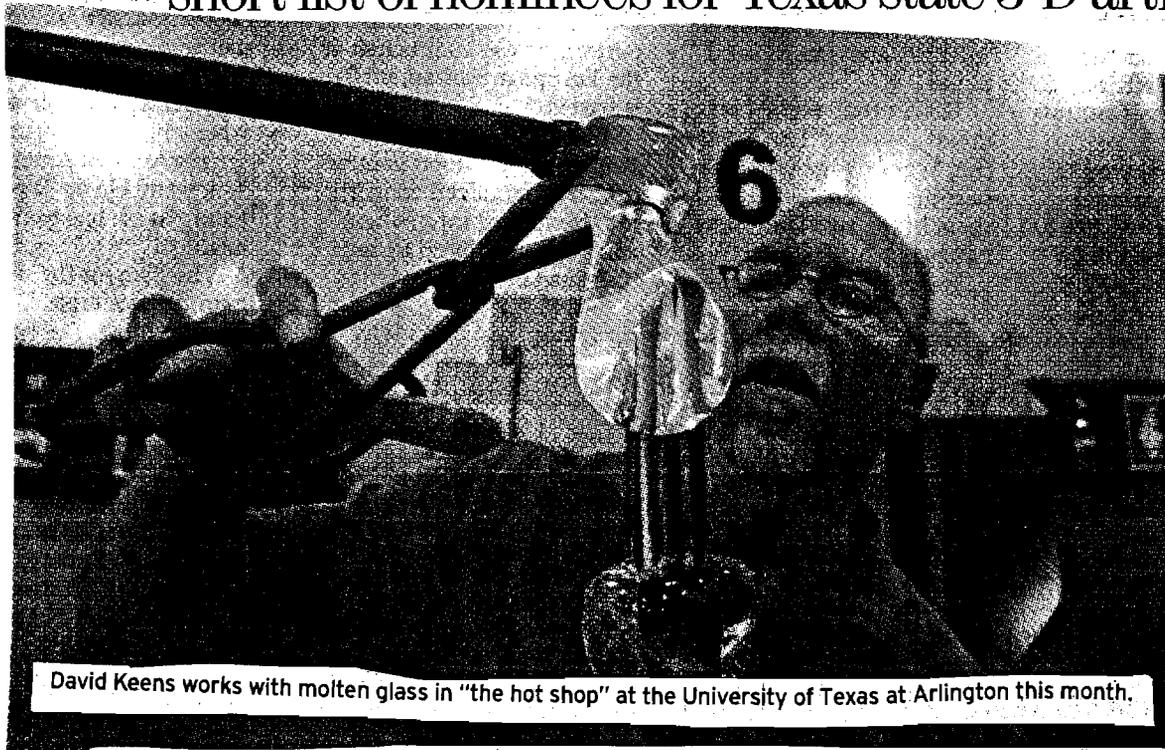


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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

David Keens, the famed professor of glass, is on the short list of nominees for Texas state 3-D artist



David Keens is the artist who created "Blooms of Enlightenment" in our library.

David Keens works with molten glass in "the hot shop" at the University of Texas at Arlington this month.

Spectator art

By JOHN AUSTIN
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

ARLINGTON — There can't be many college classrooms where so many spectators clamor to watch the professor and his students work that they've had to install bleachers.

That, however, is the situation at the University of Texas at Arlington's glassworking studio on Davis Street.

"It's the best facility in the nation — the only one in Tex-



STAR-TELEGRAM/DARRELL BYERS

Colored glass rods are melted together for use in later projects.

