

★
Saturday, April 16, 1983

Waco police interrogate Bishop

By **TOMMY WITHERSPOON**
Tribune-Herald Staff Writer

A former Waco man who was questioned Thursday and Friday by Waco police concerning his possible involvement in the 1982 stabbing deaths of three teen-agers near Lake Waco has denied any involvement in the deaths, a spokesman for the McLennan County District Attorney's office said Friday.

Waco police Lt. Marvin Horton and Sgt. Dennis Baier flew to San Diego, Calif., Wednesday to question James Russell Bishop, who is considered a suspect in the July 13 deaths of Jill Montgomery, Raylene Rice and

Kenneth Franks.

John Ben Sutter, administrative aide in the district attorney's office, said the detectives planned to attempt to administer a polygraph test to Bishop before they return to Texas.

"The officers did talk with (Bishop) Thursday and he denied any involvement in the Waco triple murders," Sutter said. "The officers in California are going to talk to him late Friday, and the investigation is continuing."

Bishop, 27, a former groundskeeper at McLennan Community College, is being held without bond in the San Diego County Jail after pleading guilty April 6 to nine felony

counts in the attempted murder and sexual assault of two California high school girls.

The former Wacoan, who faces a maximum sentence of 79 years in prison, is expected to be sentenced June 1.

Waco police have determined that Bishop was in Waco at the time of the homicides and moved to the San Diego area about two weeks after the bodies were discovered.

He has been considered a suspect in the case since Horton, Baier and officer Ramon Salinas flew to San Diego in late February to investigate a possible link between Bishop and the teen-agers' deaths. The detectives did

not interview Bishop at that time because Bishop's first court-appointed attorney would not allow it.

Bishop's second attorney, Logan McKechnie, said this week he agreed to allow the detectives to interview his client because he said Bishop was not involved in the case.

"This is a very simple matter," McKechnie said. "Had Mr. Bishop had anything to do with the crime in Waco, I would have instructed him not to talk to the Waco officers. But since I am totally confident he had nothing to do with it, I want to get the matter cleared up and cleaned up."