



Ersland Decrying Legal Fees Says He's to Pay Thousands a Day

By CHRISTOPHER V. PORTER
Chronicle Staff



Irven Box

The pharmacist accused of first-degree murder after a robbery said he has signed a contract agreeing his defense attorneys can charge him \$5,000 a day for every day of his murder trial.

"I never can pay it off," Jerome Jay Ersland, 59, said. He said he already paid his four attorneys more than \$100,000. His defense fund last month had a balance of \$394.

"I have run out of money," he said Monday afternoon at the Oklahoma City pharmacy where he fatally shot a robber. "I will work and I will continue to pay if Judge Elliott doesn't put me in jail."

His jury trial begins next week in Oklahoma County District Court. It could last 10 days—which would cost the pharmacist \$50,000 more.

Mr. Ersland was charged with first-degree murder, as prosecutors said

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Gutsy Call

President Barack Obama listens during one in a series of meetings on the Sunday before the raid on the Osama bin Laden compound in Pakistan. (Photo/Pete Souza/the White House)

Cool Hand Obama!

Risk and Success Boost The President's Standing

By SUSAN PAGE
USA Today

WASHINGTON—These are the moments that presidents hope to be remembered for: The

News Analysis

operation to get Osama bin Laden, a goal that eluded George W. Bush, brought President

Barack Obama a triumphant achievement and the most unifying episode of a presidency held

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Arrests Made In a Thunder Scalping Case

Ordinance Forbids the Practice in City

By ROBERT E. BARNES
Special to the Chronicle

Police arrested eight men early last week on scalping complaints outside Oklahoma City Arena before the Thunder's playoffs win against the Memphis Grizzlies.

Six of the arrested men were cited and released at the scene, MSgt. Gary Knight, a police department spokesman, said.

Eric Alfred Johnson, 54, of Cedar Hill, Texas, was taken to the Oklahoma County Jail because he had an unrelated warrant, MSgt. Knight said, and Rickey E. Vick, 42, of Edmond, was booked into jail because police had previous contacts with him during scalping investigations.

Mr. Johnson remained at the jail the day after his arrest on a hold for the warrant. Mr. Vick was released on bail.

Members of the police vice squad made the arrests before the game, which ended in a Thunder victory that tied their Western Conference semifinal series with the Grizzlies at one game apiece.

Some undercover officers posed as buyers, and other arrests were made when the officers observed sales taking place, MSgt.



Rickey E. Vick



Eric A. Johnson

Knight said.

The price of scalped tickets sold by the arrested men varied, but some were being sold at more than \$200 over face value, the police department spokesman said.

He said there is a police presence at every game.

Oklahoma City has an ordinance that makes it il-

legal to sell tickets for more than a 50 cent profit, MSgt. Knight said.

Listing tickets online or elsewhere for sale at a profit is legal, but the sale is considered illegal scalping if the exchange of money takes place in a jurisdiction such as Oklahoma City with a local ordinance against it, the spokesman noted.

Scalping incidents tend to

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Program On Board In District

School System Is Implementing Teach for America

By SHARON R. JONES
Special to the Chronicle

The Teach for America Program will be used by the Oklahoma City Public School District, it was announced.

Fifty program recruits will be teaching within the district beginning this fall, district and program officials announced yesterday, saying they had raised most of the \$4.6 million needed to bring in the next three years as many as 150 of the highly sought-after teachers to some of the city's most challenging schools.

"I've become invested in my home state," Will Norton, one of the 50 Teach for America Program, who happens to be from Oklahoma, will teach English to middle school students.

"I want to be doing something to make Oklahoma City better," he said.

The teachers selected for Oklahoma City were part of the more than 48,000 college students who applied for 4,600 Teach for America positions nationwide.

Each makes a two-year commitment to work in inner-city or rural public schools, with Teach for America providing providing



Supt. Karl Springer said using the recruits from the Teach for America Program offers a chance for cultural change.

intensive support and training. Officials said the program teachers will be used at 13 schools that have the greatest academic deficiencies.

Among them are Douglass Middle and High School, U.S. Grant High School and F. D. Moon Academy.

Those schools are part of a federally funded improvement process based mostly on low test scores.

Bodine, Edwards, Heronville, Martin Luther King, Parks and Greystone Lower Elementary Schools are also among the school expected to get assigned some of the program teachers.

The other four are Capitol Hill and Centennial High Schools, and Rogers and Webster Middle Schools.

Supt. Karl Springer described the program as one offering a chance for culture change.

"This is about making it possible for every child to get a quality education experience," he said.

Lance Tackett, executive director of Teach for America of Oklahoma, said the organization needs about \$900,000 more to fully fund its three-year commitment.

The organization wants to expand to the Putnam City Public School District and to some rural areas.

Career Academy Is Said Environmentally Correct

Students Not Only to Learn, but to Do So in 'Green'

By JOHN W. SIMMS
Special to the Chronicle

The newly-opened Metro Tech Career Academy is environmentally correct and that fact was emphasized at Tuesday's open house activities.

The academy is designed to provide at-risk teenagers with academic and "life-skills" needed to stay in high school and to pursue careers after graduation.

But what is also true is that the academy is on pace to be the first certified environmentally sound career technology building in the state.

The academy will serve as many as 400 students from the Oklahoma City and Crooked Oak public school districts.

With the innovative learning approaches used at the 60,000 sq. ft. academy, students receive one-on-one instruction, job skills training and career counseling. Parent education courses are conducted there, too.

"Students completing the program at the academy, in the end," a spokesman for Metro Tech said, "will have a high school diploma, and will be career and college ready."

"Green" features at the school include a roof drainage system that replenishes ponds, low-maintenance grasses, recycled building materials, energy-



The Metro Tech Career Academy held an open house on Tuesday.

saving lights, outlets for electric cars and insulated cladding.

(Cladding is a construction term referring to the covering of one material with another.)

Supt. James Branscum said the academy could receive Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification as early as July.

The certification system is

internationally recognized, and requires that a third-party verifies that a building was designed and built using strategies that produce energy savings, water usage effi-

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