

Mexican Mafia defendant sentenced to life in prison

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A federal judge sentenced a Mexican Mafia member Tuesday to life in prison for his role in a series of robberies, drug deals and murders.

Robert "Robe" Herrera was one of 10 defendants convicted in March of racketeering and racketeering conspiracy. He was the first to be sentenced. Others face sentencing this week.

U.S. District Judge Ed Prado ordered Herrera to serve a life prison sentence for each of the two counts. The sentences will run concurrently. Prado imposed no fine, ruling Herrera had no ability to pay.

"It's been hard on myself and it's been hard on my family," Herrera told the judge. "I am finally a free person because I'm free from sin from Christ, Jesus."

Alan Futrell, Herrera's lawyer, told the judge Herrera is sorry and that Herrera was asking the court for forgiveness.

"I will tell you, judge, this young man has good intellect," Futrell said. "He's somewhat charismatic, and I believe him to be a sincere believer in the Lord."

But Prado adhered to federal sentencing guidelines and imposed the life sentences federal rules called for based on Herrera's case and criminal history.

Herrera plans to appeal his conviction, his lawyer said.

Herrera, 25, was alleged to have been a captain in the Texas Mexican Mafia, a prison-spawned gang.

The 15 killings prosecutors accused the organization of committing beginning in 1994 included the August 1997 shot-

gun slayings of five people during a robbery at a house in San Antonio.

Prosecutors alleged gang members sometimes gunned down their own comrades for disloyalty or for bragging about their crimes.

The Texas Mexican Mafia, also known as the "Mexikanemi" or "La Eme," was created by primarily Hispanic inmates inside the state prison system beginning in the mid-1980s, according to the indictment.

San Antonio became the group's "capital" though the organization operated throughout Texas, the indictment alleged.

Prosecutor Bill Baumann said although each defendant is different, he anticipates life sentences will be imposed this week on the other convicted Mexican Mafia members.

Cheer up



Members of the Flatonia High School varsity cheerleading team practice their moves in front of the Student Recreation Center Tuesday. The team is participating in the UCA Cheerleading Camp, which will continue through Friday.

Police say jewelry links railway killer to murder

HOUSTON (AP) — Authorities have linked jewelry found at suspected serial killer Rafael Resendez-Ramirez's home in Mexico to one slaying and hope the cache will strengthen other cases, police said Tuesday.

Thirteen of 93 pieces surrendered last month by Resendez-Ramirez's common-law wife have been positively identified by relatives of slain Houston schoolteacher Noemi Dominguez, Houston police Lt. Ron Walker said.

Dominguez, 23, was found dead June 5. She was the first of four people police believe Resendez-Ramirez killed last month after the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service released him from custody June 2.

Resendez-Ramirez, a rail-riding drifter who routinely uses aliases, was wanted in Texas at that time, but a fingerprint check on the illegal immigrant did not alert INS officials near El Paso he was a fugitive.

Judge dismisses part of Hampton lawsuit

LUBBOCK (AP) — A judge on Tuesday threw out part of a \$30 million civil rights lawsuit filed against the city of Lubbock by the women's basketball coach of Hampton University, her husband and an assistant coach.

The suit, filed April 19, alleges racial bias by police in the wrongful arrest of the three last Nov. 16 outside a Wal-Mart.

Hampton was in Lubbock for a basketball game against Texas Tech University, but the game was canceled because of the incident.

U.S. District Judge Sam Cummings left much of the lawsuit intact. But he rejected allegations the trio made against the city of Lubbock under the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Cummings said that, under the act, the plaintiffs must have received services from the entity they are accusing, and that did not happen in this case.

STUDY

Continued from Page 1

preparing for a session. Pirola said the leaders are given a manual which has recommendations, but they are not required to follow it exactly.

"We use games and different techniques to make the session more like a group-study [session] instead of straight teaching," he said.

S.I. sessions will be offered three days a week for an hour and fifteen minutes during the second summer session. Summer sessions are geared towards core-curriculum classes, which have a large amount of provisional students.

Brandy Hunt, an S.I. leader for POLS 207, State and Local Government, and a junior political science major, said the classes offered during the summer are defined as high-risk classes. This means they are

classes which are large or classes in which a lot of students generally fail.

"My students who attend S.I. regularly generally average 10 points higher on the first test in a class than those that don't [attend]," she said.

Despite the program's success, the program has not been without problems.

Pirola said plagiarism became a problem for the program last spring when tools such as outlines and study guides began appearing at businesses that offer private tutoring. Although the tools bore the Center for Academic Enhancement copyright stamp, the problems persisted.

He said the center has started using the Texas A&M copyright stamp, which carries more weight than the center's stamp, to combat the problem.

Pirola said representatives talked to other tutoring services to solve this problem, and he said he feels the problem has been resolved.

NUTZ



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