

## 3 found dead in bloody apartment

DALLAS (AP) — Blood soaking through an apartment ceiling led to an upstairs residence where two adults and an infant were found slain.

The trio, who had been dead for as long as five days, had multiple gunshot wounds in what law officers are calling an attack by robbers who took one of the victims' cars.

The decomposing bodies were found Monday night.

"This is very brutal, no justification," police Sgt. Gary Kirkpatrick told The Dallas Morning News in Tuesday's editions. "But to kill three people, we're talking about a cold-blooded killer."

"The baby was less than a year old," he said. "There's no rationalization for that."

Police were called to the scene after neighbors living downstairs noticed the foul smell — and saw the blood seeping through the ceiling.

One of the victims' cars, a light-colored Cadillac, has been listed on a national stolen car index. Police have not yet released names of the 23-

### All tied up



Beverly Wagner, an employee at the J. Wayne Stark Gallery in the Memorial Student Center, ties down an exhibit that opens on Thursday. The exhibit is a feature organized by the Smithsonian Institute.

"This is very brutal, no justification."

— Sgt. Gary Kirkpatrick  
Dallas police

near-old man, a 22-year-old woman and their baby because their identifications Monday night were only tentative.

No arrests have been made. Family members of the slain man arrived at the apartment complex late Monday but declined to comment.

Police late Monday were interviewing neighbors and identifying stolen property.

Neighbors in the Bent Creek apartment complex said the couple kept mostly to themselves but had a lot of visitors.

"There was a lot of traffic up and down the stairs," one neighbor who didn't want to be identified told the newspaper. "Sometimes it got a little noisy, but they weren't real loud people."

A neighbor who lived in the apartment below the slain family said she called police Monday after she saw blood dripping down the wall from her ceiling.

## Accomplice recants testimony Millionaire's murder conspiracy conviction in jeopardy

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — With a millionaire's murder conspiracy conviction in jeopardy over a former accomplice's recanted story, federal investigators are focusing on whether the defendant bribed his chief accuser into withdrawing his testimony.

Businessman Allen Blackthorne was found guilty this summer of setting up the murder of ex-wife Sheila Bellush, whose throat was slit and who was shot in her Sarasota, Fla., home. Two of her toddler quadruplets from her second marriage were found crawling in her blood.

Golfing buddy Daniel A. Rocha, who testified against Blackthorne, contended in a signed affidavit earlier this month that he alone engineered the 1997 murder-for-hire of Bellush.

But U.S. Attorney Bill Blagg said Monday he is investigating whether Blackthorne used a cell phone smug-

gled into his holding cell to arrange a deal, as well as whether anyone else served as go-betweens for the wealthy inmate and Rocha.

If a deal existed, "it would seem likely that someone else was involved," Blagg told the San Antonio Express-News in Tuesday's editions. "They're both in jail. How else could it happen?"

Rocha's own lawyer agreed with prosecutors, contending Monday that his client lied when he signed the affidavit that took back previous testimony.

A former bookie, Rocha was the only witness in Blackthorne's trial to offer firsthand knowledge of how the slaying was initiated by the wealthy entrepreneur, who faces life imprisonment when he is sentenced next month.

The affidavit, filed in court Friday, is now part of Blackthorne's bid for a new trial. The businessman's lawyers insist, despite federal au-

thorities' suspicions, Rocha received nothing in return for recanting his accusations.

"It's a waste of time, but let them investigate," said Blackthorne attorney Richard Lubin.

But he would not discuss the affidavit's origins, other than to say the statements came from a handwritten letter Rocha sent to another of Blackthorne's attorneys.

Patrick Peranteau, a lawyer for Rocha, said the gambler apparently signed the affidavit after he began to suspect prosecutors would renege on a promise to help him in exchange for his testimony. The golf hustler, now serving a life term in Florida for his part in the slaying, had hoped to win a reduced sentence.

However, Blagg said Rocha's affidavit represented a breach of his agreement with the government and prosecutors are no longer obliged to support their former witness.

### News in Brief Computers may help pilots in low visibility

DALLAS (AP) — Computer-generated technology could soon help pilots safely direct their aircraft to runways in areas of low visibility.

Video screens and satellite images are being used in test flights at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. The screens are showing images of flight paths so detailed that the shoreline and houses on nearby Lake Grapevine are visible at night.

NASA test pilot Harry Verstyren said the technology makes landing so simple, "anybody who has ever played a computer game could almost jump right in and do this."

NASA researchers say the test flights at D-FW, the nation's third busiest passenger airport, could result in technology that will save lives within the next five years.



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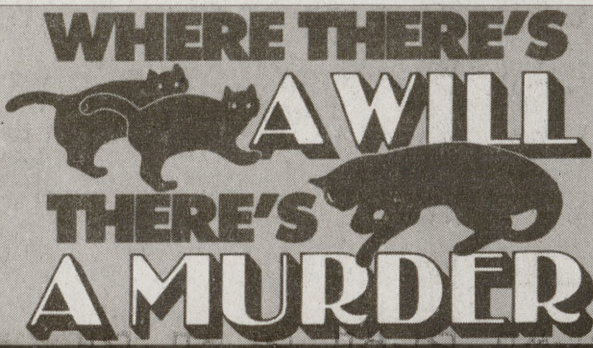
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