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Dorm director convicted of sexually assaulting students

SAN MARCOS, Texas (AP) — A middle school dormitory director at San Marcos Baptist Academy has been convicted of sexually abusing students. Jurors deliberated about five hours Tuesday before finding Bradley Wayne Dixon, 36, guilty on two charges of aggravated sexual assault of a child, one charge of sexual performance by a child and four counts of indecency with a child.

Dixon was acquitted of two counts of indecency with a child, but the jury found him guilty of the lesser offense of assault on those two incidents. "This is a case about whether or not you are going to believe the testimony of four brave little boys," said prosecutor Tate Saunders in his closing argument. "These boys were up there because they had the strength to

get up and tell you the truth about what happened," he said. But defense attorney Paul Parash claimed the boys' stories were inconsistent and unbelievable. "This case is infected with reasonable doubt," he said. "It's a military school. What kinds of kids get sent to a military school? Draw your own conclusions," Parash said. Parash suggested the 12-

and 13-year-old boys made the stories about being molested by Dixon in order to leave the school or to build a case a lawsuit. Dixon was arrested in January 2000 after boys at the school began claiming they had been molested. The number of charges grew as the investigation progressed over the next few weeks. Dixon was tried on nine counts involving four boys.

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Congress lifts blockade on Mexican trucks entering U.S.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans halted delaying tactics Wednesday that had bogged down proposed safety requirements for Mexican trucks entering the United States, but indicated they might continue slowing the measure after Congress' summer recess. The Senate voted 100-0 to end the latest round of GOP procedural hurdles, clearing the way for a vote on final passage. The safety standards — which Republicans say are really designed to hinder free trade with Mexico envisioned by a 1993 treaty — are part of a \$60.1 billion measure financing transportation programs for the coming fiscal year. The White House has threatened to veto the otherwise popular transportation bill because of its proposed requirements for Mexican trucking company audits, insurance and inspections. Sen. John McCain, R-

Ariz., who has been championing President Bush's view on the issue, hinted on the Senate floor that he might take advantage of ad-

"Our opponents have clearly lost the safety debate."

— Patty Murray
Washington democratic senator

ditional opportunities to delay when the Senate tries moving the bill into negotiation with the House. "Clearly, we have stretched this issue out into the month of September, at least," McCain said.

The Senate plans a monthlong summer recess beginning this weekend. Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., a chief author of the safety regulations, claimed victory. "Our opponents have clearly lost the safety debate," she said. The issue has pitted the trucking industry and shippers — hoping for new business driving in Mexico — against the Teamsters union, whose truck drivers fear lost jobs, and highway safety groups. Under the 8-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement, Bush has proposed opening up U.S. roads to Mexican trucks in January. Bush initially proposed letting the vehicles in while their companies were audited over 18 months, but the administration later added required border inspections of the trucks.

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News in Brief

Package explodes at Lackland Air Force Base Tuesday

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Investigators of an explosion that injured an officer at Lackland Air Force Base were searching Wednesday for a man in connection with the attack.

An Air Force first sergeant was opening a package Tuesday when the device exploded.

The unidentified victim remained hospitalized in serious condition Wednesday at Wilford Hall Medical Center with extensive injuries to her hands, torso and face, a hospital official said.

The explosion shortly after 11:15 a.m. Tuesday in the 342nd Training Squadron's headquarters building at the old Medina base prompted evacuation of the area.

The FBI, U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and Air Force Office of Special Investigations were sent to the scene with bomb-sniffing dogs.

Authorities released no details about the search for the man.

Lackland increased its security status after the explosion,

but neither the Air Force nor the FBI would say if the blast was the work of terrorists.

A device in a box was the source of the explosion, sending shrapnel into the woman's upper torso and at least one eye, and causing "severe damage to both hands," a federal investigator, speaking on condition of anonymity, told the newspaper.

Cameras installed to monitor Rio Grande border

BROWNSVILLE, Texas (AP) — A system of towers and video cameras will allow U.S. Border Patrol agents constant, inch-by-inch monitoring capability of the 29 miles of Rio Grande in their territory.

Cameras on 19 towers will transmit images to 40 color monitors that will be watched by civilian radio operators. The first tower is under construction near the Gateway International Bridge. Each tower is 72 feet tall.

The system will provide data that can be shared by local and federal law enforcement agencies.

The technology is already being used by Border Patrol agents in El Paso and Del Rio.

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