

A Writing Sample by Don Cudd

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Brazosport Sun, Freeport, Texas

Police arrest man who says he saved Clinton

**By Don Cudd
Sun Publisher**

Lake Jackson police this week arrested a Brazosport man who has said the United States Government owes him reward money for saving President Clinton's life.

Charles Timothy Pessarra, 51, of Brazoria was arrested Tuesday and now faces a felony theft charge.

Police say a South African man sent Pessarra more than \$30,000 with understanding that Pessarra would ship him a pick-up purchased from a Brazosport dealership. But the man never received the pick-up, police say.

Pessarra says the arrest is just another part of a U.S. Government plot to deny him his reward money.

"You write two articles about me saying I want my reward money, and then suddenly I get arrested," he told the Sun.

"They've had a warrant out for me since December. Why are they just now arresting me? Well, I think it's pretty obvious," he said.

Pessarra posted a \$30,000 bond set by Justice of the Peace Bobby Smith and was released from the

Lake Jackson jail Tuesday night.

Lake Jackson Police Lieutenant Dale Davis said his department has had an arrest warrant for Pessarra since Dec. 9 but wanted to be careful about arresting him.

Police have had Pessarra under surveillance for some time and waited to find him alone before arresting him, Davis said.

"He's sent some threatening letters to people in the government, so we wanted to find him while he was by himself. We didn't want to give him a chance to take a hostage or something, create a standoff of some sort. We didn't know how he would react when we arrested him," Davis said.

Davis and Captain James Dunlap arrested Pessarra as he left a Whataburger restaurant on SH 332 in Lake Jackson, Dunlap said.

"He went without an incident. He did everything we asked him to do. We searched him for weapons and he was clean. Really, he was pretty cooperative. But we had no way of knowing that he would be that way. Everything we knew about him indicated that he would be just the opposite," Dunlap said.

Pessarra has given the Sun a copy of a notarized statement to the U.S. Secret Service in which he

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asks for immunity for "all my petty crimes" in exchange for undercover work he says he did in South Africa.

The statement does not go into detail about what, exactly, the petty crimes are.

The Secret Service has not responded to the Sun's numerous attempts to find out whether Pessarra has actually been granted immunity from prosecution in any case.

"I don't know anything about immunity. He certainly doesn't have any immunity in this case," Davis said of the current theft charge Pessarra faces.

Pessarra said he looks forward to his day in court in the current case.

"I'm going to name names, and the government isn't going to like it. There's no way they're going to let this get to trial," he said.

Victor Hugo, the man who is accusing Pessarra of theft is one of the men Pessarra investigated for the Secret Service in a South African counterfeit case in 1997, Pessarra said.

"The Feds just used him, and the Lake Jackson Police Department, as an excuse to arrest me and harass me. There's no way Hugo is going to come all the way from South Africa to testify against me,

and the federal government knows that. And even if he does come, his story just isn't true.

"I really don't think the Lake Jackson Police Department knows what it got into here. This is a nothing charge brought about by the U.S. Government to pressure me into keeping quiet about my reward money," Pessarra said.

Pessarra has said that, while working on a U.S. counterfeiting investigation in South Africa in 1994, he uncovered a plot to assassinate South African President Nelson Mandela during Mandela's inauguration.

The plot also targeted a number of U.S. officials—including President Clinton—who were scheduled to be in attendance at the inauguration, Pessarra said.

Pessarra said his tips about the plot allowed Secret Service officials to make last minute changes to the pre-inauguration itinerary and, thus, foil the plan.

Pessarra says he's due up to \$5 million from the State Department's Counter-Terrorism Rewards Program.

State Department officials have only said that the information Pessarra provided in 1994 "does not rise to the level required for a reward."

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Hill Country News, Cedar Park, Texas

Mother asks for help for son in arson case

Youth charged with setting fire to Leander school

By Don Cudd
Staff Writer

The mother of a teen-ager accused of burning a Leander Independent School District building last week says she's upset about the handling of her son's arrest.

