

## MEMBER 1983

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## Session ends on an unfinished note

The regular session ended on an unfinished note and a filibuster last week, leaving the strong possibility of a special session for any or all of at least three issues.

A tax hike for public education and teacher salaries, survival of the state's employment commission, and passage of a statewide water plan are three issues that were left unresolved as time ran out for legislators.

Also up in the air are the political futures of a handful of key players this session. Perhaps more than a couple will dramatically surge or ebb in the dynamics of the anticipated special session.

A few of the key players: Mark White, Governor of Texas, who burst out of the chute with a multi-faceted program to raise taxes for teacher salaries, late in the session but full of fervor. Despite his energetic lobbying of individual House members, the proposed tax hike never got off the ground in the House Ways and Means Committee.

The Governor, who had campaigned on a much videotaped theme of "no new taxes," audaciously abandoned that theme in favor of a promised pay raise for teachers. White was forced out of his notax stance when Comptroller Bob Bullock lowered his estimate of available revenues four times during the session.

Editor's Note: The following article recently printed in one of the House newspapers, and was brought to The Headlight by Lynda Appelt, for publication. The article was written by Patricia McCormack for United Press International. The article refers to Mrs. Leveridge, who lives in East Bernard.

"I dare any of the critics of public schools to spend just one day in the front of a classroom any grade," said Mary Ann Leveridge, president of the National PTA.

"That's the only way to see how hard it is to teach school. I'll admit, I'm not a teacher, but I can tell you it's not even close to easy."

Leveridge, a Texas farm woman, mother of five and grandmother of eight, claims to know what's right and wrong with schools based on eight years in national posts with the PTA, including the last two as president. Her expertise also comes from being a member of the Texas State Board of Education.

She gives the schools passing grades. She refuses to compare them to schools in Japan or Germany, as critics have done.

She said American schools try to give all comers a chance to reach their potential.

"The child at the bottom of the totem pole is no less important than the one at the top. And that's one tremendous difference between our public schools and those in other countries."

Down on the farm in East Bernard, Leveridge specializes in small crops for the family.

"Before I caught the plane," she said at the start of the interview, "I picked 4 gallons of strawberries."

During the last year, Leveridge, also a ham radio operator and wife of an attorney, spent 270 days on the road, visiting schools in 44 states.

White's alternate threats to veto the budget and call a special session to raise taxes pulled out on him that could easily be sawed off if he reneges, or even pushes ahead and fails.

Success with the tax issue would dramatically underscore his political strength, but even then, White will have to answer for his change of stance on the next campaign trail.

Bob Bullock, Comptroller of Texas, the feisty, crafty state tax collector has already announced he will challenge White for the '86 gubernatorial nomination.

During the session, he goaded White repeatedly for lack of leadership, even while he revised the estimated revenues right out from under him.

Bullock, who was once described by a reporter as "the junkyard dog of Texas politics," has a strong following among his party's supporters and several statewide officials. If White is re-elected, Bullock is the strongest to succeed him.

But if White succeeds in raising the status of public education, Bullock may find his own office subject to a strong challenge.

Bill Hobby, Lieutenant Governor, the low-key, non-charismatic Hobby already has drawn wide praise for conducting one of

the best legislative sessions in Texas history. He is the clear-cut winner of the session.

Gib Lewis, Speaker of the House, Everybody's friend Lewis got into hot water early when the press disclosed he left several business ventures off his financial disclosure statement. Last week, Lewis pleaded no contest and paid an \$800 fine on his own initiative.

House members overlooked Lewis' stumble in order to get on with business. What saved Lewis more than anything was his staunch opposition to tax increases proposed by White or anyone else. If taxes are raised in special session, Lewis could be the strongest to succeed him.

Stan Schlueter, House Ways and Means chairman, More than any other legislator, Schlueter, D-Killeen, held off attempts to raise taxes by refusing to let any tax bill pass through his committee. His personal

requirements are not rigid enough and that the quality of teachers and teaching, in general, could be improved.

Several of the reports held up Japanese schools as models for American schools. In Japan the school day is longer, discipline is firmer and course offerings are meat and potatoes pushover subjects.

Leveridge said the Japanese schools were children early and that, as a result of pressure in school and stress from not making it to a certain school by a certain age, the suicide rate is very high among young Japanese.

"I don't think we want to put any more stress on our young people," she said.

## STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Lyndell Williams  
TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

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The reports flunking the nation's public schools were commissioned by august bodies ranging from the U.S. Department of Education to the New York Stock Exchange and the Twentieth Century Fund.

