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John F. and Jeanne Peering, publishers
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Opinion

Sunset commission votes to abolish PUC



STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Lyndell Williams
TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

AUSTIN—The Sunset Advisory Commission pulled the big surprise of this very new year last week when it voted to recommend that the Legislature abolish the Public Utility Commission.

The commission voted to abolish the PUC after proposed reforms for utility regulation were defeated through a parliamentary maneuver by Texas Arkansas Sen. Ed Howard, who chairs the sunset panel.

The PUC which sets rates for electric, telephone and other utilities, has come in for harsh criticism from many lawmakers and Gov. Mark White for handling out large rate increases on nearly an annual basis.

White also has criticized the PUC's sales-alleviating utilities to pass through to customers any increases in fuel costs without prior commission approval.

Few Capitol observers along with the Sunset Commission recommendation, partly because the utility companies who argued against the creation of the PUC in 1975—making the agency now.

As one utility company attorney put it, "We haven't always gotten everything we've wanted from them, but we want to keep them around." If the PUC were abolished, the utilities would have to return to each local community for approval of their rates.

The Sunset Commission action is seen more as a warning shot to let the utility lobbyists know the reformers are serious about winning some pro-consumer changes.

However, at least one senator has indicated he'd just as soon do away with the PUC as he is in its present form.

The PUC staff, which will force utilities to exercise more scrutiny over their fuel costs and allow customers to know what their fuel charges will be each quarter.

The utilities companies, however, argued that the proposed changes will only create more red tape and negatively impact their company cash flow.

The PUC has delayed final action on the matter until Feb. 2.

Gov.-elect White has named a black woman as his general counsel—a move that will put Myra McDaniel in the history books as the highest-ranking black appointee in the history of Texas government.

The three-member PUC is debating new rules that would eliminate the automatic fuel cost pass through and require prior commission approval before those costs are added to customers' bills.

The proposed rules also would require companies to set their fuel adjustments on a quarterly basis, which means utilities that underestimate their fuel costs would not be able to make up that undercollection for three months.

McDaniel, 50, didn't realize she was making the post. She is taking a cut in pay to return to government service, but she says people should be willing to sacrifice if they are "willing to be involved in making government work."

White also says he was unaware of the historical significance of McDaniel's appointment.

"I made this appointment because she's talented," White says. "She also happens to be black and she happens to be a woman."

Democratic opposition for that post.

Former State Rep. Dan Kubiak of Rockdale is the most likely Democrat to face Gramm, although humorist John Henry Faulk was considering the race.

VanCaspel is the author of three books: "Money Dynamics," "The New Money Dynamics," and the current national best seller, "Money Dynamics for the 80's."

She currently is moderator and participant in the national PBS show, "The Money Game," which is shown on 184 stations nationwide. She has been a contributor to many magazines concerning financial matters and has appeared on such television shows as "Good Morning America" and "The Mike Douglas Show."

VanCaspel will be the first female member of the Pacific Stock Exchange and has received numerous awards such as the Matrix Award from Theta Sigma Phi and The Horatio Alger Award for Distinguished Americans. She was chosen in 1982 as "Certified Financial Planner of the Year" by the Institute of Certified Financial Planners.

She is listed in Who's Who in America, Who's Who in American Women, and Who's Who in Finance and Industry.

The theme of her hour-long talk will be financial planning and how to become financially independent. Venita's major goal in her business is to assist people in attaining this independence.

Carrig Patman, wife of Congressman Bill Patman and Nettie Mae Freudenberg, extension agent of Fayette County, will be the other speakers for the evening.

There will be a \$10 registration fee which will include dinner, dessert and the three speakers.

Everyone is invited to attend. If you have questions concerning the Prime Time conference, please contact Shari Loyd in Columbus at 732-5530.

Pilot Club conference set

The Pilot Club of Columbus is sponsoring a conference entitled "Prime Time," on Monday evening February 7 at the Columbus High School cafeteria.

The keynote speaker for the conference will be Venita VanCaspel, president and founder of VanCaspel and Company, Inc. in Houston. She is one of the nation's best known and respected financial planners.

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She currently is moderator and participant in the national PBS show, "The Money Game," which is shown on 184 stations nationwide. She has been a contributor to many magazines concerning financial matters and has appeared on such television shows as "Good Morning America" and "The Mike Douglas Show."

