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Stage is set for anticipated special session

Some mighty good lawmakers are working day and night to resolve the state budget deficit, but it's not easy. In fact, it's a lawmaker's nightmare.

The comptroller has raised the official shortfall estimate to $3.1 billion, the governor has no plan to solve it, and the voters will be waiting in November to pass judgment at the ballot box.

To raise taxes or not to raise taxes?

The president and the lieutenant governor, even if they had orchestrated it, couldn't have provided a starker contrast of the two sides of the problem wrestling with Texas legislators.

President Reagan visited Dallas and blamed the Democrats' pro-tax mentality for the state's economic ills. That same day, Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby accelerated his push for a tax hike to ease the state deficit.

Governor criticized

Reagan was in Dallas for a $1 million GOP fundraiser for former Gov. Bill Clements, a $5,000-a-plate bash which fortified his anti-taxation campaign.

Hobby was prepping for a seven-city swing to promote his plan, a combination of budget cuts and tax raises. He is, in effect, filling the vacuum of leadership which many senators and representatives say exists.

Governor Mark White so far has not produced a plan for solving the budget crisis, and more and more he is being openly criticized for lack of leadership by members of both parties.

Voters gut-check

The Appropriations Committee has been working to slice the budget, but even some conservative members will confess their fears that they've cut too deep into services.

Last week they postponed a vote to cut $1.8 billion from the budget, mainly because they were waiting for the governor's plan. At this point, even Democratic lawmakers are not inclined to face the heat for White, now or on the campaign trail this fall.

So Hobby has stepped in, impatient with White's timidity and hardly content to wait for Reagan's trickle-down to reach the ravaged economy of the Lone Star State.

Hobby, like many others, believes voters will accept a tax hike, if they understand how badly it's needed. At the same time, Clements and the GOP ticket are waiting to use a tax bill like a club on the campaign trail. It's a gut-check for Texas voters.

Three-act play

Thus, the stage is set for the anticipated special session August 6, a drama of three parts.

On one side is the Clements-GOP bunch which doesn't want a tax hike, period. They'll use the issue on the campaign trail to defeat anyone who votes for higher taxes, if they can, particularly the governor.

On the other end is the Hobby crowd which has already made up its mind that a tax hike will be good for Texas. Generally, they have no strong GOP opposition, or have districts where services are needed.

In the middle is the gang led by House Speaker Gib Lewis, which wants to cut spending first and wait until January's regular session to pass a tax increase. They don't want a three-day special session to pass a tax bill just before Election Day.

Ravaged economy

Meanwhile, signs indicate the Texas economy continues to move backward.

Unemployment for June jumped a full point. Texas business foreclosures were up, and home sales were down.

Local property taxes for most of the state were poised to increase, and a study released by the non-profit Texas Research League found local school budgets had its highest increase in history last year to fund the HB 72 school reforms.

Other highlights

•The leader of a Tennessee-based Paramilitary group said its members will patrol the Rio Grande border in spite of warnings from Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox. Known as the Civilian Materiel Assistance, the group has drafted plans to patrol for drug smugglers in August and September.

•The attorney for Texas prison inmates asked the feds to fine the state $5.5 million for not meeting court-ordered reforms and to release early some 400 inmates.

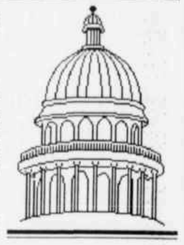
•Two Supreme Court justices facing allegations of misconduct will be allowed to take depositions from a former state supreme court employee who testified at a public hearing.

Hightower highlights

•When Texas Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower balked at trimming his budget, word leaked to his GOP opponent, Bill Powers. Powers ripped Hightower for not working with the House Appropriations panel, but not before Hightower caught on and began cooperating.

