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# Lawmakers Ask Attorney General About Speaker's Powers

AUSTIN — The 80th Texas Legislature was a contentious five-month gathering that may have seemed to end quietly on May 28.

Speaker Tom Craddick, R-Midland, had come out on top of a parliamentary battle to stay in office.

Then, House members used the closing hours of the session to pass hundreds of pieces of legislation, instead of pressing issues with Craddick to the bitter end.

But the battle over the speaker's authority and the way challenges were rebuffed raised questions.

The speaker refused to recognize members seeking to make a motion calling for a vote to remove him from office, or in House parlance, "vacate the chair."

Reps. Jim Keffer, R-Eastland, and Byron Cook, R-Corsicana, in an attempt to resolve questions about the legal and constitutional scope of the authority

of the speaker, asked Attorney General Greg Abbott to render an opinion.

Those who are interested in the details of the request can find RQ-0589-GA on the attorney general's Web site.

Alexis DeLee, Craddick's press secretary, said the speaker welcomes Abbott's opinion.

The state constitution requires the attorney general to issue a written opinion on a question affecting the public interest.

The attorney general is required to issue the opinion not later than the 180th day after the date that it is received, unless before that deadline the attorney general notifies the requesting person in writing that the opinion will be delayed or not rendered and states the reasons for the delay or refusal.

At the beginning of the legislative session, Craddick appointed Keffer chairman of the powerful House Ways and Means Commit-

tee and Cook chairman of the Civil Practices Committee.

Keffer and other House members have let it be known that they want to serve as speaker of the House in the 2009 legislative session, but Craddick has said he intends to seek re-election.

**Personnel changes are coming**

Education Commissioner Shirley Neeley announced on June 20 her resignation, effective July 1.

Perry appointed Neeley in January 2004. As commissioner, she served as the head of the Texas Education Agency, overseeing 1,037 school districts and a number of charter schools.

Secretary of State Roger Williams resigned earlier. He will be succeeded in office July 1 by Gov. Perry's former chief of staff Phil Wilson.

The governor's current chief of staff Dierdre Delisi resigned. Perry appointed Brian Newby to replace her on July 1. Newby currently serves as the governor's general counsel.

Perry also announced the appointments of senior adviser Kathy Walt and deputy legislative director Kris Heckmann as deputy chiefs of staff, effective July 1.

And, Perry announced Donna White, a member of his senior staff for more than six years, will move to a position at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. White earlier served in the office of then-Lt. Gov. Rick Perry and in the office of the late Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock.

**Other Highlights**

- Forty-four Texas lawmak-

ers signed a letter requesting the Public Utility Commission implement measures to protect the state's most vulnerable electric consumers this summer.

Chief among those measures is the permanent implementation of a moratorium on electric disconnection during the summer months for low-income elderly and critical care customers.

The rule also would allow low-income customers to spread their summer bills out over a period of time to ease the financial burden that increased summer usage creates.

- Gov. Perry issued a disaster declaration on June 19 for Cooke, Grayson, Lampasas and Tarrant counties after storms, flooding and tornadoes struck. Perry summoned military, state

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State Capital



**HIGHLIGHTS**  
By Ed Sterling

and local agencies and private organizations to assist in search and rescue and relief efforts in the affected counties.

- The governor and first lady Anita Perry are on a weeklong visit to Israel and Jordan.

## Let's Look Back...

# 24 & 48 YEARS AGO

### June 30, 1983

Mr. and Mrs. Chris Wishert of Nada announced the birth of their first child a son named Christopher "Clint". The baby was born at 7:53 a.m. on Monday, June 20 at Gulf Coast Medical Foundation in Wharton. He weighed six pounds, 14 ounces and measured 20 1/2 inches at birth...

Paul and Sue Causey are pleased to announce the birth of their second child a girl Mackenzie Kate. She was born Thursday, June 23 at 11:44 p.m. at Eagle Lake Community Hospital. She weighed seven pounds, 11 ounces...

Clark and Vicki Powers proudly announced the birth of their third child Andrew Paul Powers. He was born June 16 at Gulf Coast Medical Center in Wharton weighing eight pounds, 3.5 ounces and measured 22 inches at birth...

