

6 die in highway accident

LAS VEGAS (AP) — They are a common sight along busy Interstate 15 — juvenile offenders in bright orange vests, picking up trash.

On Sunday, 45 of them were scouring the desert landscape when a strip-club dancer who allegedly was driving under the influence careened off the highway and slammed into the group, killing six youths aged 14 to 16.

"They had no warning at all. The van ... just wiped them out," said Kirby Burgess, director of the Clark County Juvenile Services program.

The driver, 20-year-old Jessica Williams, said she had smoked marijuana two hours before the crash, according to Nevada Highway Patrol Trooper Michael Cooke.

Williams was treated for minor injuries and then jailed on drug charges and six counts of reckless driving and driving under the influence. She remained in custody Monday, and it was unclear whether she had a lawyer who could comment.

Trooper Shane David estimated the van was traveling 75 mph, the legal speed limit, when it ran off the road just north of downtown Las Vegas.

County officials defended the program, which is used for youngsters who have committed minor juvenile offenses — much different from the so-called juvenile boot camps around the nation. They work on projects

such as removing graffiti and picking up trash, and can earn credits to pay fines and restitution to victims.

The program earns the county \$46,000 a year from Silver State Disposal Service, southern Nevada's major trash hauling company. Some of the trash that the young workers have to pick up comes off of Silver State trucks making regular runs between Las Vegas and a landfill 20 miles northeast of the city.

"We think because the program has been very successful over the past 11 years, we will continue," Clark County spokesman Doug Bradford said. "But we will take a look at additional safety measures."

Those might include placing cones to restrict traffic in the lane closest to where the youths are working, Bradford said.

Two clean-up crews were working at the time of Sunday afternoon's accident, one on the right side of the highway — the group that got hit — and one in the center divider.

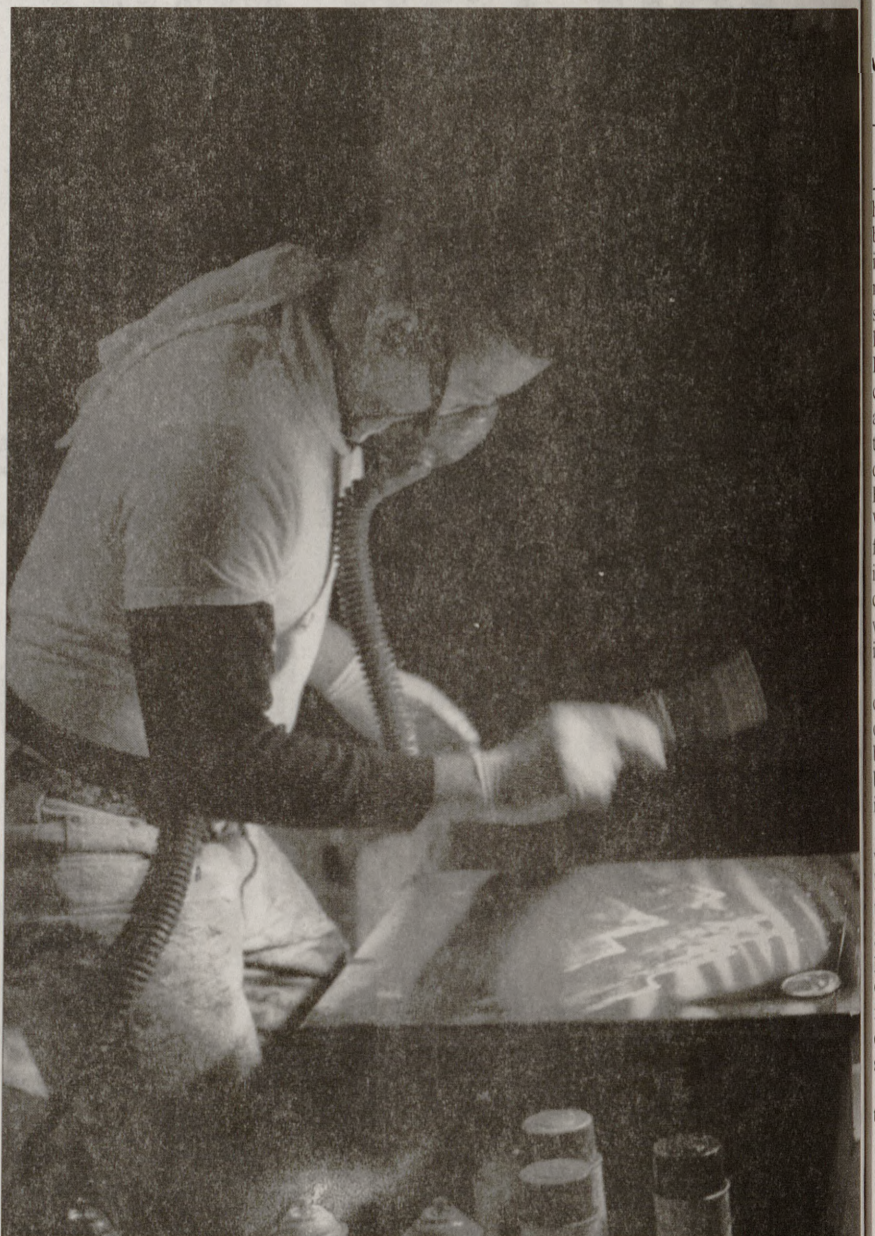
Highway patrol Sgt. Steve Cabrales said passenger vans that had brought the juveniles to the work area were parked, and one was on the right shoulder with its emergency flashers blinking.

