

Former Hightower aides convicted of bribery

Three former Texas Agriculture Department officials were found guilty last week by a federal grand jury on charges of conspiracy and bribery in a scheme to trade public funds for the solicitation of campaign funds.

The defendants were aides of former agriculture commissioner Jim Hightower, who was defeated in his 1990 reelection bid. According to testimony, former deputy agriculture commissioner Mike Moeller, his assistant Peter Thomas McRae and division chief Billie Quicksall hired consultants with public money to travel the state soliciting political contributions for Hightower's campaign.

Moeller was found guilty on a charge of conspiracy and six other counts of misappropriating or theft of public funds. McRae was found guilty on five counts and Quicksall on four. The three face 36-48 months in prison and fines under federal sentencing guidelines. A sentencing date of Nov. 19 has been set.

Jurors heard how \$173,000 in public funds was mispent. The bulk of the money was said to go to consultants Bob Boyd and Russell Koonz, both retired longtime agriculture department employees.

Agriculture owners whose livelihoods are regulated by the agriculture department testified that Boyd and Koonz pressured them for campaign contributions during business trips. Boyd and Koonz were excused from the trial because they suffer from ill health.

Hightower said he returned all the improperly raised campaign donations after reading a 1990 report in *The*

State Capitol Highlights

By Lyndell Williams
Texas Press Association

Dallas Morning News concerning the actions of the consultants.

Hightower was not accused of any wrongdoing but Assistant U.S. Attorney Dan Mills said charges against the former commissioner could emerge as a result of the verdict. Mills suggested the defendants might come forward with more information because they are facing a prison sentence.

Moeller's attorney, William Allison, said his client would appeal the verdict.

Grand Juror Subpoenaed

A subpoena was filed last week for Melvin G. Wrenn of Austin who served in the grand jury that indicted U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison last month for five criminal charges.

Hutchison's attorney, Dick DeGuerin of Houston, filed the subpoena instructing Wrenn to appear for questioning at the Travis County Court-house on Oct. 28. DeGuerin could not be reached for comment on why the subpoena was filed. He earlier accused Travis County District Attorney Ronnie Earle of discouraging witnesses in the case from talking to defense attorneys.

Schools and Income Tax
A state personal income tax is part of the solution to Texas' public school

funding troubles, a Texas Association of School Boards official testified last week in an education finance trial.

Billy Walker, TASB executive director, testified that equity in school funding will occur only when the state comes up with a better tax system. "A personal income tax is part of the solution," Walker told state District Judge Scott McCown, presiding judge in the nine-year-old school finance case.

"You must solve the state revenue problems before you can solve your school finance problem," Walker said. "If the state does not solve the revenue problem, then the school finance problem may be insoluble."

Walker's comments came in response to a question by McCown, who asked the school finance expert how he would improve the education funding system. Walker said he and the association have no position on whether the school finance law is constitutional. But whatever system is used, he said, there must be more money for education.

Professor Calls Plan Fair

In later testimony, a New York University professor said Texas would have one of the most equitable school funding systems in the nation under its new education finance law.

Robert Berne, associate dean and professor of public administration at the university, was called to testify by state attorneys defending the law against challenges by property rich and property poor school districts.

"I think if it plays out the way we've anticipated, it will produce a system that is the most equitable in the country," Berne said.

Texas Short on Grants
Texas ranks near the bottom — 46th in the 1992 fiscal year — in seeking and getting federal grants.

The U.S. Census Bureau gave Texas that low per-capita ranking because the state received only 5.3% of the federal grants available when it had 6.8% of the country's population. The state's failure to capitalize on federal dollars makes Texas a "donor" state, one where more federal dollars are leaving than returning.

Comptroller John Sharp estimated the cost of being a donor state in 1990 was \$2.4 billion.

Other Highlights

U.S. Rep. Martin Frost, D-Dallas, announced he will run for re-election next year rather than seek Hutchison's Senate seat. "I intend to spend all my energies with the future of the Super Collier," he said.

U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros has squelched rumors that he will run for the U.S. Senate next year. "I can't imagine any scenario under which I would be a candidate next year," said the former San Antonio mayor.

Early voting for the Nov. 2 statewide election started last week and runs through Oct. 29. The ballot includes 16 proposed constitutional amendments ranging from income restriction to prison construction.

Information and Opinions...

