

S.A. CPA hired for Clinton inquiry

By JAMES COBURN
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

San Antonio certified public accountant Steven Bankler has been hired by the U.S. Senate as an investigative accountant in the Whitewater probe.

Bankler analyzed Bill and Hillary Clinton's income tax returns relating to Whitewater for the Wall Street Journal in February 1994.

It was Bankler's opinion then that the Clintons "underpaid their taxes," adding that now, "I have seen nothing that changes my belief at this point."

Hired while visiting Washington last week, Bankler said he would be a "part-time employee of the U.S. Senate" as an "investigative accountant" to help out in the financial and tax side of the Whitewater investigation.

Bankler said the Clintons admitted they took improper interest deductions related to Whitewater on their 1984 and 1985 income tax returns. He said they paid back \$4,900 — most of the amount being interest penalties — on their 1994-95 returns.

The Clintons took a \$2,811 deduction in 1984, saving them \$1,181 in taxes, and \$2,322 in 1985, saving them \$975, Bankler said, for interest on loans to the Whitewater Corp.

He said the identical deductions, however, were taken by Whitewater, and the Clintons said the deductions shouldn't have been taken on their returns.

Bankler said he will receive daily pay as if his salary is \$131,000 (nearly \$360 a day) plus expenses for his work in Washington, which will involve "trying to explain to the committee what the tax returns (of the Clintons and the Whitewater Corp.) say, and what the underlying facts are, based on what the tax returns say."

A lifetime San Antonian and 1969 graduate of St. Mary's University,



Steven Bankler, hired by the U.S. Senate to assist in the Whitewater committee hearings as an investigative accountant, works in his Northwest Side office.

Bankler, 49, came to the attention of the Senate Banking Committee counsel, Joe Jempietro, because of his work on the Clinton taxes for the Wall Street Journal and for Tax Notes magazine.

The probe was scheduled to end today, but U.S. Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, the New York Republican who chairs the committee holding hearings, has asked for an unlimited extension and \$600,000 in addition to the \$950,000 already spent. Hearings began last July and should conclude by this July, D'Amato said.

Bankler said the committee is taking extraordinary precautions

to protect a massive number of Whitewater documents stored in two rooms. A 24-hour guard is on the rooms, he said.

"Your name has to be on the approved list to get in. There is no phone and no fax in the rooms. Documents cannot leave."

One room has 20 filing cabinets with five drawers each full of documents and boxes also containing papers. The other room is 1 1/2 times larger. "A lot of trees gave their lives for this," he quipped.

Bankler has "seen a lot" in the documents, "but I can't comment on it."

Mayor to name leaders of privatization panel

New team to lead political battle to overturn 60-40 rule

By JIM HUTTON
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

Mayor Bill Thornton is scheduled to reveal the tri-chairs today for a yet-unnamed group which will concentrate its efforts to repeal a federal roadblock to privatization at Kelly AFB.

The organization will unite city, congressional, community and aerospace industry representatives to strive for the repeal of the so-called 60-40 rule that prohibits more than 40 percent of military depot workloads being done by private companies.

Most observers believe relief from 60-40 must come during this election year before the Air Force is forced to build new facilities at depots in Oklahoma, Georgia and Utah to absorb workloads from shutdowns at the San Antonio Air Logistics Center and a similar facility at McClellan AFB in Sacramento, Calif.

Stout legislative opposition is expected to keep 60-40 in place.

Thornton said he would make the announcement of the tri-chairs "after gathering information from the City Council, the Greater Kelly Development Corp. and certain business leaders."

The corporation will implement the Kelly reuse plan designed by

Stout legislative opposition is expected to keep 60-40 in place.

the Initial Base Adjustment Strategy Committee, which also had tri-chairs — lawyers Tullio Wells and Jose Villarreal and City Councilman Juan Solis.

A strategic plan for the repeal of 60-40 has been developed and specifies that more than 30 chief executive officers from aerospace companies have agreed to contact federal lawmakers to convince them to support privatization.

Meanwhile, board members of the Local Redevelopment Authority, which oversees the Kelly corporation, have set March 15 as the deadline for requests for information from private companies interested in working at Kelly.

The requests for proposals, which would be contractual documents for interested companies, are scheduled tentatively to be sent out April 19, according to board members.

Additionally, a two-week Privatization Model Solicitation Workshop continues through today at Bergstrom AFB in Austin.

The San Antonio Air Logistics Center invited several private companies to Bergstrom to help draft a contractual model to assist in facilitating future privatization at Kelly.

All the companies involved have expressed interest in future commercialism at the base, the Air Force said.

A Kelly spokesman declined to identify the participating companies.

The focus of the workshop is on the propulsion business area where the logistics center manages, procures and maintains more than 14,000 aircraft engines.