The accident occurred 11 days after another I-15 crash that killed eight and injured five. That accident occurred 30 miles south of Las Vegas, after the driver fell asleep, Cooke said.

"[The six youth offenders] had no warning at all. The van ... just wiped them out."

— Kirby Burgess
Clark County Juvenile Services program director

Street scene



A street merchant performs his spray paint art at the annual South by Southwest media festival. The festival brought out many unique street talents and crafts.

Clinton visits South Asia, India

The trip is an effort to better, renew post-Cold War relations

NEW DELHI, India (AP) — President Clinton's mission to back South Asia away from nuclear-tinged confrontation is beginning wordlessly, at the simple marble monument to India's apostle of nonviolence.

With the silent laying of a wreath in homage to Mohandas Gandhi on Tuesday morning, President Clinton was planning to let the imagery speak for itself.

But after that was coming a series of meetings at which Clinton hoped to persuade reluctant Indian leaders to ban nuclear testing and cool tensions with Pakistan in their bitter dispute over the Himalayan territory of Kashmir.

Formally opening the first visit in 22 years

by an American president, Clinton was set for a pomp-filled welcome at Rashtrapati Bhavan, the presidential palace that was built as a grand estate for British viceroys in the years of colonial rule. Then it was straight on to the Gandhi memorial.

Clinton arrived in New Delhi on Monday evening after a visit to Bangladesh that proved something of a letdown when he canceled his two major public appearances there due to security concerns.

On the advice of the Secret Service, Clinton skipped a helicopter trip that was to have taken him to a wreath-laying at the nation's most important memorial and to a remote village that had spent two weeks sprucing up in eager anticipation of his arrival.

"We had specific information which led us to the conclusion that traveling to the village was

inadvisable," said Sandy Berger, his national security adviser. Clinton would not discuss the matter but, privately, officials said his safety could not be guaranteed flying 20 miles in a helicopter over dense forests and rice paddies.

Instead, about 300 women and children were bused from the village to meet Clinton at the U.S. Embassy. Celebrating their climb toward self-sufficiency, he told them that "no one should believe that poverty is destiny."

"The village is highly disappointed," said Muhammad Yunus, a friend of Clinton and founder of a bank that helped residents set up businesses. "They all thought he would sit under the banyan tree and see a beautiful Bangladesh village."

Both the United States and India seek a new, closer relationship after years of Cold War estrangement.



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