Kitty Thomas, of Eagle Lake a sophomore Computing Science Major has earned "Distinguished Student" status at Texas A&M University...

Carl Albert Lundquist, 85, of Eagle Lake, passed away early Tuesday morning in Eagle Lake Community Hospital. Funeral services were scheduled Wednesday at 3 p.m. in the Dulany Funeral Home chapel with the Rev. Wilbert Sims. Burial was held at the Cheatham Cemetery in Sheridan...

Lillian Irene Janow, 65, of Eagle Lake passed away June 25 in Methodist Hospital in Houston following a long illness. Funeral services were conducted Monday, June 27 in the Dulany Funeral Home Chapel with the Rev. J. Melburn Sibley. Burial was in Lakeside Cemetery...

Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Brookshire was the setting of a double-ring ceremony uniting Dr. Carmen Grace Stallman, DVM of Garwood to Dr. William Clayton Stone, DVM of Fulshear on Saturday, June 11 at 5 p.m....

Miss Janice Marie Prihoda and Gale Dean Thompson exchanged wedding vows at 2:30 p.m. on June 18 at the Saint Mary's Catholic Church in Nada.

Msgr. Victor Schmidtinsky officiated at the ceremony...

In a 4 p.m. ceremony on Saturday, June 18, Jonna Webb and Wayne Bowen were united in marriage at the First Baptist Church in Eagle Lake. Rev. Paul Krupicka of the Grace Lutheran Church and Rev. Melburn Sibley of the First Baptist Church both in Eagle Lake performed the ceremony...

Saint Anthony's Catholic Church in Columbus was the setting for the wedding of Miss Pamela Kaye Morgan of Eagle Lake and Anthony Stephen Wostarek of Columbus on Saturday June 4 at 3 p.m. The Rev. Brian P. Crookes officiated at the double ring ceremony...

### July 2, 1959

Chamber of Commerce has selected Miss Sandra Thomas,

daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Thomas, as its entry in the annual "Miss South Texas" Bathing Beauty Contest to be held in Max Starcke Park in Seguin July 4...

Headlight won third place in its division in the annual Appearance Contest, held by the State-Wide Texas Press Association...

Curtis Laughlin, son of Mr. and Mrs. J.R. Laughlin, and junior champion at the Eagle Lake Recreation Center won first in the third flight of the Austin Junior golf tournament held recently in Austin...

Barbara Boggess and Charmaine Causey will represent Eagle Lake in the annual Wharton County junior tennis tournament to be held in El Campo July 11 and 12. They will compete in the 15 and under singles and will team up doubles competition...

Mrs. R.J. Campbell was honored with a pink and blue shower June 24 with Mesdames George Cason, Jr., Allen Cassady, Leonard Walker, Raymond Lee Kohleffel and Charles Smith as hostesses...

Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Gertson have purchased the home of Mrs. L.D. Roberts on the corner of State Street and McCarty Avenue. Mrs. Roberts plans to move to Houston...

Mrs. Elmer Struss and Ralph Halvorsen and Mrs. Chas. Morgan and Clyde Brown tied for first place in the Scotch Golf Tournament held at the Eagle Lake Recreation Center Sunday afternoon. Their score was a 47...

Dianne Duncan, Julia Wells and Carol Wells are attending Camp Arrowhead near Hunt and will return home July 13.

## COLORADO COUNTY COURTHOUSE REPORT

### County Court Dispositions June 20

George Butler, III, possession of a controlled substance. Sentenced to 45 days in jail.

Victor Cantu, possession of marijuana in a drug free zone. Sentenced to 10 days in jail, fined \$300.

Heather Mae Duty, driving while license invalid. Sentenced to six months deferred adjudication and fined \$350.

Michael Galabeas, theft of stolen property. Sentenced to 10 days in jail.

Jose Galvan, accident involving damage to vehicle. Sentenced to one year probation, fined \$150, and restitution of \$1,185.18.

Juan Joe Gonzales, driving while license invalid with previous conviction. Sentenced to three days in jail, credit for two, fined \$500.

Reza Attar Jafari, driving while intoxicated. Sentenced to one-year probation, fined \$500.