State Capitol Highlights

By Lyndell Williams



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COLORADO COUNTY:

CALCULATION OF EFFECTIVE TAX RATE, ESTIMATED UNENCUMBERED FUND BALANCES AND DEBT SCHEDULE

I, Bill Youens, Tax Assessor/Collector for Colorado County, in accordance with Sec. 26.04, Property Tax Code, have calculated $.31612 per $100 of value as the tax rate which may not be exceeded by more than three percent by the Commissioners' Court of Colorado County without holding a public hearing as required by the code.

$.13987 per $100 for farm-to-market/flood control tax;
$.17625 per $100 for the general fund, permanent improvement fund, and road and bridge fund tax;
+$.00000 per $100 for public road maintenance tax; thus
$.31612 per $100 TOTAL COUNTY EFFECTIVE TAX RATE

The estimated unencumbered fund balances are as follows:

Farm to Market/Flood Control	Public Road Maintenance	General Fund
Maintenance & Operation: $100,000	Maintenance & Operation: $0	Maintenance & Operation: $539,000
Interest & Sinking: $0	Interest & Sinking: $0	Interest & Sinking: $0

The following schedule lists debt obligations that the 1986 property taxes will pay:
March 1, 1987
September 1, 1987 Total - $85,313

The following schedule lists indigent health care services required of Colorado County.

	Continued Service Cost	New 1986 Service Cost
A. Required services that 1986 taxes will pay:	$0	$20,000
B. Required services that 1985 taxes paid:	1982	
C. State reimbursement for required services:		
1. Reimbursement received (indicate in continued service cost column)	$0	
2. Reimbursement expected (indicate in new 1986 service cost column)		-$1982
NET INCREASE FOR NEW SERVICES FOR 1986 (New 1986 service cost less state reimbursement anticipated)		$18,018

Bill Youens, Tax Assessor/Collector
July 21, 1986

CALCULATION OF EFFECTIVE TAX RATE

Separate calculations are performed for each type of tax levied by Colorado County in order to determine a 1986 effective tax rate. The following guide corresponds with the calculations show. A - Farm-to-Market Road/Flood Control Tax. B - General Fund Tax. C - Maintenance of Public Roads Tax.

	Type of Tax: A	Type of Tax: B
MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION (M&O) TAX RATE		
1. 1985 total tax levy	$862,551	$1,117,409
2. Subtract 1985 debt service (I&S) levy	- $0	- $88,888
3. Subtract 1985 taxes on property in territory no longer in unit in 1986	- $0	$0
4. Subtract 1985 taxes for property becoming exempt in 1986	- $5,314	- $3,704
5. Subtract 1986 taxes for property appraised at less than market value in 1986	- $3,718	- $4,349
6. Subtract 1985 taxes used to regain lost 1984 taxes because of appraisal roll errors	- $0	$0
7. Adjusted 1985 M&O levy (subtract #2, #3, #4, #5, and #6 from #1)	$855,519	$1,020,468
8. 1986 total taxable value of all property	$638,154,841	$651,929,208
9. Subtract 1986 value of new improvements added since 1/1/85	- $26,538,165	- $26,538,165
10. Subtract 1986 value of annexed property added since 1/1/85	- $0	$0
11. Adjusted 1986 taxable value for M&O (subtract #9 and #10 from #8)	$611,616,676	$625,391,043
12. Divide the adjusted 1985 M&O levy (#7 above) by the adjusted 1986 taxable value for M&O (#11 above)	$.0013987	$.0016317
13. Multiply by $100 valuation	x $100	x $100
14. Effective M&O rate for 1986	$.13987/$100	$.16317/$100
INTEREST AND SINKING (I&S) TAX RATE		
15. 1986 I&S levy needed to satisfy debt	$0	$85,313
16. 1986 total taxable value for all property	$638,154,841	$651,929,208
17. Divide the 1986 I&S levy (#15 above) by the 1986 total taxable value (#16 above)	$0	$.0001308
18. Multiply by $100 valuation	x $100	x $100
19. Effective I&S rate for 1986	$0/$100	$.01308/$100
APPRAISAL ROLL ERROR RATE		
20. Rate to raise the 1985 levy because of appraisal roll errors	$0/$100	$0/$100
21. Add rate to regain 1985 taxes lost because of appraisal roll errors	$0/$100	$0/$100
22. Total rate to adjust for appraisal roll errors	$0/$100	$0/$100
1986 EFFECTIVE TAX RATE FOR EACH TAX		
23. Effective M&O rate (#14 above)	$.13987/$100	$.16317/$100
24. Add effective I&S rate (#19 above)	+ $0/$100	+ $.01308/$100
25. Add rate to adjust for appraisal roll errors (#22 above)	+ $0/$100	+ $0/$100
26. 1986 Effective Tax Rate for this tax	$.13987/$100	$.17625/$100
TOTAL EFFECTIVE TAX RATE FOR 1986		
27. Add 1986 effective tax rate for each tax $.13987/$100 + $.17625/$100 + $0/$100		$.31612/$100
1986 Effective Tax Rate for Each Tax Levied and the Total 1986 Effective Tax Rate are the rates published as required by Sec. 26.04, Property Tax Code.		
28. Rate required for additional indigent health care services ($18,018 ÷ $651,929,208) x $100		$.00276/$100

