

GISD

Continued from 1-A

Answers were: poor attitude or apathy, 31 percent; failure to do homework or classwork, 17 percent; poor attendance, 12 percent; immaturity, 10 percent.

The second question was "What, in your opinion, can the district do during this school year to help reduce the failure rate in your classes?"

The highest ranked answers were: improve parental involvement, 17 percent; offer remedial education, 12 percent; student removal and detention hall, 8 percent; and district cannot do anything, 6 percent.

The final main question was "What, in your opinion, should the district consider changing or doing to reduce the failure rate in your classes in future years?"

Answers were: work to increase parental support, 11 percent; improve student placement process, 10 percent; demand more from students, 6 percent; and enforced discipline, consider vocational school, and close the campus, all 5 percent.

Twenty-three of the 40 teachers favored closing the campus for ninth graders, but only 15 wanted to keep all the ninth graders at either Ball North or Ball South.

Twenty-three teachers also favored requiring students with a 75 or lower average to attend tutoring.

Pickett said the survey indicates there is great concern about parental involvement as a way to improve a student's performance.

The biggest surprise of the survey was that conduct did not seem to be the major issue, he told the board.

"It was perhaps a lack of interest," Pickett said, adding he was concerned with repeated references to lack of attendance.

Dr. Sarah Ashburn, assistant superintendent for instruction, said there was some good news in the numbers, in that 85 percent of the faculty at Ball High did not have a failure rate higher than 20 percent.

That should allow the district to look for more specific reasons for failure rates in individual classes, Ashburn said.

Pickett said finding answers to the problem will require asking tough questions, but that should not imply that the district was telling some teachers they were failing too many students.

"But we've got to find out from these people why these kids are failing," he said.



Jim Pickett

Residen

Continued from 1-A

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Weir says the ha hydrofluoric acid us itself in the begi passages, lungs an skin membranes ar person comes into concentration of the choke to death, he sai

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Passing

Continued from 1-A

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Norman Dunham

News

Continued from 1-A

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No charges filed in pit bull attack

GALVESTON — A retired seaman who was severely mauled by a pair of pit bull dogs on Friday remained in critical condition at John Sealy Hospital on Sunday, a spokeswoman said.

Johannes Wilkins, 83, had chunks of flesh ripped off his arms down to the bone during the attack at about 3 p.m. in the 1000 block of 62nd Street, police said.

Both dogs involved in the attack and a pair of pit bull puppies have been impounded, but no charges had been filed on the owners by late Sunday, police said.

Wilkins was also bitten on his neck, chest and legs, police re-

ported, but the most serious injuries were to his arms.

Doctors in the John Sealy emergency room told police Friday they did not know if they would be able to save both arms due to the quantity of flesh missing.

Police said Wilkins may have walked near the two puppies as he went to take out his trash, prompting the grown pit bulls to attack.

The attack went on for about 15 minutes before someone called police and the emergency medical service, police reported.

Jet

Continued from 1-A

Tom Meeker landed the plane or took the controls when the craft was on the ground.

Meeker told airport police that Ely slumped over the controls while the plane was about 50 feet above the runway and that Meeker landed and taxied the plane to the terminal, said Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Kathleen Bergen.

However, Meeker told the airline officials that Ely landed the plane and that the co-pilot took over while the craft was speeding down the runway, said Elsesser.

"You have to understand this is an ongoing investigation and

we're still dealing with preliminary information," said Elsesser.

None of the 10 other crew members or 83 passengers aboard Flight 612 from Chicago was injured, Elsesser said.

A crew member made an announcement "concerning the slightly rough ride into the terminal and putting on the brakes," he said. However, he said he did not believe passengers were told Ely suffered a heart attack.

Ely died about an hour later, at 12:16 a.m. Sunday, at Elizabeth General Medical Center after attempts to revive him at the airport and in the emergency room failed, said hospital spokesman Douglas Harris.



He pleads guilty, goes to prison again

if he turned himself in.

McConnell was the Galveston Chamber of Commerce man of the year last year. He turned himself in to the FBI at Intercontinental Airport in Houston on Nov. 18 after a flight from Mexico City.

McConnell's attorney at his preliminary hearing, Stan Cushman, said McConnell is broke. "Everything he has is tied up in bankruptcy." Cushman resigned shortly after the hearing.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott Woodward has successfully urged Judge Brown to refuse bail to McConnell, contending he might flee.

McConnell's whereabouts have been unknown since midsummer last year, but Woodward said investigators believe McConnell has been in London, Canada, Scotland and Switzerland. Woodward said there is some indication that McConnell "may have a residence in Switzerland."