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Portrait of Venita VanCaspel, keynote speaker for the Pilot Club conference.

Controversial issues, face legislature

By Kent A. Caperton
state senator, dist. 15

The upcoming 68th Legislature will be one of the most important in our recent history. Legislators must grapple with several controversial issues, including: funding state government without tax increases, better salaries for state school teachers, revising DWI laws, resolving the issue of financing schools outside the Permanent University Fund, and improving regulation of the utility monopoly.

The need for increased enforcement and tougher penalties for repeat DWI offenders is obvious. But also clear is the fact that we must try to rehabilitate and educate the first offender—rather than subject him to mandatory jail terms and fines—in order to steer him back on the right course. The proper education of our children regarding alcohol and drug abuse and vehicular responsibility is our best long-run solution to this grave problem.

The need to preserve the Permanent University Fund for the A&M and University of Texas systems is an important issue. But just as important is the need to establish some source of dedicated funds for colleges and universities outside the UT and A&M systems. A solution to this complex problem seems close at hand. The future of our state's economic and

social vitality lies in the strengthening of all our institutions of higher learning; to help them to always grow, always improve, and always educate.

Teacher salaries

While higher education expands and enhances the minds of our young adults, the importance of a solid and rounded foundation in the public schools cannot be overstated. Modern business and agricultural techniques are becoming more complex and effective every day. For us to equip ourselves with a labor force capable of dealing with the sophisticated tools of tomorrow, we must invest in the education they get today. To do that, we must dramatically improve the salaries of teachers, in order to attract and keep qualified professionals.

PUC ineffective

Another issue that directly affects the voters of Texas is the obvious ineffectiveness of the Public Utility Commission. The hard work and strong advocacy made during the interim by the Sunset Commission to revise the PUC

destroyed by the efforts of the powerful utility lobbyists, who broke up the coalition which passed the reforms. As a result, the Commission voted 7-3 to recommend abolishing the PUC to the legislature. Although a responsible PUC would greatly benefit the consumers of Texas, I feel that the state would be better off without an unchanged PUC. But I will fight for legislation to reform the PUC, to forge it into an effective tool of state-wide regulation of the utility industry.

During the interim between the 67th and 68th sessions, I served on a number of committees. The efforts of the Texas Energy and Natural Resource Advisory Commission were particularly effective. The TENRAC resolution to deal with the monumental water crisis on state faces in the future is a detailed, well-thought out plan of action. Water is our most irreplaceable commodity, the impending shortage of which will affect everyone from the largest agricultural and industrial concerns to the little girl who has a glass of

COUNCIL

Let's Look Back
Continued from Page 1

the advertising agency that handles the domestic consumer and food service advertising program for the rice council.

New efforts are being implemented to enhance the rice council's foreign market development program which is conducted in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture's foreign agricultural services.

Details of this effort also will be given. Brief reports on the domestic program and the substantial increases in per capita consumption of rice in the United States also will be outlined by the rice council staff.

"Promotion is an important part of the rice industry, and Texas Rice Council president Jack Wendt urges all rice farmers and spouses to attend," a news release from the council said.

Board of Directors of the First National Bank of the December meeting, approved a 16 percent dividend on outstanding capital stock, which amounts to \$4 per share. Bill Stiles will take over as Commissioner of Precinct 4 after election on November 2. Charlie Allen of Columbus will be the District Clerk of Colorado County after having defeated Richard Schmidt in the August primary run-off election. Herbert Schroeder will be the new County School Superintendent.

Letter to the editor

Headlight, which was "Nothing expensive, nor set down ought in mail." It's still a pretty good motto for any newspaper.

Very truly yours,
Madeleine D. McCarty

Letter to the editor

Among the 191 million acres in the U.S. National Forest System, there's one tropical rain forest, Puerto Rico's Caribbean National Forest. National Geographic says, Its 40 square miles protect 240 native species of trees, as well as the Puerto Rican parrot.

