

'Butcher of the Balkans' receives death sentence

Baby James heads home

Reggie passes Mantle, but Angels lose, 8-5

The Sun

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Teenager testifies against sheriff's deputies

Female scout is first witness in Victorville sex case

By PRISCILLA NORDYKE Sun Staff Writer

VICTORVILLE — A teenage Explorer scout testified on Wednesday she had sexual intercourse with a civilian and two sheriff's deputies and was intimate with two other deputies she met off-duty at prearranged locations.

The 18-year-old woman, who now lives out of state, was the only witness to testify in the first day of the preliminary hearing for five men charged with unlawful sexual intercourse with a minor.

Details of alleged incidents leading to the charges came to light for the first time since the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department began an investigation into the sexual conduct of some of its officers assigned to the Victorville station.

The investigation was initiated when the woman told authorities she was raped by a deputy after a wedding reception Feb. 14 and had had sexual relations with four other deputies before she turned 18.

Facing charges of unlawful sexual intercourse in the case are former deputies Robert M. Swindie, 31, James B. Dawson, 37, Wil-

liam E. Abernathie Jr., 28, Timothy Retzlaff, 27, and Rex Lair, 26, who is not associated with the Sheriff's Department.

A fifth deputy, Ronnie Lynn Wimberly, 30, has been charged with rape and is scheduled for a preliminary hearing June 25.

All of the deputies have resigned or been fired from the Sheriff's Department.

The teenager was composed but appeared nervous throughout most of the nearly five hours of testimony before Municipal Court Judge Carol Koppel.

She described the men as "friends" and said the loss of the deputies' jobs caused her to suffer from depression so serious she was hospitalized in a San Bernardino mental health unit for two weeks last March. She said none of the five men in court Wednesday had used force or intimidation during the sexual encounters.

In response to volleys of questions by Deputy District Attorney Ron Barbatoo and defense attorneys, the young woman testified:

• She had sexual intercourse with Lair twice at his home during the latter part of 1983. The second time was an occasion when she had gone to tell Lair she thought she was pregnant.

• She had sexual intercourse with Swindie once in 1984 after driving alone to his Victorville home.

• She had sexual intercourse with Lair once the following year after driving to meet him at a location in the desert just off Heperia Road, south of Green Tree Boulevard.

• She had sexual intercourse with Dawson once between Jan. 17 and Feb. 6, 1986, in "his wife's apartment."

• She also was intimate with a male Explorer scout.

The issue of the woman's mental condition was raised early in the hearing by defense attorneys, who unsuccessfully argued that her mental state might alter her ability to recall and testify about the alleged incidents competently.

During testimony, the victim said she had joined the Explorer Scout program sometime between Nov. 1 and Dec. 31, 1985.

She testified she had met Abernathie there after talking with him earlier about problems she was having with her family.

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3 dead in Mt. Hood snowstorm

TIMBERLINE LODGE, Ore. (AP) — Specially trained dogs and helicopters with infrared sensors failed to find six teenagers and two adults lost on Mount Hood for a third day early today after a blizzard unleashed a school expedition, killing three teens.

An Air Force helicopter with an infrared device that can detect temperature variations of 2 degrees found nothing late Wednesday and officials believed the climbers might still be in a snow cave, said Air Force Staff Sgt. John Hartline.

Dogs trained for mountain work were brought from Seattle, but were also unable to find the missing climbers. The search was to have continued Wednesday night, but unsafe footing forced a postponement until dawn today.

Three frozen members of the party, two girls and a boy, were airlifted Wednesday from the slopes of the 11,235-foot mountain, and a medical team of 40 at Portland's Emanuel Hospital worked to revive them.

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SEARCH FOR THE MISSING: Rescuers head up Mount Hood in Oregon on Wednesday in an attempt to find eight climbers who were still missing after a blinding snowstorm Tuesday prevented them from returning down the mountain. Three teenagers in the 13-member group were found half-frozen and later died, while two others were able to hike to safety Tuesday.

Safety of airlines is questioned

By H. JOSEF HERBERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congressional investigators charged Wednesday that the Federal Aviation Administration "cannot say with assurance" that airlines it oversees are obeying passenger safety regulations.

Moreover, auditors from the General Accounting Office said, the FAA suffers from a shortage of safety inspectors and lacks fundamental information about its own inspection program.

The GAO representatives told a House aviation subcommittee that while the FAA recognizes the problems and is trying to find solutions, it may take years before an adequate airline monitoring program is in place.

The FAA is caught "in a hole," said Herbert R. McClure, director of the GAO investigation. "It's going to take them some time to get out of the situation."

In "short," McClure said, "the FAA at present cannot say with assurance that airlines are complying with safety regulations."

The hiring of additional inspectors — as planned by the agency — is not the only answer, he added, because the FAA is "ill prepared" to train and absorb the additional manpower.

The FAA in a statement called its airline inspection program "aggressive" and "better now than at any time in the past."

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Fontana plant dumped cyanide, ex-employee charges

By THERESA WALKER Sun Staff Writer

FONTANA — Operators of a South Fontana metal recycling plant illegally dumped spent X-ray film (fetched with high levels of cyanide) in public landfills, a former employee of the company has alleged.