Leyendecker, Seydler exchange letters on spike buck controversy

Dear Editor:

In answer to the letter written by Mr. Larry Seydler, and printed in your paper, June 19, 1986, I was fortunate enough to serve on the Colorado County Commissioners Court for a number of years with Mr. Otto Loessin. By working closely with him and knowing his sincerity and interest in Colorado County, I'm shocked by the way Mr. Seydler questioned the commissioner's letter.

Mr. Loessin didn't attend the meeting in Columbus because he appeared along with other members of the Colorado County Commissioners Court before a Water Commission hearing in Austin, part of their jobs as our public servants.

Personally, I've appeared at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department meeting many times. I've also written them letters and have attended their meetings when they pass on game regulations in Austin. I was in Columbus when there were so many people that the county court room could not accommodate their numbers so we went to the district court room. Now, if Mr. Seydler and the Parks and Wildlife Commission think that the majority of the people in Colorado County are satisfied with their handling of our fish and wildlife regulations, they are so far off that they need to be pitied. I personally stopped attending the meetings because I felt like it was only a formality, written into the law by Legislature, to require the Texas Parks and Wildlife to listen and take advice from the concerned citizens. I came to the conclusion that it was only a formality and that not one speck of input was taken into consideration. I made this remark to an ex-employee of the Texas Parks and Wildlife. He smiled and answered that the tapes of the meetings are edited and only those parts that are appealing to the ears of those responsible are heard in Austin. Those parts that don't fit their philosophy are discarded. Now that should be enough to make any sane person stop wasting his time at such a charade.

Gosh, if we could take all the money wasted on officers and travel expenses for these useless meetings, the Parks and Wildlife people could quit looking for ways to get more money out of the sportsmen.

Mr. Seydler also questions Mr. Leossin on spike bucks. Well, any sportsman that has kept current in his reading will have read many articles questioning the wisdom of the wreckless killing of the spike bucks.

Why is it that the proposed slaughter of deer, one buck and three does per hunter, without any limits on acreage or permits, has not been published in any of our local papers? I myself read it in a Houston publication. Are the Parks and Wildlife people just a little afraid of this wreckless experiment? They certainly get information to sell their views in everybody's paper.

The deer population in Colorado County is a valuable asset that must be protected. Our people accept new thinking but the allowing of the killing of four deer per hunter in our county, with its five and ten acre ranchettes will put us back to 1920 era. We probably had less than 50 deer left in Colorado County at that time and there was a good percentage of bucks. Is that what the people who work for us want us to have? It sure would be nice to change some heads, but since these people are not elected and the last vestige of local control was taken away from our commissioners court some years ago, we just have another growing bureaucracy not responsive to its citizens. I can assure them if the proposal is carried forth, the crowd in the courthouse of several years ago will be small in comparison to what will be there.