Constitutional Amendments

Texas NFIB promotes Prop. 2

Texas' largest small business advocacy group has announced support for Proposition 2 on the ballot of the Nov. 2 election. The proposal to exempt pollution control equipment from local property taxes is strongly backed by the National Federation of Independent Businesses (NFIB).

"Of the 16 constitutional amendments on the November ballot, only Prop. 2 will help preserve jobs and clean up the environment," said Robert Howden, director of the 37,600 member state chapter of NFIB. "The soaring cost of complying with federal and state environmental regulations threatens to bring tens of thousands of small businesses to their financial knees. Prop. 2 is our best hope for reducing these costs in the long run and helping people stay in business."

The new federal clean air standards will affect more than 60,000 small firms in the state according to the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC). Compliance is expected to cost more than \$1 billion in capital investments, increased operating costs and administrative expenses.

Dry cleaners, service stations, auto garages and bakeries will be hit hard by the new standards. Their only options are to buy expensive pollution control equipment or shut down, Howden noted.

"Coming up with the cash to buy the equipment is extremely difficult because it won't make the business more profitable. That's not the kind of investment local bankers or outside investors are looking to make," he said.

Prop. 2 won't help find purchasing capital but it will keep the businesses from being slapped with increased annual tax bills on top of the purchase payments for the equipment they are forced to buy.

The proposition would take effect Jan. 1, 1994 so no property now taxed would be removed from tax rolls. All it would do is ease pressure to raise consumer prices in shops seeking to recoup their environmental protection costs.

Texas NFIB is the latest and largest business group to join the Clean Texas Coalition, which includes organized labor, environmental groups and state and local officials.

For information about Prop. 2, contact the Clean Texas Coalition, 114 West 7th St., Suite 625, Austin, TX 78701 or call 512-482-0095.

Prop. 3 would give land back to owners

McCluskey asks voters to approve Prop. 3

State Rep. Huey McCluskey, D-Rosenberg, is asking Texas voters to correct a technical oversight and return the ownership of their land to 140 families, two churches and a school district in Fort Bend and Austin counties.

When Texas voters go to the polls Tuesday, Nov. 2, to consider the 16 proposed constitutional amendments, Proposition 3 will deal with state ownership of 4,428 acres in these two counties.

The land in question was part of a Mexican land grant, McCluskey said, which was partially voided under Mexican law prior to Texas becoming a republic. After Texas won its independence from Mexico, all land not in private ownership reverted to the new republic.

The one-third ownership in the 4,428 acres was discovered in 1991 during a routine title search for mineral rights. In the search, it was discovered that one of the Mexican grantees had not fulfilled ownership requirements and his rights to the land were voided.

Since all state land which was not designated for other purposes was made part of the Texas Permanent

School Fund in 1900, McCluskey notes that in the eyes of the state, one-third of the Austin and Fort Bend acreage has been a part of the fund for 93 years.

In March, 1992, he said, the Texas General Land Office informed the landowners of the possible state claim for a one-third interest in their land. He pointed out that the state has not claimed the land since 1824. The May 1993 issue of *Texas Monthly* asserts that the state even "technically purchased land from itself" for highway right-of-ways.

McCluskey said Proposition 3 passed both houses of the legislature unanimously and approval by a simple majority of Texas voters would "instantly cure the legal deficiencies" in the land ownership.

"If Proposition 3 is rejected, it will mean complete devastation to 140 families and two church congregations and could mean a large tax increase for the patrons of the Wallis Orchard Independent School District, which has its high school and stadium facilities on the disputed land."

"I urge all voters in Texas to vote for Prop. 3," stated McCluskey.

Sincerely,
Clyde King Jr.
Associate Publisher, The
Herald-Coaster, Rosenberg

Recognizing October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month

We are reducing our prices from \$60 to \$40 for a mammogram during the month of October.

DO I QUALIFY FOR A MAMMOGRAM?
HOW CAN A MAMMOGRAM HELP ME?
WHAT SHOULD I DO?

1. Women age 35 and over who have NOT had a mammogram within the last 12 months. • Women who are NOT pregnant. • Women who are NOT nursing.
2. A mammogram is a low dose x-ray that helps 'see' breast cancer before there is a noticeable lump.
3. Just make an appointment as soon as possible.

Mammography is now covered by most Health Insurance and Medicare. Mammographic screening is performed by trained and licensed technologists and interpreted by Board Certified Radiologists, and accredited by American College of Radiology.