"I don't want to sue anyone, and there's not a question that he started the fire. I don't want to fight. I just don't think my son got his due

process, and I want the system fixed so this kind of thing doesn't happen to anyone else," the mother told the *Hill Country News*.

The local president of an Hispanic civil rights organization has said the group will likely take up the case.

"The boy was questioned by Leander police without an attorney present, without his mother present. He has attention deficit disorder. He needed someone to be with him. It's clear that this just wasn't right," said

Ray Rodriguez, president of the local chapter of the League of United Latin American Citizens and a friend of the boy's family.

Rodriguez said he plans to discuss the case in much more detail with the mother and other LULAC officials.

"Based on what I've seen so far, I'm pretty sure we'll do something about this," he said.

The teen-ager, a 15-year-old

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Leander High School student, was arrested at school last Friday morning after confessing to starting a fire at LISD's alternative school the previous night, the mother said.

The confession came in a class essay the boy wrote, she said.

The boy had apparently been upset at having been assigned to the alternative school the day before the fire and decided to burn the building, the mother said.

The school's 75 students are those who have presented major discipline problems at the district's other schools. The teen-ager had been in the school before and did not like it, the mother said.

In the latest instance, district officials sent the boy to the school after an argument with one of his LHS teachers, the mother said. The mother said she didn't know in advance that the boy had been assigned to the school.

"No one from the school called me until after the arrest. That's another of the things I'm upset about," she said.

The boy has been in Williamson County's Juvenile Detention Center in Georgetown since Friday. It's unclear how long he will remain in custody.

The fire caused an estimated \$350,000 to \$400,000 in damages which are on target to be repaired before March, school district spokesperson Bill Britcher has said. No one was injured in the incident.

The building's south wing, which held most of the classrooms for the school's 75 students, was destroyed in the fire. Classes have moved to the building's north wing, and things have been business as usual at the school this week.

Citing laws which protect the privacy of juveniles, city and county officials have said very little about this case.

"We are handling this investigation as we would any other, according to Texas Code for Juvenile Criminal

Justice. That's all I can really say, legally. Before you print anything (about the mother's complaints), I would refer you to the County Attorney to find out about the law in regards to how juvenile cases are handled," Leander Police Chief Don Hatcher told the *HCN*.

Williamson County Attorney Gene Taylor was out of town and could not be reached for comment Thursday.

The mother said she met with her son on Monday.

"He was shaking uncontrollably. He was very upset. It's just now setting in, what he's done," she said.

A big focus for the mother in the coming weeks will be to see that her son gets good psychological treatment along with whatever punishment the courts dish out.

"He's accused of a felony, so, I guess he'll get some jail time. But I want to make sure he gets the medical treatment he needs. He's got psychological needs that require treatment. Just throwing him in jail isn't going to help those needs," she said.

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Brazorian News, Lake Jackson, Texas

Lest we forget

Gators team part of city's history

By DON CUDD
The Brazorian NEWS

The legendary Lake Jackson Gators softball team, the pride of Brazosport from 1946-1963, got together for its annual reunion recently, and one theme kept coming up during all the reminiscing:

The Gators deserve to be remembered in style. "The city, or somebody, needs to put up a monument at Gator Field or do something to make sure no one ever forgets these guys," said Nancy Heathcock, whose husband Gene played for the team.

"This team played all over the world. They were world class. They brought fame to Lake Jackson.

"They're a big part of Brazosport's history. You should have seen the crowds this team drew to its home games.

"They deserve to be remembered."

Throughout the afternoon, others said the same.

"I loved the Gators, and I know a lot of people who felt the same. I'd like to have this team

remembered for as long as I live and even further. The Gators still mean a whole lot to the people in this area." said L.E. Koening, whose two sons played for the Gators.

Koenig pointed to the crowd of about 100 at the reunion, and went on.

"Look at all the people here today. Listen to all the stories about that great team, and then try to tell me that the Gators weren't something special that touched a lot of people."

The Gators were an Amateur Softball Association men's fast pitch team. Official records are hard to come by, but Willie Whitehead, a son of a Gator and a team batboy, said the team won at least six Texas State ASA championships and played in at least two ASA World Tournaments.