We as citizens can unite and start at the root of this problem. I believe the Texas Legislators must take another look at the Parks and Wildlife Dept. and bring them in line. They must be more responsive to the sportsmen and all citizens. They should answer to elected officials and the "dead wood" should be removed from their ranks. If you believe as I do, call or write your state senators and representatives. Let's get this bureaucracy back in responsible hands and responsible to our elected officials.

Sincerely,
Crockett Leyendecker

(Reprinted from the July 17, 1986 issue of The Weimar Mercury)

Seydler Replies...

Dear Editor:

I would like to respond to the letter you published in your paper from Mr. Crockett Leyendecker concerning the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. His letter was in response to a letter I had written to you that was published in an earlier edition of your paper.

In his letter, Mr. Leyendecker explained how the public hearings held by the Parks and Wildlife Department were only a "charade." He wrote that an ex-employe of the Parks and Wildlife Department told him that the tapes of the meetings are "edited and only those parts that are appealing to the ears of those responsible are heard in Austin." I have to wonder why he did not give the name of this ex-employe. A statement such as this does not hold water if you do not name the source from which it came. Perhaps he can encourage this ex-employe to write a letter to explain how he came upon this information. If this is a true fact, we should all be made aware of this situation.

Mr. Leyendecker infers that I have not kept current in my reading about the spike buck controversy. He infers that I am infavor of reckless killing of spikes. I have never said that spikes should be killed recklessly. What I did say is that the only time spikes should not be harvested is when the deer herd is in such bad shape that they are the only bucks left to do the breeding. There are some parts of the county where this is the case.

Several years ago the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department was given complete control of setting season dates and bag limits for all counties. Before this change the game laws were governed by the commissioners court in some counties. It is obvious that some members of the court from this era are still very sore about professional wildlife managers taking control of the local game laws. With all due respect, how many members of commissioners court are educated in wildlife management? I have to give my support to the professional biologist. Wildlife management is one thing that we should keep out of politics.

Finally, I want to say that I have no doubt that Mr. Leyendecker and Mr. Loessin are sincere in wanting to do what is best for the deer herd in Colorado County. Although we may not agree, hopefully the letters we have written will encourage others to be aware of the changes that are going on. If the deer herd benefits from our differing opinions we can all be happy.

Sincerely,
Larry Seydler

(Reprinted from the July 24, 1986 issue of The Weimar Mercury)

Colorado County Courthouse Report

MARRIAGE LICENSES

Joseph Peter Darr, 26, and Amanda Ann Marcisz, 23.

Orville Stanley Higgins, 24, and Teresa Lynn Cassell, 19.

Gary Keith McTear, 23, and Bobbie Kaye Johnson, 22.

Jesse Saldana, 18, and Michele Renee Hernandez, 18.

REAL ESTATE DEEDS

Deed, E.H. Stienke, et ux, to Leona Joseph, west 87 feet of lots 13, 14 and 15, block 15, town of Garwood; 7-9-86.

Deed, Elsie Kersten to Bobby Wayne Koym, et ux, 24.22 acres, John Swart Survey; 7-9-86.

Deed, Roma Danchak to James E. Mikulenka, et ux, 24.350 acres, Henrich Krey Survey; 7-14-86.

Deed, James T. Marek, et ux, to Stephen L. Tompkins, et ux, 3 acres, William Hudgeons Survey; 6-26-86.

Deed, Ilvin Irving to Clyde Ashton, lot 3 and 9.8 feet off the west side of lot 2, block 111, town of Columbus; 7-14-86.

Deed, David Glenn Venghaus, guardian of the person and estate of Shee Marie Venghaus, to David Glenn Venghaus, undivided 1/2 interest in 18.123 acres, Samuel M. Williams Survey; 7-15-86.

Deed, Charles J. Marik Jr., et ux, to William F. Marik, track of land, Jno. Dunlavy Survey; 7-11-86.