EARLY DETECTION. IT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE!

"We Care"
SOUTH TEXAS
MEDICAL
CLINICS, P.A.

1-800-635-4021
2100 Regional Medical Drive
Wharton

ELMS students of month chosen

Eagle Lake Middle School announced the students of the month for the first six weeks.

Students are nominated from each class on the basis of their academic progress, attendance, citizenship, attitude, cooperation and dependability.

Named were: fourth graders Sonia Vasquez, Imelda Posada, Jessica

Buckner, Jennifer Saucedo and Maria Najera; fifth graders Patricia Najera, Cindy Webb, Johanna Lopez, Kurt Coldeway and Stephanie Jackson.

Sixth graders named were Tabitha Connor and D.J. Sosa; seventh grade choices were Brian Cardenas and Lori Grigar; and for eighth grade Jonathan Burrow and Tiffany Wilkerson.

Raiders show their spirit

By Rosemary Valles, Student Reporter

Dress-up Week was one of the many events that helped celebrate the 1993 Homecoming.

On Tuesday, Raider fans wore clothes from their favorite periods in history. This included clothes from as far back as Paleolithic days.

Wednesday they CLASHED! This was their chance to wake up in the morning and put on anything without having to worry about what everyone would say.

Thursday was backwards day. They wore their clothes in almost every way possible to show their support. Finally, Friday was Blue and

White Western Day. Raider fans wore blue and white from head to toe to show our guys that we are behind them all the way.

Slovak Republic home of new student at Rice

By Rose Valles, Student Reporter

A foreign exchange student visiting the area for this year is from the Slovak Republic. Roman Dobosovic, 17, is staying with Bill and Hope Raley of Garwood during his year in the United States.

Dobosovic thinks Rice is a very nice school with nice people. The prom is one event he is very much looking forward to attending.

He hopes to visit New York, Los Angeles and New Mexico while he is in this country.

His favorite activities include scuba diving, mountain climbing, listening to music, collecting old coins and, as he calls them, banknotes (bills).

The Rice students look forward to his stay and hope it will be filled with good memories and happy times.

VICA officers named

The Rice High School VICA (Vocational Industrial Clubs of America) elected officers for the 1992-93 year in an Aug. 26 meeting. Pictured are new officers President Veronica Serna, Vice President Melissa Hernandez, Treasurer Annette McTeer, Secretary Christina Rodriguez and Reporter Regina Upson. The club plans a fundraiser during October to raise money for district and state contests. *RHS Photo*

Red wagon parade, bonfire

By Tracy Rodriguez
Student Reporter

The third annual Rice bonfire was held Thursday, Oct. 14.

Festivities began with a red wagon float parade as a prelude to the Bonfire. The theme for the parade was "Raiders are Rockin'". There were 12 entries from the various clubs and organizations around the high school. The parade was led by the cheerleaders and football team from the administration building all the way to the student parking lot.

Awards were given for originality, best theme, most spirit, and the principal's choice. The Bonfire Red Wagon Parade was a great success that added excitement and spirit for the homecoming activities.

Winners in the different categories are: Most Original - Rodeo Club, Runner-up Vica Club; Best Theme - Special Olympics, Runner-up Freshman Band; Best Spirit - Student Council, Runner-up RHS Band; and Principal's Choice - PALS, Runner-up FTA.

HACKEMACK'S RESTAURANT
• German Foods • Steaks
• Seafood • Live Musik
• Wheelchair O.K. • Visa/MC
OPEN:
Thurs., Fri., Sat.: 5 to 10 p.m.; Sundays: 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.
• Thursday is Shrimp Night!
Information & Reservations:
409-732-6321
On FM 109, 10 miles North of Columbus

ELMS seeks donations

The Eagle Lake Middle School is seeking donations of items to create a comfortable, rewarding environment. A reinforcement room to reward the terrific kids who behave well and do not receive sufficient recognition is being sponsored by the school PTO.

They are in need of such items as a comfortable couch, chair, TV, old video games such as Atari, rugs, magazines, books, coloring books and colors and other such things.

"Remember, one man's junk is another's treasure," commented teacher Jeanie Young.

The first electric razor was marketed in 1931.

They would like to have such "treasures" from the community. Anyone having donations may call 234-3393 and leave a message.