Colorado County Courthouse Report

MARRIAGE LICENSES ISSUED

- Leslie Frank Potter, 23, Columbus, and Verban Gale Pfeifer, 28, Bellville, 12-13-82.
- Nide Gilbert Stech, 27, Weimars, and Lisa Dawn Rabel, 16, Weimar, 12-15-82.
- Johnny Henry Hajovsky, 24, Columbus, and Kathy Ann Ferguson Branstrater, 20, Columbus, 12-17-82.
- Clarence Franklin Hamman, 18, Weimar, and Don Jean Hall, 14, Columbus, 12-17-82.
- Daniel Heeger, 22, Columbus, and Geneva Jean Rios, 20, Columbus, 12-20-82.
- Ray Edward Addicks, Jr., 24, Eagle Lake, and Catherine Marie Richardson, 16, Eagle Lake, 12-23-82.
- Charles Allen Henry, 28, Houston, and Veronica Ann Shubay, 25, Houston, 12-27-82.
- Leslie Ray Williams, 33, Columbus, and Sandra Kay Nelson, 24, Columbus, 12-28-82.
- Mark Arthur Ritchie, 22, Columbus, and Marla Jean Mikeska, 23, Columbus.
- Ronald David Walla, 29, Cat Spring, and Bessie Ann Petrzalka, 21, Needville, 12-29-82.
- Jerry Allen Stokley, 34, Columbus, and Lynda Lee Reeves Jackson, 39, Columbus.
- Mateo Navarro, Jr., 18, Eagle Lake, and Emma Andrea Mancias, 16, Garwood, 12-31-82.
- Ismal Mendoza, 23, Eagle Lake, and Rachel Ann Cordova, 15, Eagle Lake.
- Gift Deed, Chester M. Gebert et ux to Billie Jean Case et vir, 6 acres, A. Henderstrom Survey, 4-23-82.
- Quit Claim Deed, County National Bank, Clearfield Pennsylvania et al to C. A. West, N one-half Lot 9 and S one-half Lot 10 Blk. 31, Sheridan, Texas, 9-15-82.
- Deed, Henry Teddlie to D. D. McMan, Lots 5, 6, 7, and 8 Blk. 80, Sheridan, Texas, 12-6-82.
- Deed, Walter Kansteiner et al to Robert Lee Hinton, Sr., 272 acres, J. Gillespie Survey, 12-13-82.
- Deed, Angel Inez Ruiz et ux to Jose Israel Ruiz et ux, 0.50 acre, John Hadden League, 7-6-82.
- Deed, Luis Glenn to James P. Smallwood, 1 acre, Colorado County, 12-8-82.
- Quit Claim Deed, John T. Murphy et al to The Harmon Corporation, 5 acres, H. E. & W. T. RR Co. Survey, 9-17-82.
- Deed, Donald Schoenfeld to Louis A. Dolan et ux, 10.00 acres, Lockwood Potter Survey, 12-9-82.
- Deed, Herbert Schroeder, Trustee to Nick C. Gallagher et ux, 1.757 acres, Daniel Gilleland Survey, 12-10-82.
- Quit Claim Deed, Helen Woodward to Susan Ann Halter Wilcox et al, 0.863 acres, William Henry Survey, 11-30-82.
- Deed, Susan Ann Halter Wilcox et al to Helen Woodward, 1.047 acres, William Henry Survey, 12-8-82.
- Deed, Scott Ross Halter et al to Willie Wilcox et ux, Lot 137, Lake Sheridan Estates Subdivision, 11-18-82.
- Deed, Willie Wilcox et ux to Carlos Mendoza et ux, 0.863 acres, William Henry Survey, 11-29-82.
- Quit Claim Deed, Gerald Roland Halter to Patricia June Halter Gay et al, Lot 89 and Lot 137, Lake Sheridan Estates, 11-11-82.
- Deed, Susan Ann Halter Wilcox et al to Helen Woodward, Lot 89, Lake Sheridan Estates, 11-11-82.
- Deed, Eugene J. Antosh et ux to Arthur Nelson et ux, Lot 4 Blk. 51, City of Weimar, Texas, 12-18-82.
- Deed, Harry Speck to Gabriel Almeida et ux, 0.114 acres, H. Austin Five Leves Grant, 11-18-82.
- Gift Deed, Joe Agnello, Jr. et ux to Billie Mae Huff et al, undivided interest in 288.67 acres, Henry Sene Survey, 12-30-82.
- Gift Deed, C. H. Potter et ux to C. H. Potter, Jr., undivided interest in and to 290.00 acres, J. Sylvester Survey et al, 12-27-82.
- Gift Deed, C. H. Potter et ux to C. H. Potter, Jr., undivided interest in and to 290.00 acres, J. Sylvester Survey et al, 12-27-82.
- Oil gas leases
- Lease, E. J. Gracey et al to F. B. Lacy, 320 acres, James Nelson Survey, 11-15-82.
- Lease, Mabel Meyer Beard et al to Sun Exploration & Production Co., 112.45 acres, Jesse Burnham League, 7-31-82.
- Lease, Emil A. Hernies to Sun Exploration & Production Co., 112.45 acres, Jesse Burnham League, 7-31-82.
- Lease, Edna Perkins to Sun Exploration & Production Co., 112.45 acres, Jesse Burnham League, 7-31-82.
- Lease, Harold W. Jones et al to Atlantic Richfield Co., 4.259 acres, Peter Piper Survey, 12-13-82.
- Lease, James E. Mikulanka et ux to Atlantic Richfield Co., 198.00 acres, William Hudgones Survey, 10-21-82.
- Lease, Harold W. Jones et al to Atlantic Richfield Co., 4.259 acres, Peter Piper Survey, 12-13-82.
- Lease, Edward E. Eller III to Corbin J. Robertson, 525.04 acres, James Cummins Survey, 7-14-82.
- Lease, Onelle Woodall to Corbin J. Robertson, 525.04 acres, James Cummins Survey, 11-27-82.
- Lease, Gloria Greak Guthmann, Guardian for Leroy Greak to Howell Drilling Inc., 3.345 acres, Alfred-Kelso Survey, 12-8-82.
- Lease, Cleo Morris Wicks to Delta Drilling Co., 4.6 acres, Whiting & Osborne Survey, 11-12-82.
- Lease, Robert S. Anderson et ux to Atlantic Richfield Co., 46.843 acres, Peter Piper Survey et al, 10-15-82.
- Lease, Albert E. Noska et ux to Atlantic Richfield Co., 42.151 acres, Peter Piper Survey et al, 10-19-82.
- Lease, James E. Mikulanka et ux to Atlantic Richfield Co., 198.00 acres, William Hudgones Survey, 10-21-82.
- Lease, Harold W. Jones et al to Atlantic Richfield Co., 4.259 acres, Peter Piper Survey, 12-13-82.
- Lease, Edward E. Eller III to Corbin J. Robertson, 525.04 acres, James Cummins Survey, 7-14-82.
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- Lease, Cleo Morris Wicks to Delta Drilling Co., 4.6 acres, Whiting & Osborne Survey, 11-12-82.

