9:30-10:30
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B.J. Dunn, a senior from A&M Consolidated High School, looks over the boars outside the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Lab Monday. The animals are used in melanoma research.

**Gore back
Brown in
Houston**

HOUSTON (AP) — Vice President Al Gore stumped Monday Houston mayoral candidate Lee Brown, calling the former Clinton administration drug czar someone who can bring the city together to continue its progress.

Gore's appearances were primarily to fatten the campaign treasury of Brown, who faces Houston businessman Rob Mosbacher in an election Dec. 6. Each man hopes to succeed three-term Mayor Lanier, who cannot run again because of term limits.

"What you have here before you is Lee Brown in an experienced leader who has made a difference as a cop on the beat, a leader in cities in this nation, as a cabinet member responsible and part of the team for one of the greatest success stories in economic development and reduction in crime in the whole history of the United States of America," Gore told more than 100 people who paid \$1,000 apiece to hear his brief remarks.

Then he left to have lunch at an inner-city cafe, where he was seen through the food line with a couple of Democratic congressmen and state legislators from Houston, Texas Democratic Party chair Bill White and a few others. Brown took no questions from reporters during his three-hour visit, but staffers persisted in keeping reporters away, except for photographers.

During his brief remarks, Gore touted Brown for his integrity, honesty and commitment to excellence in public service. He also cited Brown as someone who solved problems during his stints as police chief in Houston, New York City and Atlanta, and as the Clinton administration drug czar.

PUC: Beware of phone-bill fraud

Commission warns Texas residents to watch for fraudulent, mistaken bills

AUSTIN (AP) — Reading a phone bill might be as exciting as reading the local yellow pages, but officials at the Texas Public Utility Commission say Texans could protect themselves from fraud simply by reviewing their monthly statements.

The PUC on Monday opened an investigation into the growing problem of fraudulent and mistaken billing by various phone companies. The practice, known as cramming, is quickly becoming a top complaint at the utility commission. Officials want to know how it happens and how to stop it.

Commission Chair Pat Wood said Texans need to scrutinize their bills and question anything that doesn't look right.

"If you've got something weird, call us," he urged Texans. "Some of this is just plain fraud."

Under federal law, local phone

companies, such as Southwestern Bell, that do their own billing must provide billing services to other telephone companies, like AT&T and many lesser known companies. Those companies can offer a wide range of services, from paging to voice mail.

Wayne Detjen of SWB said Bell cannot verify the accuracy of charges provided by other companies on SWB bills. "We have to take the service provider's word," he said.

Detjen added that even if the billing company knows people involved with a new company have defrauded customers in the past, federal law does not allow them to deny billing services to the new company.

Detjen said he recalled only once when SWB stopped billing for a company that was ripping off customers. He said that landed SWB in court and took a long time and a lot of money to resolve.

Michael Nighan, a regulatory affairs representative for Frontier Communications, a small long distance company, said it's up to the PUC to identify the bad guys.

"We can't play judge and jury," he said. "You tell us who you don't want us to serve, and we'll not serve them."

Janece Briesemeister, a policy analyst for Consumers Union, said Texans won't always be protected even if they carefully read their bills.

By law, phone customers who don't pay all toll charges on their monthly bills can have their long distance and local telephone services disconnected. That means if a customer finds a bogus toll charge, they face losing local service if they fight it, she said, adding that the PUC could change that rule.

Briesemeister also suggested the PUC require companies that send

the bills to fully itemize them and scrutinize the services for which other companies are billing.

Most often, the billing companies refer complaints to the companies that claims to have provided the questioned service. That company at times is not responsive or refers calls back to the billing company, Briesemeister said.

"Someone has to be held accountable," she said. "They keep pointing their fingers back and forth about who is responsible."

The PUC plans to hold hearings and discussions on the issue in several weeks before deciding whether any action it can take.

Wood said the commission could have to turn to the Legislature for more power or to the attorney general to prosecute bad companies.

"The main thing I would like to use is the bully pulpit to get these people out of Texas," he added.

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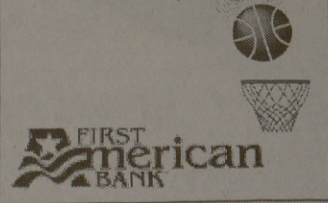
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- MICR 351 - Section 509 BSBE 312 MW 10-11:50 a.m.
- ZOOL 388 - Section 505 BTLR 001 T 9:35-12:25 a.m.
- ZOOL 388 - Section 506 BTLR 001 R 9:35-12:25 a.m.
- BIOL 489 - SP TP GENES, ECLGY & EVOL Pepper
Section 500 BTLR 100 MWF 10:20-11:10 a.m.

For more information call 845-7771