McConnell faces 20 years in prison and a possible fine of \$1 million if he is convicted, and he is a flight risk because of that,

See McConnell, 11-A

Dog owner due to face charges

By KATHY THOMAS
The Daily News

GALVESTON — Charges are expected to be filed this week against the owner of two pit bull dogs who severely mauled an 83-year-old retired seaman outside his home Friday.

City Attorney Steve Williams said Monday that he and the Galveston County District Attorney's Office are working closely to determine which office will file charges in the attack.

Johannes Wilkins was mauled by a pair of pit bulls as he was taking out the garbage from his cottage in the 1000 block of 62nd Street. In the attack, he suffered bites to his neck, torso and legs, with large chunks of flesh being torn from his arms.

Wilkins' condition was upgraded Monday from critical to serious at John Sealy Hospital.

Williams said the owner could receive a maximum

See ATTACK, 11-A

Jury gets 35th day in case

By JOEL KIRKPATRICK
The Daily News

HOUSTON — The fraud trial of Shearn Moody Jr. and Howell Willis went to a jury at mid-afternoon Monday after final arguments in the marathon case were concluded in the 35th day of the trial.

But it was near 5 p.m. when prosecutors and defense attorneys finally listed and agreed upon exhibits to send to the jury.

In final arguments to the jury Monday morning, Assistant U.S. Attorney Mitchell Lansden said the case is "basically a very simple case of fraud."

And the Moody Foundation was the victim of the fraud, he said.

He argued that the jury should convict Moody and his co-defendant, Dallas tax protestor Howell Willis.

The judge will fix the punishment in the case. Moody faces up to 85 years in prison and fines up to \$4.25 million. Willis faces up to 20 years.

Jurors have heard more than six weeks of testimony, and between 600 to 800 pieces of evidence have been introduced.

An alternate juror, who sat through the trial and was dismissed Monday, said he would

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Dog attack victim's arm amputated; owners vanish

By MONTY FOWLER
The Daily News

GALVESTON — An 83-year-old man who was viciously mauled by a pair of pit bull dogs had his damaged left arm amputated last week, hospital officials said Monday.

In a related development, police have launched a search for the owners of the animals, who apparently gave police false information and may have left town.

Johannes Wilkins was taking out his trash on Nov. 19 behind his home in the 1000 block of 62nd Street when he was mauled, police said.

The two dogs attacked him so viciously that chunks of flesh were ripped from the elderly retired seaman's arms. He also was bitten on the chest and throat, police said.

Doctors at John Sealy Hospital were forced to amputate his left arm below the elbow on Thanksgiving Day, a hospital spokesman said, and Wilkins has remained in critical condition since then.

Police impounded the two pit bulls, as well as two pit bull puppies, immediately after the attack. Officials speculated that Wilkins may have walked near the puppies and that somehow triggered the attack.

Also on Monday, Galveston municipal court officials who tried to serve court summonses on the dog's owners found they had left the area.

A bailiff who went to the address said the house was completely empty. Court Clerk Lana Hegman said, adding that neighbors indicated they left the area about a week ago.

Some of the information the dog owners gave police has not checked out, she said, indicating it may have been false.

The case has been turned over to the Criminal Investigation Division of the police department, Hegman said.

City officials have filed charges of harboring vicious animals and allowing animals to run at large against the owners.

The first charge carries a maximum \$2,000 fine and the second a maximum \$500 fine, City Attorney Steve Williams said last week.

Dr. Ralph Morris, director of the Galveston County Health District, said the owners were mailed a notice Wednesday saying they had 10 days to appear in court and say why the dogs should not be destroyed.

If the owners have left town, Morris said officials would still probably wait the prescribed 10 days before killing all four dogs.

The larger problem, of how to ban or control pit bulls, will have to be decided by lawyers, Morris said, since they will have to determine what exactly constitutes a pit bull or a vicious animal.

"Maybe the answer is making people more responsible for their pets," Morris said.

Owners try to discourage city from banning pit bulls

By ARLENE BATTISTA
The Daily News

GALVESTON — Pit bulldog owners, one with his dog in tow, were among the dozens who tried to discourage City Council from banning the dogs from the city limits Thursday.

Dog owners and breeders, a local veterinarian, postal service employees and other concerned citizens packed the council conference room as officials wrestled with ways to respond to several recent attacks by pit bulls.

The Galveston County Health District prefaced all comments by saying the city's animal control program is woefully understaffed and lacking equipment.

