

WORLD BRIEFS

Defense claims Noriega worked as ally to U.S.

MIAMI — Manuel Noriega was the United States' closest ally in Latin American drug wars and served its political ends in Central America and the Grenada invasion, his attorneys said Monday as they opened his defense.

"At the end of this case you may wonder why General Noriega was ever indicted," attorney Jon May told jurors. The prosecution case in Noriega's 10-count drug and racketeering trial ended in December, but the defense was delayed seven weeks after U.S. District Judge William Hoeweler underwent heart surgery.

In a brief opening statement, May argued that Noriega could hardly have sold his nation to Colombia's Medellin cocaine cartel while at the same time identifying its couriers to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, raiding laboratories and seizing cocaine-refining chemicals.

"The level and quality of the cooperation given by General Noriega to the United States was unprecedented among the leaders of Central and South America," said May. "General Noriega was our ally in the war against drugs."

If convicted on all 10 counts, Noriega could receive a 140-year sentence

yet?" Bush relented, and Romer began his assault. He said Bush's \$1.52-trillion budget contained \$40 billion in gimmicks.

Pageant contestant testifies in Tyson trial

INDIANAPOLIS — A teenage beauty contestant blurted out, "Heraped me!" and looked as if "something had taken her soul away," another pageant participant testified Monday in boxer Mike Tyson's trial.

"I just wanted to comfort her," Stacy Murphy told the Marion Superior Court jury. "I didn't know what to do. I knew she needed help, and I knew I couldn't help her."

The prosecution neared the end of its case as the trial entered its second week. Tyson, 25, is charged with rape, confinement and criminal deviate conduct. If convicted, he faces up to 63 years in prison.

The defense maintains that the woman consented to sex and has implied that the former heavyweight boxing champion will testify.

British TV ad features tourist plug from Bush

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — A commercial that stars President Bush as a pitchman for visiting America has proven a hit on British television, and a similar ad campaign may be mounted in Japan or Germany next year, government officials said Monday.

The commercial is part of a campaign aimed at adding to a tourism trade surplus for the United States that reached \$10.6 billion for 1991 and is projected to hit \$11.9 billion this year.

In 500 airings that began Jan. 13 and will continue through February, British viewers see American scenery as Bush extols the nation's beauty.

But, he adds, "most of all, you'll find the friendliest people in some very interesting places. Today there are more reasons than ever to visit America. So what are you waiting for — an invitation from the president?"

Of the estimated \$45.2 billion that foreign visitors left in the United States last year, Japanese accounted for \$8.1 billion, Britons \$4.1 billion and Germans \$2.6 billion.

— The Associated Press

Hooper challenges GOP establishment

By Anna Griffin
Assistant State and National Editor

Ruby Hooper, a longshot Republican gubernatorial candidate, said her faith, honesty and dedication to hard work could help her capture the governor's mansion.

Hooper, a 67-year-old state employee, said in an interview that her 40 years of experience serving the people made her the best possible candidate for governor.

"I've worked for the people a long time," she said. "I'm noted for being very honest and very compassionate." Hooper served at Dorothea Dix Hospital from 1945 until 1982.

Hooper's campaign, which began last May when she resigned as deputy secretary for the N.C. Department of Human Resources, is based on restoring public faith in government and improving state living conditions through education.

"I'm running against the establishment," Hooper said. "I'm running against a lot of money. I won't be bought. The largest contribution I will accept will be \$100."

Running for public office is nothing new to Hooper. The UNC-Greensboro graduate ran an unsuccessful campaign for the N.C. General Assembly in 1969 against Rep. Ray Fletcher, R-Burke County. Fletcher still holds the 47th



District seat.

Hooper also challenged Gov. Jim Martin in the 1984 Republican primary. In her 1984 effort, Hooper spent less than \$10,000 and earned 9 percent of the GOP vote.

In planning her 1992 campaign, Hooper said she had expected support from Martin, who had appointed her to the position in the Department of Human Resources after she ran against him. But when she went to the governor with her resignation last May, Martin failed to tell her he would be backing Lt. Gov. Jim Gardner, she said.

Despite her loyalty to the GOP, Hooper said she did not believe Jim Gardner was the right candidate for governor.

"I've realized two things during my campaigning: Everybody doesn't like Governor Martin, and everybody doesn't like Lieutenant Governor Gardner," Hooper said. "What I want is for people to have a choice. I'm not a professional politician, I'm a citizen candidate."