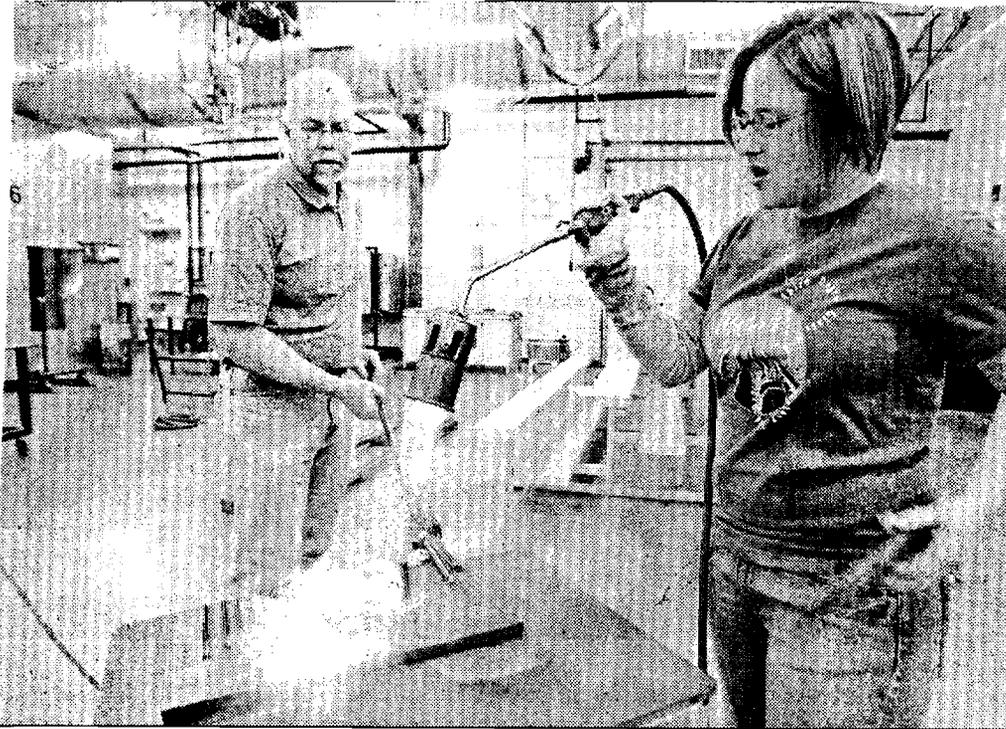
as. It's amazing," said art major Dara Atkinson, rushing around the furnace-lined studio, a place that's known as "the hot shop."

But, said UT-Arlington neon instructor Don Beck, "It pretty much wouldn't be here if he hadn't taken it on. It's his baby."

Beck was referring to David Keens. A 33-year UT-Arlington veteran, Keens is more than a highly regarded teacher. The Texas Commission on the Arts recently put him on the short list for its State Artist honors program.

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STAR-TELEGRAM/DARRELL BYERS

David Keens and his assistant, Dara Atkinson, work together in the glass studio at UTA this month.

The program honors a poet laureate, musician, two-dimensional artist and three-dimensional artist each year. Results for 2007 are expected in January, said commission spokeswoman Gaye McElwain.

"I'm very flattered to be nominated," said Keens, a compact man with a short graying beard and mustache, small red spectacles and strong forearms that come from years of handling heavy steel bars with hot glass on one end. "It's not something I applied for."

Keens didn't need to apply; his reputation preceded him.

Beck said, "He's one of the known masters in the United States."

Anne Allen, director of the Arlington Museum of Art, said Keens' work is "beautiful and difficult." It includes wall-mounted pieces that call to mind large jellyfish and big forms with layer upon layer of multicolored glass and silver leaf.

"Metal, ceramics, glass are all working to make that transition," from craft to art, Allen said. "Artists like David are helping make that transition."

The National Museum of Modern Art in Kyoto, Japan, and American Airlines, among others, all have examples of the California native's glass creations in their collections. His multifaceted, \$48,000 installation for UT-Arlington's faculty club was such a hit that university President James Spaniolo put a color photo of the room on the front of his Christmas cards.

Keens knew next to nothing about glass when he began teaching at UT-Arlington. He came to the university as a metalworking artist. His work was strong enough to win international reviews and invitations to exhibit his pieces alongside the creations of artists such as Rene Lalique, Georg Jensen and Josef Hoffman in Vienna.

In about 1975 the university acquired some rudimentary glassmaking gear. That was the beginning of the end for Keens' metalwork. He began to teach himself to blow and mold glass.

"There came a point where I decided I'd done enough," said Keens, taking a break from the furnace, where he and Atkinson had just stretched a couple of wads of molten glass into a multicolored "cane" about 15 feet long and an inch thick. "To me the interesting thing about artwork is it has to be challenging. What better way to challenge yourself than walk away from what you do best?"

Sea influence

It's understandable that some of Keens' pieces suggest sea creatures; he was born in 1949 and grew up surfing the Pacific waves off San Pedro, Calif. He also began developing his aesthetic sensibilities with an ongoing love of cool-looking cars back in the days when he hauled his surfboard in a 1965 VW bus.

These days he drives a '51 Chevy panel van with black primer paint, pinstripes and a floor-mounted chrome shift lever that extends above head level; one of his biggest new thrills is the house he and his wife just moved into in the Wimbledon addition of south Arlington.

"I'm hard-core and my wife is, too. One of the motivations of moving is a bigger garage," said Keens. "Three-car with room for two more down the road."

But garage expansion won't be a do-it-yourself project. Beck, Keens and others in the department are confident that the regents are close to approving a master's of fine arts program in glass. That will mean more students, more work.

The load shouldn't be a problem for Keens, whom Beck says has a "ridiculous" work ethic.