"They were awesome, there's no question about that," Whitehead said. "The whole town used to come out to their games."

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The place where the Gators played their home games is still known to many locals as Gator field, but today it is three fields which are home to the Lake Jackson Girls Softball Association.

The City of Lake Jackson owns the land.

The pressbox at the main field displays photos of LJGSA's recent championship tournament teams, but there is not one sign, anywhere, to show that the Gators once graced that spot.

"I think it's great that we had a team like that here, but I didn't know anything about them," Clyde Moss, a parent of a LJGSA player said before a game at the main field Monday. "Yeah, we probably should have something about them out here."

Lake Jackson City Manager Bill Yenne said he's glad the topic of a Gator memorial has come up.

"I would love to see something like that done out there. The Gators were a big part of Lake Jackson," he said.

"Things like that are usually done through donations. The Friends of the Library group, for example, got together and put a memorial in front of the library a while back. Maybe the Gators fans can form a Friends of the Gators group and do the same kind of thing," Yenne said.

The most recent official tribute to the Gators came during a 1983 City of Lake Jackson 40th birthday celebration when former Gators teamed up with city staff members in a slow-pitch softball game, Yenne said.

"We didn't have another game during the 50th birthday. I think that's because the Gators were getting a little old and the city staff was getting a little old, and playing softball is getting a little hard for everybody involved," Yenne said, chucking. "But, yeah, I'm glad

to hear talk about a monument of some sort. The Gators deserve it. They were a wonderful of a team."

During their reign, the Gators were the talk of the nation's softball circles, and they even raised some eyebrows on people in major league baseball said Speedy Bullard, the team's long-time catcher and manager.

"I had people with big league teams come down and watch our games and just be in awe," Bullard said. "They'd tell me they couldn't believe some of the stunts we pulled."

One play the Gators perfected over the years involved a pitcher throwing at the head of a right handed batter while a runner was on third, Bullard said.

"The batter, of course, is going to duck out of the way, and the runner on third will probably see the wild pitch and get off the base a little, expecting to run home when I miss the pitch. But I surprise them. I

catch the ball, and I have a clean shot down to third to get the runner. That was a great play. They fell for it quite a bit," he said.

"We studied the game very carefully and came up with a lot of little plays like that."

Bullard compared the team's decision to disband after 1963 to another sport's dynasty currently in the news.

"We were like the Chicago Bulls are now. We said all along that we were going to quit while we were ahead, that we didn't want to keep playing until we started losing. We felt like we'd given it everything we had, that we'd done all that we could. So we hung it up after 1963," said Bullard, who now lives near College Station.

"We had a hell of a team. I hope nobody ever forgets us," he said.

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Hill Country News, Cedar Park, Texas

Masters of a Domain: Who owns those coveted local web names?

By Don Cudd
Staff Writer

Curious about the local life on the Internet, the *Hill Country News* checked the addresses that we figure are the most sought after by local web masters: cedarpark.com, leander.com, cedarpark.net, leander.net, cedarpark.org, and leander.org.

In a nutshell, here's what we found: three of those sites are not operational, and at least two are run by people who have nothing to do with Leander, Cedar Park, or even north-west Austin. Only one has any local content.

Here's a rundown of what we found out about the owners of the high-profile domain names and their plans for their sites.

■ www.leander.net

This site is the one which has the local content. It's owned by James Kinter, a Leander resident who maintains corporate web pages for a living and has a computer consulting business on the side.

"I snagged leander.net a couple of months ago when someone dropped

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it. I couldn't believe I got it. It's a great name for a local site. I want to eventually turn it into some kind of web site for the city," said James Kinter, owner of leander.net.

Leander.net, for the moment, leads to a page that advertises Leander Computing, Kinter's part-time business. The page also offers classified advertisements for free to anyone who cares to post one.

"I'll put some other things there, as I go along. This is just a hobby for me, so I don't have any definite plans yet. For now, I just hope people will go to the site and try to sell their things. There hasn't been much action lately, but I advertised some stuff on there several weeks ago, and it sold pretty quickly," he said.