Improving state education on all levels will be the major task facing the next governor, Hooper said. Students must be taught the basics of reading and

arithmetic to combat the state's high illiteracy rate, she said.

"From kindergarten to fourth grade, we should concentrate on reading and math," she said. "You have to be able to read to do anything."

Problems such as the recession and the state's rising crime rate could be alleviated by improving North Carolina's ineffective schools, Hooper said.

"The future of our state, the social problems we are having, relate to our poor education," she said. "We've got to get all of our population reading."

Hooper said she would advocate expanding and modifying the state's community college system to provide opportunities for technical job training.

"Every child that chooses not to go to college should have the opportunity to learn a trade," she said. "We have families that can't read. We have to get these people into community colleges."

Although there are few female legislators in North Carolina, Hooper said she did not expect her gender to be a detriment to her campaign. The fact that she is a woman would make her a more effective governor, she said.

"I would hope that thinking people would realize that it's time for a woman governor," she said. "We need some calm and some warmth and togeth-



Ruby Hooper

ness. I know I can provide that."

Recently, Martin has had difficulty passing GOP-sponsored bills through the Democratic-controlled General Assembly. Hooper said she would combat partisan politics by always attempting to do what was morally right.

"If you can come to a consensus and try to do that which is right and good, then (the General Assembly) will be more inclined to work with you," she said.

Raleigh, Asheville courts burn late-night oil
North Carolina's first night courts designed to ease overcrowded case loads

By Karen Lakey
Staff Writer

Overcrowded courts in Raleigh and Asheville began receiving some needed relief Monday with the debut of night courts that will handle less pressing cases and leave time during the day for more serious trials.

The Wake and Buncombe County night court programs, which began operation Monday evening, will allow retired judges to hear pleas and misdemeanor cases during four-hour court sessions, four evenings per week. Each county has four functioning night courts.

The program also should give district attorneys more time during the day to prosecute major cases, especially drug- or alcohol-related trials.

"Night court will be like any other district court, operating in the same way and dispensing the same high quality of justice," said Franklin Freeman, director of the N.C. Administrative Office of the Courts and head of the Wake County pilot program.

The majority of cases heard in Wake County night courts will be victim-initiated complaints, such as assault or trespassing, eliminating the need for an arresting officer to be present at the trial, Freeman said. In victim-initiated

"The program will add additional resources to attack our increasing criminal case load. We hope it frees time so the district attorney can put more effort into trying cases in district and superior court."

Bert Butler
co-director of the Asheville night court program

cases, the plaintiff swears out a complaint or warrant with the magistrate.

Buncombe County night courts will hear similar pleas and misdemeanor cases, said Bert Butler, a trial court administrator and a director of the Asheville program.

Asheville night court judges also will hear all traffic violations, including those involving alcohol or drugs, he said.

Butler said he thought the program would be well-received by defendants because it would save them the inconvenience of missing work to go to court. Cases will be heard on a first-come, first-serve basis, quickening the judicial process, he said.

"The program will add additional resources to attack our increasing criminal case load," Butler said. "We hope it

frees time so the district attorney can put more effort into trying cases in district and superior court."

A \$295,000 grant from the Governor's Crime Commission will fund the night court program. Judges will receive \$150 per day, plus travel expenses. The rest of the grant money will help pay part-time prosecutors and other court personnel.

With the state budget already strained to the limit, Butler said he expected the program to be a responsible use of state money.

"It's very worthwhile, especially when resources are so difficult to come up with lately," he said.

N.C. Attorney General Lacy Thornburg said he was excited about the program's potential.

"It's certainly innovative," he said. "It's an excellent step in the right direction."

Night courts could become an integral part of the state judicial system and might be expanded to handle superior court cases still reserved for daytime courts, Thornburg said.

In Wake County, expansion of the night court program could include allowing judges to hear routine superior court cases such as pleas in felony trials, said William Pittman, an assistant district attorney for Wake County.

If the pilot programs in Buncombe and Wake counties are deemed a success after the 65-week trial period, the night court plan will go before the N.C. General Assembly to be considered for expansion and state funding.

The program could be enlarged to include night courts in Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Charlotte, Durham and Fayetteville, Freeman said.

Butler said the program's success would be measured by its effectiveness in providing a community service while relieving case loads of daytime courts.

"If the public is happy, and the lawyers get their work done, and victims and witnesses are not inconvenienced, then it will be a success," he said.

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