That's cool with Keens. "I don't want to be in my comfort zone," he said.

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GARBAGE SERVICE | STRIKE

Allied will be ready to roll by Tuesday

By ADRIENNE NETTLES
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Allied Waste will have enough workers and equipment by Tuesday to collect trash, recycled materials and bulky waste, said Tim Powell, general manager of Allied's Fort Worth division.

The company has brought in temporary workers and additional trucks since Teamsters Local 767 went on strike Monday. The union and Allied have not reached an agreement since the previous contract expired Dec. 10.

By the close of business Friday, Allied was to have collected 95 percent of residential trash this week for the more than 25 area communities the company serves, Powell said in a news release Friday. Exceptions include

neighborhoods in Azle, North Richland Hills and Watauga, but trash collection in those areas will be completed today. Recycling collections in Keller will also be completed today, the release said. Allied will also collect solid waste in unincorporated areas of Tarrant and Denton counties, the statement said.

Residents in communities served by Allied have reported problems with trash pickup since the strike began. City officials said they will weigh Allied's performance when considering contracts up for renewal next year.

If residents and businesses have problems with trash pickup, they are urged to check their city Web sites or call Allied Waste at 800-333-7301.

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REGIONAL ROUNDUP

EULESS

House destroyed after catching fire twice

A one-story house was destroyed this week after catching fire twice in two days. The home, in the 300 block of Shenandoah Drive, first caught fire about 1:20 p.m. Sunday because of a small electrical blaze, Euless Assistant Fire Chief Robert Isbell said. The electricity was shut off, and firefighters used thermal-imaging cameras to look for hot spots. Several hours after firefighters left, about 5 a.m. Monday, the fire apparently rekindled and engulfed the home. "You can have a smoldering fire for an extended period of time, though it's uncommon," Chief Isbell said. "It can be deep-seeded in the wall." The family wasn't home during either fire.

Holly Yan

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Wreck slows traffic

Casper Bonz hooks up wrecker cables after a collision between an Allied Waste trash truck and a car going east on Texas 183 near Bedford Road; the wreck slowed traffic in both directions. Both drivers were taken to a hospital, as was a passenger in the trash truck. The injuries were not considered life-threatening, said Tim Powell, general manager for Allied's Fort Worth office. The cab of the truck remained upright in the wreck.



Area's trash collection appears to be going well

■ More garbage collectors from out of town will remain through New Year's, an official says.

By **ADRIENNE NETTLES**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Allied Waste's trash collection appeared to go well Tuesday despite an ongoing worker strike during one of the heaviest trash collection times of the year.

In addition to normal pickups, trash collectors took on extra loads of wrapping paper and gift boxes from Christmas, said Tim Powell, general manager for Allied's Fort Worth division. More trash collectors from out of town will remain through New Year's, he said.

Residents in some of the more than 25 communities in Tarrant and southern Denton counties served by Allied had

complained that their trash had not been collected for days after members of Teamsters local 767 went on strike Dec. 18.

On Tuesday, North Richland Hills officials reported no problems. City officials in Azle said Allied trucks were rolling there as well. Other city offices were closed Tuesday because of the holiday. The only reported incident was a traffic accident involving a trash truck in Bedford.

Residents in Azle, Bedford, Grapevine, North Richland Hills, Saginaw and Watauga whose usual trash pickup day was on Monday should have had their trash collected Tuesday, Powell said. Trash collection in Southlake and Euless was also expected by Tuesday, those cities' normal pickup day.

Other cities whose normal

pickup day is Tuesday, including Keller and Hurst, will likely have their trash collected by today, Powell said.

Allied has brought in replacement workers from its operations in Texas and other states.

Workers walked off their jobs when union and Allied officials failed to reach a new labor contract; the previous agreement ended Dec. 10. Allied and union officials are expected to resume negotiations Jan. 3, Powell said.

Allied can get the job done with the work crews now in place, he said.

"This is the heaviest trash time of the year," Powell said. "We've got plenty of resources and equipment on the ground."

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EULESS | LAWSUIT

Animal sacrifice permits sought

■ A man who practices Santeria says the city violated his religious freedom by forbidding animal sacrifices.

By **MELISSA VARGAS**
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

A Euless man has filed a federal lawsuit against the city and three city officials because they refused him a permit to sacrifice animals as part of a religious ritual, according to court documents.

Jose Merced, who describes himself as a priest in the Santeria religion and as president of Templo Yoruba Omo Orisha Texas, says he was denied a permit to slaughter chickens and sometimes goats.

The lawsuit says that the animals are killed quickly and humanely and that the meat is eaten. The blood sacrifice is necessary for initiating new members, consecrating sacred shells and healing rituals, the lawsuit states.