To get the domain name, Kinter used a program which constantly checks to see if a specific names are free. On Dec. 14 when the program notified him that leander.net was available, he signed up for it immediately.

"The name was probably available for about an hour before I found out about it. I didn't waste any time registering for it. I figured someone else around here was doing the same thing I was doing (with a similar program). I was probably pretty lucky to get the name," he said.

For \$70 paid to Network Solutions — the company that registers most of the names on the Internet — Kinter bought the rights to leander.net for at least years. In Dec. 2002 he'll have the option of renewing the name for \$35 a year.

Of course, if someone else wants the name while Kinter has the rights, that person can always ask to buy it.

"I know there's probably someone else out there waiting for me to just let it go, but nobody has contacted me wanting to buy it. I'm not sure if that will hap-

pen, but, yes, I will listen to any offers. I'm not really in this to make a whole lot of money, though. I'd like to do something for the community with the site," he said.

The previous owner of leander.net (the person who didn't renew the name on Dec. 14) was Leander Kalpaxis of Ridgewood, New York. Kalpaxis did not respond to e-mails and could not be reached for comment.

Kinter said he's still got his program running, checking for other high-profile local domain names.

The moment someone doesn't renew one, chances are, Kinter will end up with it, he says.

www.cedarpark.com

Cedar Park resident Kevin Hutson has owned this name since September of 1999, and he's still trying to decide exactly what to put on it.

Right now the address leads to a page advertising Network Solutions and saying the site is still under construction.

"I was just playing around one Saturday afternoon and decided to check to see what names were available. I typed in cedarpark.com and was really surprised to see that nobody had ever registered it. So, I took it, of course," he said.

Like Kinter, Hutson works with computers all day for a living, and the local website is just a hobby.

"So I still haven't decided what to do with it. I've tossed around a lot of ideas, but just haven't done anything yet," he said.

He's considered putting local news, travel information, or government and school information on the site.

And he's also thought of starting a small software businesses and selling his original programs on the site. "I am a programmer afterward," he said.

Also like Kinter, Hutson says he's not heard from anyone wanting to buy cedarpark.com, but he would consider

any offers.

www.cedarpark.net

This site is completely off the internet. Type that address into a browser and your computer will report that the "server does not have a DNS entry". That means there is absolutely nothing to the site — not even a "under construction" sign.

A check of Network Solution's records shows the domain name is owned by Cedar Park resident Shelby O'brien. The name is up for renewal in July.

O'brien did not respond to an e-mail asking about the site, and the phone number listed for him is an automated weather line provided by Austin's KVUE-TV. A live person does not answer, and a KVUE staff member said O'brien's name doesn't appear on a list of employees.

So, in short, we can't tell you much about what's in store for this site.

www.leander.org

This name is owned by Michael Leander of Arlington, Virginia. The site currently has a "Coming Soon" message on it.

Like Kinter and Hutson, Leander is a part-time web developer and has no specific plans for the site.

"Since my name is Leander, I just did a search for Leander domains that were available. When I saw that leander.org was open, I just took it and said I'll decide what to do with it later. I was hoping that, maybe, Leander.com would be

available, but I'll take leander.org," he said. Leander has had the site for a year and a half.

He says he's considered starting some kind of Leander family site, but he also said he would not rule out some sort of joint venture with someone in Leander, Texas.

"If the City of Leander wants Leander.org for their website, for example, I'd be willing to work with them somehow. My plans are, right now, to renew the name in six months, but, again, I'm still not sure what I want to do with it. If someone in Leander, Texas has a good use for the name, I wouldn't want to necessarily stand in their way," he said.

Leander says that, while he doesn't know of immediate family connections to Leander, Texas, he and several family members want to, eventually, come for a visit.

"My father and others in the family have an affection for all things Leander so, of course, we all want to make it to Leander, Texas one day. We've heard about the town, but we've never been there yet," he said.

www.leander.com

This name is owned by a Denmark firm called Haleraprej 71. The site has no content.

Haleraprej 71 did not respond to e-mails asking about the site. The company's rights to the name are up for renewal in October.