Deed, David Glenn Venghaus, to David Glenn Venghaus, guardian of the person and estate of Shee Marie Venghaus, 18.124 acres, Samuel M. Williams Survey; 7-15-86.

Deed, Texas Western Mortgage, Inc. to Carl Ramirez, et ux, lot 19, 20, 21 and 22, block 30, city of Eagle Lake, Highland Park addition; 7-14-86.

Deed, Beverly J. Duncan to Bob L. Duncan, 5 acres, Alfred Kelso League; 7-10-86.

Gift Deed, Leo Lebeda, et ux, to Wilbert Lebeda, et al, western most 49 feet of lot 6 in block 26 of the town of Weimar; 7-14-86.

Deed, Lewis B. Epps, et ux, to Sam L. Burris, et ux, 1.050 acres, Gabriel Strawsnider League; 7-15-86.

OIL, GAS LEASES

Bennie Murl Dillard to Amoco Production Company, 46.48 acres, Leander Beason Survey; 5-8-86.

Malissa Woods Goodwin to Weldon B. Hill, 88 acres, J. Cummins Survey; 4-14-86.

Shirley Jean Ward to Weldon B. Hill, 88 acres, J. Cummins Survey; 5-15-86.

David M. Anderson, et al, to Doyle E. Prater, 159.15 acres, James Nelson survey; 6-13-86.

Virginia Coleen Shaw, et vir, to Doyle E. Prater, 34.31 acres; 6-16-86.

Judith Bailey Refo, et vir, to Doyle E. Prater, 52.76 acres, James Nelson Survey; 6-16-86.

Pilkington campaigning for cystic fibrosis

Throughout August, Mrs. Helen Pilkington will host a letter campaign to benefit cystic fibrosis, according to Kenneth G. Teusink, Texas Gulf Coast chapter president. "Our goal during this campaign is to reach many Eagle Lake area residents with the facts about cystic fibrosis, while raising important research, care and education dollars," said Teusink.

Mrs. Pilkington will conduct the letter campaign to help the chapter in its efforts to raise money and heighten awareness of the disease. For more information on the campaign, call Mrs. Helen Pilkington in Eagle Lake at (409) 234-2543.

"Cystic fibrosis is America's number one genetic killer of children," explained Teusink. It suffocates and starves the body by producing a thick, sticky mucus that clogs the lungs and impairs digestion. The disease is presently incurable, and strikes one in every 1,800 live births. "Medical advances have increase the life expectancy of CF victims from three years of age to an average twenty years and beyond," added Teusink.

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Conservation reserve signup period Aug. 4-15

Federal officials have announced the next signup period for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will be August 4-15.

The CRP is a program administered by the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) offering landowners opportunity to receive payment for qualifying croplands taken out of production.

Landowners interested in applying should contact their nearest ASCS office. For Colorado County, the ASCS office is located in Columbus. Also, a free leaflet explaining the program and its potential benefits for wildlife is available from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744. The leaflet may be obtained by calling toll-free 1-800-792-1112.

Ron George, CRP coordinator for the department, said the August 4-15 signup period is for the 1987 growing season. Lands submitted for the program must be highly erodible cropland that was farmed in at least two of the past five years.

George said planting of cover vegetation required by the CRP offers the dual benefits of erosion control and enhancement of wildlife habitat, especially for ground-nesting birds.

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Colorado County office Agricultural Stabilization & Conservation Service News

The 1986 loan rates for No. 2 or better grain stored in an approved warehouse is as follows: grain sorghum, $3.44 per cwt.; corn, $2.13 per bu. Only farms participating in the 1986 feed grain program are eligible for the loan.

The 1986 rice loan rates are as follows: (1) farm stored, long grain, $7.52 per cwt.; (2) warehouse stored, long grain, whole kernel value, $12.44 cwt., broken kernel value, $4.98 cwt. Farms participating in the 1986 rice program are eligible for the loan. All 1986 crop loans will be reduced by 4.3% as required by the Gramm-Rudman Act. Contact the Colorado County ASCS office in Columbus, says Daniel C. Streckfuss, county executive director.