Its engine workloads include the TF39 engine for the C-5 Galaxy, the T56 powerplant for the C-130 Hercules and the F100 engines which power more than two-thirds of the Air Force's fighter aircraft.

Logistics center officials stated in a letter to the companies that the federal government would not pay for any information obtained or expenses incurred by private-sector participants.

In addition, the company representatives were told their participation would not necessarily result in future contracts at Kelly.

Ex-county tax office employee suspect in possible embezzlement

By TOM BOWER
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

A 30-year-old employee of the Bexar County Tax Assessor-Collector's Office was questioned Wednesday by U.S. Postal Service inspectors investigating the possible embezzlement of property tax revenues.

The employee, a man, had been working since January as an automobile title clerk, but the incident under investigation occurred in December when he was in a part-time position, Tax Assessor-Collector Rudy Garza said.

Garza said he became aware of the situation late Tuesday and called federal authorities Wednesday because the theft appeared to have occurred through the mail.

He said the incident came to

light after a property owner received a notice that she was delinquent in paying her taxes. The woman said she had paid the taxes with a Postal Service money order, but county officials said they had no record of the payment.

Garza said the woman paid the taxes again and then put a tracer on the earlier money order. When the trace was completed, Garza said he was shown a copy of the document and recognized that the name of the payee was one of his employees, who had also signed his name as an endorsement.

He added that the money order had not been completely filled out by the taxpayer and that the name of the payee had been filled in by someone else.

When confronted with the evidence, Garza said, the employee

gave a statement to the federal authorities and resigned from his job. Garza added that the amount of the theft was \$509.87.

Postal Inspector supervisor Henry Palmer confirmed that an investigation of the incident was under way and that a suspect was brought in for questioning from the courthouse Wednesday afternoon.

He said information from the probe would be turned over to the U.S. attorney's office, which will decide whether to bring federal charges.

Although the amount was small, Palmer said the incident should be a warning to all citizens to fill out completely all types of financial instruments, such as checks and money orders.

BRIEFS

Gatesville woman killed in wreck

A 70-year-old Gatesville woman died from injuries she received in a traffic accident Jan. 28 about a half-mile west of Boerne on Texas

46, a Texas Department of Public Safety spokesman said Wednesday.

Bertha Ortega Macedo died Tuesday at University Hospital in San Antonio, the spokesman said.

The woman was injured when her vehicle was struck by another automobile that slid into her as she was eastbound on Texas 46, he said.

The driver of the other vehicle wasn't injured, although two passengers were treated and released from University Hospital, the spokesman said.

Workshop to focus on Woodlawn Lake Park

Residents interested in Woodlawn Lake Park are encouraged to attend a workshop to develop a park master plan.

It will be from 8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday in the park's gym at 1103 Cincinnati St.

Sponsors are the San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department and the Woodlawn Lake Park Planning Team.

"We would like to have some input on how the park should be used, what types of facilities should be added or removed and what citizens would like the park to look like," city park projects manager Dale Bransford said.

Groups participating in the effort include the Jefferson, Woodlawn Lake and Monticello Park neighborhood associations, Woodlawn Lake Sailing Club and groups from area public schools and colleges, said planning team member Edward Garza.

Scouts' clothing roundup to resume

After a 10-year absence, the Alamo Area Council of Boy Scouts and Goodwill Industries will resume the "Good Turn Day Clothing Roundup."

On Saturday, March 16, Scouts will go door-to-door across San Antonio and surrounding areas to collect all usable articles of clothing.

On Saturday, March 9, Scouts will cover the neighborhoods and leave a door hanger reminding residents to bag up the clothes so that the Scouts may return for them on March 16.

All of the clothes will go to Goodwill, which will sell them.

Proceeds will go to providing jobs and training for people with disabilities and others who face barriers to employment.

For more information, contact Lupe Young, Goodwill Vice President of Public Relations at (216) 924-8581, ext. 127.

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SAN ANTONIO TEXAS CRIME STOPPERS CALL 224-STOP

The body of Joe Luis Ybarra, 37, was found April 1, 1995, in the 1300 block of Rigby Avenue at the High View Apartments.

Ybarra was last seen the previous evening drinking in the courtyard of the apartment complex with several acquaintances.

He returned to his apartment in Building 30 at about 2 a.m.

An unidentified female reportedly lured him back outside, at which time he was believed to have been stabbed repeatedly. His body was discovered the following morning, a Saturday.

For one week only, Crime Stoppers will pay up to \$1,000 for information that leads to the arrest and grand jury indictment of the person or persons responsible for Ybarra's death.

Crime Stoppers pays for information that leads to the arrest and grand jury indictment of anyone involved in any felony crime. As always, you do not have to give your name when you call. Call Crime Stoppers at 224-STOP or 1-800-233-7867 or #STOP on your cellular phone.

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