

THE EAGLE LAKE HEADLIGHT

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Richards is no 'Annie Oakley'

Some may picture Gov. Ann Richards as the "Annie Oakley" of Texas politics, but her tough talking last week makes her more like a saloon-clearing Dodge City marshal.

Speaking to a joint session of the Texas Legislature, Gov. Richards told representatives, senators, lobbyists and politicians to clean up their act, but it could have been worse.

She told two state Board of Insurance commissioners to get out of town by next week, as she tried to hand them their pink slips, while the entire state watched.

Some openly resisted her public arm-twisting, especially the two-tarred commissioners chairman James Saxton and Richard Reynolds, two appointees of Gov. Bill Clements.

Mouth, muscle and mandate
Without question, her's was the loudest talking State of the State speech in recent memory, and many of the new guard Democrats loved it.

Lots of pocketbooks on Main Street loved it, too, for Richards has uncovered a popular gripe: rough treatment by insurance companies.

But the old guard lawmakers, lobbyists and power-players doubt whether she has the political muscle to back up her threat, which is to get the State Conservatorship Board to take over the insurance board.

In fact, one senator said she doesn't have the mandate she thinks she has, since she got less than 50 percent of the votes cast in November.

But, she got many last-minute votes by promising to make the insurance industry more responsive to consumers and to rezone state government with a new breed of appointees.

Some reports indicate the governor plans to appoint Houston insurance agent Georgina Gonzales and former Texas Supreme Court Justice

William Kilgartin, lately the court-appointed master over the poor schools bail-out plan.

High stakes bluff?
Is this a high stakes bluff on her part, or does Richards have the face cards, the secret facts to drive out Saxton and Reynolds for poor management?

Until Meno receives the governor's official approval, and is confirmed by the Senate, Tom Anderson, the number two man at the Texas Education Agency, will serve as the interim commissioner.

"In general, I want someone who's not afraid of change. I want someone who understands that excellence can be measured by something other than a test...and I want someone who is not afraid of sharing power," Richards said.

By Lyndell Williams
Texas Press Association

State Capitol Highlights

One thing is certain: she walked into the House chamber to shake things up, and they're still straining the pictures on the walls.

The governor may be the only woman in the top echelons, but when it comes to bravery, she tops them all.

Speaker Lewis update
The attorney for beleaguered Speaker Gib Lewis updated Lewis' version of an alleged unreported loan from a lobbyist.

Lewis sold his part-interest in an Austin Condo to Purchasing and General Services Commission director Bubba Steen, who with lobbyist Dean Cobb lost it to foreclosure in 1988.

That equity, plus a \$5,000 check from Lewis to Cobb, bought Cobb's share of a ranch they co-owned.

According to the attorney, the promissory note indicating a loan to Lewis from Cobb never was really a loan.

Other highlights
"Comptroller John Sharp says his crackdown on delinquent taxpayers doesn't include Speaker Lewis because taxes owed by the Fort Worth businessman's two companies technically are not delinquent."

But Lewis, who was treasurer of Sharp's campaign last year, will be treated the same as everybody else once an administrative process known as redetermination is complete, said a Sharp spokesman.

Education commissioner
After a nationwide search, the State Board of Education recommended that Gov. Richards appoint Lionel "Skip" Meno to be the new

education commissioner, replacing Bill Kirby, who retired Jan. 31.

Meno, 43, is the deputy commissioner for elementary and secondary education in New York.

The governor's initial comments were favorable. "Everything I have heard about Mr. Meno would suggest he fits our needs to a T."

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Letters to the Editor

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effectively become involved, the PTA has become a leader in grass-roots educational efforts.

The Texas PTA is encouraging not only parents but everyone who cares about children to take a serious look at how they can help children succeed in school and life.

The PTA can provide ideas, advice and information for those who are interested.

Sincerely,
Pauline McKee
District President
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At a time when the men and women in our armed forces are facing their greatest test, we at home are facing a test as well. Our test is to maintain our unity and resolve, as our troops are doing in the Persian Gulf.

We don't want Saddam Hussein to take this country's tolerance for anti-war demonstrators as a signal he should wait out our resolve in a long and bloody war.

I'm outraged at the brutal treatment of our POW's. And I'm saddened to see the media give so much attention to the small number of anti-war protesters who have sprung into action. It seems that every time a few protesters pick up their signs, the cameras swarm around them, and they end up on the news.

Our soldiers have said that they have a job to do and are going to get it done. I feel I have a job to do, too. And that's to stand up in strong support of our troops.

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California's opinion on the Gulf War

Dear Editor,
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Alfred Nobel, after whom the Nobel Peace Prize is named once said that "a mere increase in the deadliness of armaments would not bring about peace... War must be made as deadly for all the civilians back home as it is for troops on the front lines... War

will instantly stop if the weapons is bacteriology.

Yet in the Middle East our troops now face chemical and possibly even bacteriological weapons. And Saddam Hussein has promised to bring this war to American soil.

L. Ron Hubbard, widely read and well-known author of *Dianetics*, argued that there was only one way to explain war: "On the day when we can fully trust each other, there will be peace on Earth."

The Middle East crisis highlights that it is not weapons or military strength that ensure peace, but rather international cooperation and trust. We can only hope that the cooperation which Hubbard describes in *Dianetics* will replace violence in the Middle East as rapidly as possible.

Sincerely,
Barbara A. Bloomer
N. Hollywood, California

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Colorado County Go Texan representatives to compete in many events

Colorado County Go Texan representatives will compete in many events during the opening Saturday of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, February 16.

Teams scheduled to compete in the Go Texan events are: Men's Horseshoe Pitching, team consisting of Anthony Drlik of Garwood and Keith Penell of Eagle Lake;

Women's Horseshoe Pitching, team consisting of Laane Schindler of Alkley and Kathy Moore of Altair;