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News

Page 6A

THE BATTALION

Wednesday, August 22, 2001

Texas residents accuse troopers of harassment

ODESSA (AP) — West Texans who contend that state troopers have followed them, searched their cars and subjected them to other harassment have met with the Texas Department of Public Safety on the claimed abuses.

Almost 200 people crowded into the Fort Stockton Civic Center on Monday night to complain about harassment by state law officers.

"We have to put up with cocky, power-hungry state cops who are angry because they can't catch any real crooks," said Frieda Powers, a business owner from Alpine who gathered 100 names on a protest petition.

Several people told stories about being tailed and pulled over for no reason by officers. Other residents from Alpine, Ozona and Van Horn accused troopers of harassing motorists by tailing them and conducting car searches.

DPS Capt. Tom Cummings of Midland and other agency officials attended the 2 1/2-hour

meeting along with State Rep. Pete Gallego, R-Alpine. "We're here in hopes of at least getting a better understanding of how folks feel out here," Cummings told the American in Tuesday's meeting.

"We have to put up with cocky, power-hungry state cops who are angry because they can't catch any real crooks."

— Frieda Powers
Alpine business owner

said Cummings, who oversees DPS license and weight officers in 49 West Texas counties.

Tom Ingram, a Fort Stockton businessman, organized the meeting. He said he hopes it will bring about some changes.

"I just hope that they don't just pull back for a few weeks

until they think it's all over," Ingram told the American in Tuesday's meeting.

Cummings told there was no excuse for officer behavior and acknowledged a level of inexperience among troopers in Fort Stockton.

Gallego, who invited officials to the meeting, said concerns must be raised. "It's important to us that we work for you," he said. "Courtesy, service and protection — this is the motto of the DPS. If the department is holding true to its mission, we must speak up."

Cummings and DPS David Baker, also of Midland DPS office, said they were observers at the meeting and would not comment on individual complaints.

After the meeting, Cummings said they would work with citizens to resolve the problems.

"I know we have some issues to face," Baker said during the meeting. "We'll work to resolve those issues. I ask that you work with us."

Church vandalized by 5 male teens

TYLER (AP) — Five Brownsboro teen-agers were sentenced Tuesday to five years of community supervision for spray-painting racial slurs on the walls of a predominantly black church in April.

Racial epithets and references to "White Power" and the Ku Klux Klan were found spray-painted just before Easter along the side of the historic Mount Moriah Baptist Church in the Sand Flat community seven miles north of Athens.

Jeffery Matthew Morgan, 19; Jeffrey Wade Cook, 18; Matt Lynn Sanders, 17, and Cody Mitchell Kuykendall, 18, pleaded guilty July 3 to placing graffiti on a place of worship, and state District Judge Jack Holland ordered a pre-sentencing report.

The teens appeared before Holland in an Athens courtroom on Tuesday. The judge said he initially contemplated jail time after witnessing pictures of the damage, but felt differently after further review.

The defendants were ordered to make restitution to the church, attend the county's youthful offenders program and complete 250 hours of community service, the *Tyler Morning Telegraph* reported in a story for Wednesday editions. Holland noted Henderson County has several minority cemeteries and suggested the youths clean them as part of their community service.

Each of the youths and their parents made public apologies to the church and others during Tuesday's punishment hearing.

WIRELESS

Continued from Page 1A

will help all students by making it easier to do research without being tied to an immobile computer."

Other on-campus wireless facilities for students with their own laptops include Sbis Dining Hall, Rumours Coffee

House & Deli, Thompson Hall and Fermier Hall. Wireless Internet access will be available in Hullabaloo! Food Court and Poor Yorick's Coffee House within the next few months.

Jon Gardner, computer systems manager for the Department of Food Services, said all students should be able to use the wireless Internet in buildings on campus.

NEWS IN BRIEF

BAMC, Beach Pavilion to be redeveloped

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Senators Phil Gramm and Bailey Hutchinson, Republicans from Texas, Tuesday announced a partnership between industry and Army that will help preserve old Brooke Army Medical Center and the Beach Pavilion Hospital complex.

The partnership will fund more than \$50 million in private funds into the restoration and redevelopment of the property. The partnership is between Orion Partners Inc., a real estate development firm, and Weston, an environmental engineering company, and the Army.

"This will facilitate the preservation of history that is so much the part of our great state while allowing us also to look to the future," Hutchinson said at a news conference in front of Brooke Army Medical Center.

The only hardware system needed to access the wireless network is an 802.11 wireless card. Students can download the required software from <http://net.tamu.edu>, or call to <http://food.tamu.edu> for less for an overview of how wireless system works and what requirements must be met, Gardner said.



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