"Most of the recommendations are wonderful," Leveridge said. "What would be new would be if large numbers of people got behind the recommendations."

"Reform of the type recommended already is under way in a number of states, the result of a movement at least five years old."

A Texas report on excellence in education resulted in the Legislature upgrading teacher certification and curriculum. Talk now is of lengthening the school day or year.

"We require four years of English, three years of

semester hours with grade-point averages of 3 to 3.5 included: Michael A. Black, Bessie A. Donner, Dora Jaramillo and David M. Sommer of Eagle Lake; and Linda J. Sewell and David L. Shimek of Garwood.

## 24 Years Ago

Let's Look Back

May 28, 1959  
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Searcy are the proud parents of a son, Stuart Reid, born in Laughlin Hospital on May 20. The Rev. Leslie A. McDaniel, pastor of Colly Memorial Methodist Church, is in San Antonio attending the Southwest Texas Methodist Annual Conference.

Miss Willie MacFarland was pleasantly surprised May 23 by a group of ladies on her birthday anniversary. Miss Willie, as she is fondly known, was 84 years of age Sunday, May 24.

Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Engstrom of Garwood were honored by their children in the occasion of their Golden Anniversary with a reception at the Methodist Educational Building in Garwood May 17. Mr. and Mrs. Engstrom were married in May of 1909 at the bride's home near El Campo.

Eagle Lake High School seniors left for a two-day Senior trip to Mayan Ranch at Bandera. Billy Maness, secretary of the Eagle Lake Volunteer Fire Department, was studying minutes of the City of Eagle Lake to determine the exact date for organization of the volunteer fire department. He came up with city records dated August 12, 1888 setting up the fire department for this city.

Victrolator for the E. H. Henry High School is Linda Lou Ford and John Oliver Glover is salutation.

Chief of Police James Adams and Constable Buster Semora report they have killed more than a dozen owls at the McClanahan house on Prairie Street. The neighbors said the owls made so much noise that they were unable to sleep at night.

48 Years Ago  
Let's Look Back  
June 7, 1935  
Miss Clara Mae Forbes entertained a few of her friends in celebration of her eleventh birthday. Those enjoying the party were Paul Balas, Dick Obenaus, Calvin Pennington, Delno Forbes, Thelma Branch, Ruby Lynn, Leola Kreitzschmar, Doris Gett Barnett, Mildred Larson and the hostess, Clara Mae Forbes.

"North part of county to get oil well test," Ben McElhinney, Jr., who was a member of the Texas University graduating class, receives his BA degree and received special mention as one of the sixteen outstanding senior men at the University.

Dr. J. R. Laughlin, C. A. Wiegler, J. N. Frazar, and J. J. Whaley of Houston return from a successful fishing trip to Aransas Pass.

Buddy Randow, W. P. Wade, Doc Star, Bennie Blair, Hillie and Leo Kreitzschmar and W. G. Durby leave for El Paso to attend the State Firemen's Convention.

Coach and Donna Layton Langensberg, 33, Rock Island, 5-23-35. Ricky Joe Holden, 33, and Tommie Lynn Thornton Heard, 37, Eagle Lake, 5-24-35.

Warren Chandler Moore, Jr., 16, New Ulm, and Lori Lee McCoy, 15, Hempstead, 5-25-35.

Michael Dale Ubig, 25, Houston, and Anna Annette Galloway Daniels, 24, Houston, 5-27-35.

Darryl Leo Hoelscher, 23, Weimar, and Roxana Gross, 22, Houston, 5-27-35.

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Vernell Burley of Weimar, had probation revoked on a theft by check charge filed 9-24-82.

Mark Thomas Harrison, Houston, fined \$250 and given one year probation and a 30-day jail term for driving while under the influence.

Herve Gachon, listing the address of an Eagle Lake attorney, plead No Contenders to criminal trespassing of a habitation, and was fined \$200.

Daniel Ray Tucker of Hockley, fined \$320 and given one year probation and a 30-day jail term for driving while under the influence.

Jerry Abel, Andy Newton and Terry Woodward, in separate cases and each listing Seis Pro Services, Inc., of Houston as an address, each were fined \$100 - on criminal trespass charges.

Robert Barnes of Glidden was fined \$50 and ordered to pay restitution on a theft-by-check charge.

Kenneth E. Gottschald of Sheridan was fined \$100 and sentenced to three days in jail on a charge of trespassing a habitation.

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Bumper Crop Agriculture Services Inc. vs. Bill Raley; suit on account, 5-24-83.

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