The 1986 crop rice loan have been announced and have considerable changes. Producers may obtain loans and are permitted to repay 1986-crop rice loans at the lesser of the following: (a) the loan rate (gross), or (b) the higher of the following: (1) 50 percent of the (gross) loan rate or (2) the prevailing world market price for rice as determined by the secretary.

1986 loans will mature at the end of the ninth month following the month in which the loan was disbursed by the county office. There will be no more April 30 maturity date as in the past, unless the loan is disbursed in July. Rice producers should be very careful before marketing the 1986 rice crop. Selling the crop or losing title to rice may make you ineligible for program benefits. If you have any questions please contact the ASCS office in Columbus (732-8306) before you make a costly mistake.

A signup period has been set beginning July 28 and ending August 29, 1986 for the conservation program (ACP). If you have a conservation problem and wish to carry out a practice with cost-sharing, you must file your application during the signup period. Work on the practice should not be started until an approval notice has been received.

A signup for the 1987 Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will take place August 4-15, 1986, in ASCS county offices. These contracts are for 10 years.

If you have highly erodible cropland you may volunteer it for entry into the CRP. Cost-share payments of up to 50 percent of the eligible costs to establish a cover crop will be paid in addition to the annual rental payment.

Land designated for CRP may not be grazed after the contract is approved. If you have a 1986 crop on the designated area, you will be allowed to harvest the crop before the contract becomes effective, if necessary. Bids for the annual rental payments should be filed no later than August 15, 1986.

Crop Acreage Bases (CAB's) in 1987 for wheat, feed grains, rice and cotton will be determined by the same rule as in 1986 except the base period is 1982 through 1986. The yields for 1987 will be the same as 1986 yields. The additional yield provision will apply if the 1987 yield is reduced from the 1985 yield by more than five percent. Production of alternated crops and haying of ACR are not permitted.

Rules concerning the grazing of ACR will be announced later. To be eligible for benefits for participating crops, the acreage of any other program crop planted for harvest on the farm may not exceed the CAB for that crop. The 50/92 provision will be in effect, using conserving use acreages.

Farm Acreage Bases (FAB's) will be established. No adjustment of CAB's will be permitted. Cross Compliance of crops on same farm will be in efect for 1987 crop year.

Hermann Sons lodges launch drive to acquire new members

A "campaign to acquire new members" will be conducted from August 1 to November 10 in all 160 lodges of the 81,000-member Order of the Sons of Hermann in Texas, announced Louis B. Engelke of San Antonio, grand president.

Local membership representatives in the Eagle Lake area are: Walter Stahmer of La Grange for Columbus Lodge No. 10, New Bielau Lodge No. 205 and Bernardo Lodge No. 243 and Fritz Keilers and Milton James Behlen for New Bielau Lodge.

On July 20, more than 800 lodge leaders from around Texas met in San Antonio, home office site of the fraternal society, in a rally for the campaign. This rally followed a seminar attended by some 120 local lodge membership representatives.

Hermann Sons in Texas dates back to July 6, 1861, when Harmonia Lodge No. 1 was officially chartered in San Antonio. Originally part of a national society founded in New York in 1840, Hermann Sons in Texas became autonomous in 1921. Headequarters are located in San Antonio where the grand lodge was established in 1890.

The not-for-profit order in Texas operates a retirement home for aged members and a youth summer camp, both near Comfort, and sponsors 34 dancing schools for its junior members. Local lodges sponsor both social and benevolent activities. As required by law, the fraternal benefit society also provides life insurance for the benefit of adult and junior members.

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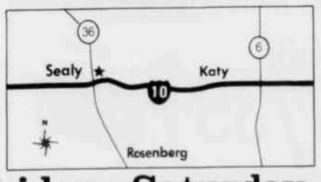

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