Brian Bartle, who worked as a lab technician and chemist at Western States Refining, said that dumpsters containing X-ray film chips soaked with cyanide solution routinely were emptied at local public landfills.

He estimated that each dumpster contained about 200 pounds of the solution. "They never did take it to a classified dump," claimed Bartle, a Western States employee from March 1981 until it closed in 1984. "Wherever else it went, it had to be illegal," Bartle said he found out where the contaminated film negatives were being taken when he asked a company truck driver.

"He said, 'Oh, I just take it to the public dump,'" Bartle recalled. However, he said he could not remember which sites the truck driver said he used, "but I'm sure there were at least two."

Each dumpster, about 10 by 30 feet in size, contained 20,000 to 30,000 pounds of the cut up X-ray film that had been treated with a strong cyanide solution to recover silver. "Every three or four days we'd get a load up and go," Bartle said.

Officials of Western States, which is now involved in a Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceeding, could not be reached for comment.

But Don Rothman, an attorney representing the firm and its parent company, Veta Grande, said he doubted the accuracy of Bartle's statements.

"What you're saying is just so shocking," Rothman said when told of the accusations. "It is so shocking that I cannot and certainly do not think that's correct."

Veta Grande operated the plant at 10763 Poplar Ave. for about two years before it closed in November 1984.

Rothman said that Veta Grande's president, Len Smith, would not allow illegal dumping of hazardous substances. "It is just impossible that it could have happened," Rothman said. "He certainly would not condone any such thing. He's a law-abiding good guy."

State law requires that refuse containing the high amounts of cyanide that Bartle claims was in the spent film be taken to certified hazardous waste landfills.

Public dumps can be used only when a potentially hazardous substance amounts to less than 1 gallon per million pounds, said Peter Briery, supervisor of the county Environmental Health Services Department's hazardous waste section.

"If it turned out where there was something in terms of pounds of cyanide going to a public landfill, that would be a problem," Briery said. "That would not be acceptable."

"That would pose a groundwater threat and a threat to the workers," Briery said that a future investigation

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Gorbachev assails West's 'lies' about Chernobyl, admits 9 dead

By ALISON SMALE Associated Press

MOSCOW — Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev said on Wednesday night that casualties from the Chernobyl nuclear disaster had risen to nine dead and 289 hospitalized, but declared, "The worst is behind us."

He accused the West of telling "a veritable mountain" of lies about the accident.

Gorbachev's 25-minute speech on state television was his first public comment on the explosion and fire April 26 that spewed radioactivity over Europe and forced the evacuation of 92,000 people from the vicinity of the Ukrainian power plant.

He said radiation still was dangerous around the plant, 80 miles north of Kiev.

Gorbachev said the probable cause of the accident, which he repeatedly referred to as "our misfortune," was a power surge and hydrogen explosion.

He said that the Soviet Union on Wednesday announced the expulsion of a U.S. diplomat for an alleged spy ring. Story/A4.

☐ RADIOACTIVE RAIN: Airborne fallout from the Chernobyl nuclear disaster is likely to fall to the ground wherever it rains in the United States. Story/A5.

first atomic bomb on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945. Gorbachev began the Soviet's testing moratorium last Aug. 6.

"The accident at Chernobyl showed again what an abyss will open in nuclear war before mankind, for inherent in the nuclear arsenal stockpiled are thousands upon thousands of disasters far more horrible than the Chernobyl one," he said.

The Soviets at first said two people died in the accident, and later official statements said six.

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Mikhail S. Gorbachev Soviets to extend nuclear test ban

UPDATE

WEATHER

Mostly sunny: Low clouds this morning, becoming mostly sunny in the afternoon. Highs 74 to 76. Mostly clear tonight. Lows 50 to 56. Some fog and low clouds early Friday.

Details A18.

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• The Sun, 1986
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De Lorean loses



John De Lorean

DETROIT (AP) — A federal judge has denied John Z. De Lorean's request for confidential grand jury information to be used in his defense against racketeering and fraud charges.

U.S. District Judge Julian Cook Jr. on Tuesday ruled that De Lorean either had shown no need for the information or had no right to it.

De Lorean asked Cook for permission to get detailed information about the grand jury that indicted him in September on charges of defrauding investors in his Northern Ireland car-making enterprise of \$8.9 million.

Volcano builds dome

VANCOUVER, Wash. (AP) — Scientists flew into the crater of Mount St. Helens on Wednesday and found the volcano has added new molten rock to its huge, craggy lava dome.

The observation confirmed signals from instruments that indicated the volcano had started a quiet dome-building eruption, said U.S. Geological Survey geologist Steve Brantley.

The new job is on top of the 800-foot tall, 3,000-foot wide lava dome, which sits inside the gaping crater of the mountain. Brantley said.

Fire nearly contained

AMFSTEAD, N.C. (AP) — Weary front-line firefighters, with help from the Marines, completed containment lines around a blaze that has raged through 73,000 acres of woodland, but officials stopped short of saying the fire was contained.

"We're going to stay until general rains give it no chance of getting out," said Tommy Thompson of the state Forestry Dept.

Today, firefighters were expected to "make a major attack using military resources," Thompson said.