STURM ASSOCIATES, ARCHITECTS
• House Plans
• Interior & Remodeling
• Commercial/Industrial
409-992-3000
"We Appreciate Your Business"

Foot Facts

By Dr. Eric R. Tepper, Podiatrist
ADVANCE ABOUT APPLYING ICE

One of the first general rules of first aid is to apply ice to a fresh injury. The principle is that ice reduces swelling and discourages blood from pooling. Cryotherapy, the technical name for the use of ice, can be particularly important to a foot or lower leg injury since gravity and body weight are such potent forces in those areas. To ice an injury, place ice cubes in a plastic bag and wrap with a dry towel. Gently massage the injured area in a circular motion with the covered ice for about ten minutes per hour as often as possible for the first two to three days. However, never put ice on a fresh wound. Also, never leave an ice pack strapped to your body, as serious skin damage could result.

If you would like more information about first aid at home or at work, we would be glad to assist. Please call my office for further information or for an appointment, at the Eagle Lake Community Hospital at 409-234-5571. I am there the first and third Tuesdays of the month. As a family practice, I offer comprehensive diagnosis and treatment of foot problems, as well as preventative foot care direction.

F.S. Freeze water in five-ounce paper cups for handy ice "packs".

11TH ANNUAL
TEST OF THE BEST
BAR-B-QUE COOKOFF FUNFEST
NADA, TEXAS
OCTOBER 30, & 31, 1993

BAR-B-QUE COOKOFF ■ CHILI COOKOFF
PINTO BEAN COOKOFF
TRIP & GUN RAFFLE ■ VOLLEYBALL
FOOD & REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

Saturday, Oct. 30:
COOKOFF: team check-in, 1-7 p.m.
Pinto bean judging, 9 p.m.
HALLOWEEN COSTUME DANCE
awards presented at 10 p.m.
DANCE BY GOLD DUST, 8:30-12:30 p.m.
Judging: Showmanship 11 a.m.; Chili, 2 p.m.; barbecue, 3 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 31:
VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT
8:30 a.m., 36 team, 4 divisions
For information call
739-3610, 543-4098, 758-3067

Proceeds to Benefit NADA Knights of Columbus Charities
Remitted Broadcast by Radio Station KLLP - El Campo
FOR MORE INFORMATION & RESERVATIONS FOR COOKOFF CALL:
739-3620 ■ 738-3572 ■ 543-5047 ■ 758-3380 ■ 758-3605
Applications available at NADA Grocery & Market
NADA, TX & Farmers Co-Op GARWOOD, TX

COLORTYME

Now Serving Eagle Lake and the surrounding areas

- Television
- Video
- Audio
- Furniture
- Appliances

WHAT'S
RIGHT
FOR YOU.

543-3477

1258 N. Mechanic
Stanley's Shopping Center
El Campo, TX

*This is a retail purchase transaction which does not grant ownership rights until the ownership terms have been completed.
The products may be new or pre-owned. Specifics apply may vary.

Columbus Television & Appliance SUPER DEAL!



COLUMBUS TV
738 WALNUT
732-6054

**MUST BE ACTIVATED
ON MINIMUM OF BASIC
VALUE RATE PLAN

Some Restrictions Apply

Toll-Free Dialing To
409 & 713 & 512
Area Codes Within
The GTE Mobinet
Coverage Area.

GTE Mobinet
Authorized Agent

Offering highway coverage from
The Lone Star Cellular Network®

KNOW YOUR MERCHANTS AND BUSINESSES

For advertising information call
409-234-5521

A Large Selection
of Beautiful
Holiday
GREETING
CARDS

Laker Printing
123 N. McCarty • Eagle Lake
• 234-3360

Excellence
Trophies
& Awards
...for those who Excel
Engraving • Plaques • Signs
Custom Identification Products
409-234-2492 204 W. Center
Charles & Kate P.O. Box 456
Spangler Eagle Lake, Texas 77434

This Space
Available!

Call 234-5521
for information.

MOSS
Air Conditioning & Refrigeration
Sales & Service
• Air Conditioners • Walk-In Coolers
• Refrigerators • Freezers
• Ice Machines • Ice Storage Boxes
• Furnaces • Water Heaters
409-234-2793
Benny Moss
200 W. Center • Eagle Lake
TACLB000406
The right decision.™
Licensed YORK® Insured