The city currently employs two rabies control officers plus a supervisor, said Dr. Ralph Morris, health district director. A city Galveston's size should have a minimum of four officers.

"There are approximately 35,000 dogs in this city," said City Manger Doug Matthews. "We need to be out there with more enforcement. Now, our time is basically consumed by responses to bites and problems."

City Attorney Steve Williams urged council to improve the animal control program, and to pass a stronger ordinance regulating vicious dogs.

Mayor Jan Coggeshall had asked that council on Thursday discuss banning pit bulldogs from the city limits, but a breed-specific ordinance would almost

Jury takes no action in fatal dog attack

GALVESTON — The grand jury took no action Wednesday in the case involving a death caused by pit bulls.

District Attorney Mike Guarino says the grand jury found no criminal evidence and did not return an indictment.

"There was no violation of the state penal code, according to the grand jury. They feel it was a very tragic incident and their sentiment lies with the toughening of ordinances regarding ownership of pit bulls. They feel there should be stricter ordinances and penal laws," Guarino said.

Johannes Wilkes, 83, of Galveston died Dec. 30 in John Sealy Hospital in Galveston after being attacked Nov. 19 by two pit bulls. Wilkes was attacked in the 1000 block of 63rd Street while he was emptying his trash. His arm was amputated Nov. 26 as a result of injuries he received in the attack.

certainly be challenged in court, he said.

"If this is passed, it will be challenged," Lenna Hanna of the American Dog Owners Association said of the proposal to ban pit bulls. "It's not the dogs, it's their upbringing and environment, and this can be proved over and over again."

The meeting was briefly disrupted when island resident John Williams brought his pit bulldog, "Boudreaux," into the meeting room. The dog was promptly ejected, and the city attorney later scolded the owner for bringing the dog into the crowded room.

"I brought my dog here to exhibit that (pit bulls) can be

perfectly at home around people," Williams said, defending his actions. "I'm here because I feel it's my duty to try to protect my friend."

Members of the U.S. Postal Service agreed that stronger ordinances are needed, but they agreed that banning the pit bulldog will not solve the problem.

"We're not after pit bulls, even though one of our workers was recently attacked by a pit bull and a can of mace saved her life," said Elsworth Scales, president of the local letter carriers union. "We want stricter laws."

Dr. Ken Diestler, a local veterinarian, urged council not to

See OWNERS, 13-A

The mantis seizes the locust
but does not see
the yellow bird behind him.

Chinese proverb

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THURSDAY MORNING, MAY 12, 1988

Who remembers the dog's victim?

By MONTY FOWLER
The Daily News

Does anyone remember Johannes Wilkins?
More to the point, does anyone in Galveston care enough to do something?

I still remember him, a nice, 83-year-old retired seaman who loved to tinker with old clocks, a legacy of his German heritage.

On a bright November day last year, Johannes Wilkins made a fatal mistake.

He took out his trash.

That simple, everyday act killed him.

Because in taking out his trash, Mr. Wilkins had the misfortune to walk by two pit bulldogs. The dogs were not tied up. Without provocation, they attacked the retiree.

And proceeded to tear him into little pieces, ripping one bite-sized chunk of flesh at a time from his hands, arms and chest.

One of the policemen who responded to the scene, a veteran of many accidents and other tragedies, said it was one of the most sickening things he had ever seen.

Blood, Mr. Wilkins' blood, was dripping from the dogs' mouths.



It's
My
Turn

Wilkins died five weeks after the savage attack. Doctors had to amputate one of his arms that was too badly mangled to save.

The dogs were destroyed, far more humanely than the fate Mr. Wilkins got.

The dogs' owners left town. They are still at large.

And the city has done nothing — nothing — to protect its residents from these potentially deadly creatures.

The city has an almost non-existent dog control program. The City Council has done nothing about the problem despite a very

brief spasm of concern.

What is it going to take?

Another human being, torn apart by pit bulls crazed by the scent of blood?

Or maybe if someone more notable than Mr. Wilkins, who only attracted attention when he was mauled to death, gets chewed up in another senseless attack that would prompt action.

There will be another tragedy in Galveston if the city does not act.

It is not a question of if, only when.

And when the next victim is mauled, or even killed, I hope everyone remembers Johannes Wilkins.

We need to regulate pit bulls, and all potentially vicious animals, to the point where they will not endanger anyone.

Or ban them altogether.

But we must force our city officials to do something.

Before we all read about the next Johannes Wilkins.

Monty Fowler, a dog owner, is a staff writer for the Galveston Daily News.

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