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Basketball shoot-out for Easter Seals is set

Students participating in the annual Basketball Shoot-Out for Easter Seals will be visiting local businesses and friends in the coming weeks.

Basketball Shoot-Out is open to all Texas students eighteen years and under through their coaches, and will take place during the week of January 24 through 28 at Eagle Lake Middle School. Each participant will be responsible for soliciting sponsors from the community to pledge a certain amount for each basket made.

Students will shoot baskets for the allotted three-minute time period. Their coach will verify the number of baskets made during this time period. The participant then returns to the sponsor he or she has obtained prior to the event and collects the amount of money pledged, times the number of baskets made.

The sponsorship money is considered as a contribution to Easter Seals, and is tax deductible. Community support and student involvement for this event will help the physically handicapped in Texas.

Two statewide winners will be selected: the student who shoots the most baskets in a three-minute period, and the student who raises the most money. These lucky winners along with their coaches will sit on the bench with Coach Bob Weiklich and the Texas Eagle Longhorns at Baylor University on February 26 at Austin.

Two state winners and eight UIL Regional winners will receive a large trophy and official U.S. autographed team basket ball.

In addition, each student who raises over \$100 will receive a sew-on patch and T-shirt; over \$200 will receive a plaque in addition to the T-shirt and sew-on patch; over \$300, a windbreaker, plaque, T-shirt and sew-on patch; and each student who raises over \$500 will receive a warm-up suit, windbreaker, plaque, T-shirt and sew-on patch. All participating students will receive a Basketball Shoot-Out participant ribbon.

Last year, the students raised over \$100 and according to Easter Seals that money was kept in the county to help the handicapped. Also, our school was one of the top 10 schools in our region in raising money, noted Charles Abel, principal of Eagle Lake Middle School.

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Eagle Lake

NEW HOURS Effective Saturday, January 15, 1983, the following companies will no longer be open on Saturdays.

Garwood Implement and Supply Company
Modern Fuels, Inc.
Garwood Irrigation Co.