

## Death sentence of Houston man upheld

AUSTIN (AP) — The death sentence of a man convicted of raping and murdering a 7-year-old girl he abducted from his neighborhood near Houston in 1995 was upheld two days ago by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals.

Eric Charles Nenno was convicted of capital murder for the rape and strangling death of Nicole Benton in March 1995 in rural Hockley, about 30 miles northwest of Houston.

As part of an automatic appeal to the Court of Criminal Appeals, Nenno's attorneys argued that the evidence was insufficient to show that Nenno would be a future danger to society — one of the issues a jury must consider before sentencing someone to death.

But the state's highest appeals court for criminal cases disagreed.

Jurors in Nenno's case deliberated for about 11 hours over two days before deciding on the death penalty rather than a life prison term.

Nenno, a plumbing supply salesperson, lived less than a block from the Benton family in a subdivision.

According to trial testimony, neighborhood residents had been wary of Nenno because he was said to have grabbed a child and pulled down her pants.

In his confession, Nenno told detectives he struggled most of his life with urges to fondle young girls.

He said he managed to lure Nicole to

his home by suggesting that they retrieve his guitar so he could join her father's band. Once inside his house, the girl began to cry, and Nenno strangled her to quiet the sobbing.

Nenno raped the girl twice after realizing he had killed her, according to his confession.

Later, Nenno joined about 100 volunteers and law officers who searched for Nicole and distributed thousands of fliers and pink ribbons. At one point, he suggested to investigators that a man like himself might have abducted the child.

Nenno eventually led police to Nicole's body, which he had stashed in his attic.

### Murderer escapes from Huntsville

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — A statewide alert has been issued for a fugitive murderer who apparently walked away from his job as a trusty at the prison system's hangar at Huntsville Municipal Airport, a prison spokesperson said yesterday.

Prison officials said Robert James Hudspeth Jr., 47, may have used an airport telephone to arrange his escape.

Hudspeth was serving a life term for a Travis County murder.

A local search had been called off since it appeared Hudspeth was no longer in the immediate area, said David Nunnelee, a spokesperson for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Authorities in Texas and nearby states have been asked to be on the lookout for the fugitive, he said.

Hudspeth was performing custodial work alone at the hangar on Monday, with a guard periodically checking on him as he worked, officials have said.

Hudspeth, who had been working a 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. shift at the hangar, left a note that said he had become ill and was returning

to the adjoining Wynne Unit, Nunnelee said.

"The note was discovered by a pilot arriving about 2 p.m.," Nunnelee said.

Hudspeth was officially listed as missing when he failed to appear for a 7:30 p.m. head count at the prison unit.

A ground search around the airport and prison unit was abandoned at 10 p.m. Monday, Nunnelee said.

Hudspeth was convicted of murdering a 43-year-old Travis County man by shooting him six times with a .22-caliber pistol.

Hudspeth began serving his life term in February 1981. He has been a trusty and allowed to work off prison grounds with minimum supervision for 10 years. He had a very good record in prison with only one reported infraction, possession of contraband, Nunnelee said.

To qualify for trusty status, which accelerates the rate at which good time credit is accrued, inmates must pass scrutiny by both unit and state-level prison authorities.

### Worldwide flight delays caused by American Airlines computer glitch

FORT WORTH (AP) — American Airlines' computerized reservation system experienced a three-hour outage yesterday morning, causing flight delays worldwide.

The airline's passenger service system went out around 6:35 a.m. and was back up by 9:45 a.m., American spokesperson Chris Chiames said. The cause of the outage was unknown.

Airline employees processed passengers' tickets manually at gates and ticket counters and then calculated the weight and balance of planes before take-off.

Chiames said that caused some flights to be slightly late.

"Some were international flights that may have run 15 to 20 minutes late," he said. "There weren't enormous delays. If it ran over 15 minutes, it wasn't two hours."

Seventy-six percent of flights out of Dallas-Fort Worth International took off within 15 minutes of their scheduled departure, Chiames said, as did 91 percent of flights out of Chicago's O'Hare.

Chiames said he had no figures on the number of people and flights affected.

He said the airline was expected to be back on schedule by Wednesday afternoon.

### Feeding time



MIKE FUENTES

Marci Streck, a first-year veterinary student, feeds deer at the Wildlife and Exotic Center Wednesday. Streck volunteers twice a week for the experience with the animals.

# Freedom of speech

# Freedom of the press

# Now, Freedom Checking...


a free checking account

- Unlimited checking
- No monthly service charge
- First 50 checks free
- Check safekeeping
- 8 convenient locations
- 12 ATMs


We're here to help. Call us. 260-4300  
www.first-american-bank.com




Member FDIC First American Bank, SSB



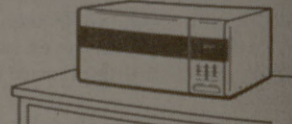
**Fitness Center**  
(Treadmills, Stairmasters, Cycles, Circuit Training, Free Weights)



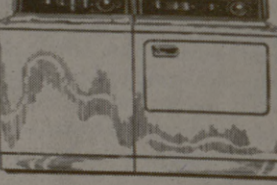
**Multi-Media Center**  
(Computers, Printer, Fax, Copier)




**Ceiling Fans**  
(In Every Bedroom)



**Microwave**  
(And All New Appliances)



**Washer / Dryer**  
(In Every Apartment)



**STERLING UNIVERSITY**  
Village COLLEGIATE RESIDENCES

117 Holleman Drive West College Station, Texas 77840  
Tel.: (409) 696-5711 Fax: (409) 696-5661

Office Hours: Mon-Sat 10-12, Sunday 12-2

Check Us Out on the World Wide Web:  
www.dmcmgmt.com

An S.U.H.™ Community Developed by Dinerstein Companies