"Santeria cannot continue to function, much less exist, without animal sacrifice," Merced wrote in an affidavit to the U.S. Northern District Court of Texas.

Euless City Attorney Bob McFar-

land said the city had no knowledge of the lawsuit.

According to the city's Web site, it is unlawful to slaughter or keep animals for the purpose of slaughtering in Eules.

It is also illegal to keep goats and other livestock within 100 feet of any residential building on adjacent property, or to keep livestock on less than half an acre, the site states.

The lawsuit, which names Euless building official Kurt Kasson, Police Chief Bob Freeman and Director of Planning and Development Mike Collins, seeks a permanent injunction to prevent the city from enforcing the ordinances.

The suit alleges that a police officer and an animal control officer, who were alerted by a neighbor, came to Merced's home May 4. They told Merced and 10 of his church members that a religious ceremony scheduled for the following day at Merced's house would be illegal. No animals were at the house, and the officer told Merced to consult city officials before conducting any sacrifice, Merced said in an interview Wednesday.

On June 21, a Santeria priest from Puerto Rico met with Kasson, who referred

him to Collins. The priest was in town for another ceremony at Merced's house, and the city again refused to issue a permit.

The lawsuit contends that the city violated the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 and the Texas Freedom of Religion Act.

According to Merced, Santeria originated in Nigeria and is a combination of religious traditions. It arrived in Cuba with African slaves and entered the United States with refugees from the Cuban Revolution, Merced said.

The belief is a combination of the traditional Yoruba faith and the worship of Roman Catholic saints, according to the lawsuit.

Merced, who owns three properties in Euless and has lived there since 1990, was initiated as a priest in 1979, he said. Police have been called to his home by neighbors three times about the rituals, and when they see cars at his home "even for birthday parties," he said.

In an affidavit attached to the lawsuit, Merced wrote: "We do not want to break the law, and yet we are entitled to practice our religion."

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Cheers & Jeers

Cheers: To The Hole in the Wall diner in Eules. The food is homemade and delicious. Don't let the name fool you! I've tried several dishes, and they're all wonderful! Try the Mikey Burger created by Chef Mike himself.

Erma Richardson, Corinth

Cheers: To a diner called The Hole in the Wall in Eules! The food is very good, and homemade. Mike, the chef, makes delicious homemade pies as well.

Larnell Fisher, Flower Mound

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2006

A LOOK BACK

Getting a leg up

Football player Alex Kautai leads a *haka*, a traditional tribal dance the team uses to rally school spirit, during a standing-room-only pep rally before Trinity High's playoff game against eventual state champion Carroll in November.



STAR-TELEGRAM/KELLEY CHINN

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BIZ BUZZ

Lowe's and Chili's in Euless

The grand opening for the Lowe's in Euless is planned for Jan. 11 at the southeast corner of Texas 121 and Glade Road, according to the home improvement chain.

For those who can't wait that long, the store actually opens Jan. 6 to shoppers.

The Chili's restaurant taking shape at the same Shops at Vineyard Village shopping center is expected to open in late January or February, said a spokesman for parent company Brinker International.

The home-improvement store and restaurant are part of the 300,000-square-foot shopping center developed by Hurst-based Burk Collins & Co.

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CONTRACT TALKS

No progress on trash strike

By ADRIENNE NETTLES
 STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Contract talks resumed Wednesday between Teamsters Local 767 and Allied Waste, but little progress was made toward ending the union's strike.

Tim Powell, general manager of Allied's Fort Worth division office, said in a prepared statement that "no significant progress" occurred Wednesday. Allied officials declined to discuss details of the negotiations.

"The company feels strongly that a union contract should not be negotiated in the news media," Powell's statement said. "Claims and counter-claims are not in the best interest of the employees."

Union officials could not be reached Wednesday for comment.

Why is my trash still on the street?

Delays in trash pickup – including in Azle, Euless, Grapevine, Keller, North Richland Hills and Southlake – have been ongoing since Allied Waste workers went on strike Dec. 18. Allied has tried to cover its routes by using nonstriking workers and by bringing in temporary workers from its operations in Texas and other states. The company serves about 25 communities in Tarrant and southern Denton counties.

Why a strike? Teamsters Local 767 and Allied couldn't reach a new labor agreement to replace the one that expired Dec. 10. About 100 Allied truck drivers and helpers out of 220 union members are on strike.

What are Allied and cities saying: Powell said Wednesday that Allied service "is fully operational." But cities report that trash collection in some neighborhoods is at least a day behind, and complaints from residents are still coming in. As long as Allied is picking up trash, cities are contractually obligated to stay with the company even during a strike, city officials said. And residents must still pay their trash bills.

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