Leslie A. Latham, driving while license invalid. Sentenced to three days in jail, credit for two, fined \$350.

Karen Treon Latson, criminal trespass. Sentenced to 45 days in jail, credit for 29.

Jay Deep Luthra, possession of marijuana. Sentenced to three days in jail, credit for two, fined \$350.

Jerri Lynn Montgomery, theft. Sentenced to one year deferred adjudication, fined \$390, \$201 restitution.

Russell C. Nelson, theft, pub serv/elderly. Sentenced to 60 days in jail.

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Russell C. Nelson, theft. Sentenced to 60 days in jail.

Rhonda Jean Peters, driving while intoxicated. Sentenced to 45 days in jail.

Rhonda Jean Peters, driving while intoxicated-2<sup>nd</sup> offense. Sentenced to 45 days in jail and interlock device.

Alejandro Ramirez, driving while license invalid. Sentenced to six months deferred adjudication, fined \$350.

Robert Saunders, possession of marijuana. Sentenced to one year deferred adjudication, fined \$350.

Walter J. Soderquist, driving while license invalid. Sentenced to six months deferred adjudication, fined \$350.

Dennis Wayne Wise, possession of marijuana. Sentenced to three days in jail, credit for two, fined \$500.

Christopher M. Zapata, driving while license invalid. Sentenced to six months deferred adjudication, fined \$350.

Eric Justin Andel, violation of protective order. Sentenced to 60 days in jail.

Christopher Cengiz, possession of marijuana. Sentenced to one year deferred adjudication, fined \$250.

Caroline Crosby, driving while intoxicated. Motion to revoke, dismissed.

Calvin Cunningham, driving while license invalid-with previous conviction. Sentenced to three days in jail, credit for two, fined \$500.

Charles Hosman, theft-stolen property. Sentenced to two years deferred adjudication, fined \$250, restitution \$2,102.78.

Kenneth Mann, driving while intoxicated. Sentenced to one-year probation, fined \$500.

Vicente Ramirez-Salinas, driving while intoxicated. Sentenced to 10 days in jail, six months driver's license suspension, fined \$300.

Joe Paul Rodriguez, theft-stolen property. Fined \$500.

Jeffrey Thomas, reckless driving. Sentenced to 30 days in jail.

Jeffrey Thomas, possession of marijuana. Sentenced to 30 days in jail.

David Toledo, tamper with government record. Sentenced to one year deferred adjudication, fined \$1,000.

Jessie Upson, Jr., driving

while license invalid-with previous conviction. Sentenced to 20 days in jail.

Kara Welch, theft-stolen property. Sentenced to one year deferred adjudication, fined \$100.

### Four Suits Filed In District Court

Four suits were filed in Colorado County District Court in the past week.

In one suit, filed on June 21, owners of a tract of land in Eagle Lake sued the city of Eagle Lake in a dispute over the land.

Richard Lyle Anderson, Dana Anderson and Robbie gay Anderson filed the suit.

The suit states the Andersons own 1.897 acres of land in the city.

It also stated that between Jan. 1, 1968, and May 2007, the city constructed and maintained a water line through the plaintiffs' property to service municipal golf course.

The suit claims no easement was ever granted.

In the summer of 2005, the suit states that the city water line was discovered to be leaking.

According to the suit, the land was easily flooded, thought they could do nothing to further use the land and constructed a pond nearby.

The suit says the owners now realized the land was saturated due to a leak that may have continued for many years.

The suit seeks damages and a declaration that no valid easement exists.

In another suit on June 21, prosecutors filed suit to forfeit to the state \$14,600 in currency, which was seized on June 19 in the county by a DPS officer.

The suit claims Nickolas Martinez was the owner of the currency and claims it is contraband.

On June 22, Hudson and Keyse LLC filed suit against Benjamin B. Perez in a dispute over a credit card account. The suit claims \$9,237 is in dispute.

On June 22, Ford Motor Credit suited Jose A. Rodriguez in a dispute over payment loan for a 1998 Ford F-150 pickup. The suit claims that \$5,953 is owed.

**Divorce Filed**  
Frances Diana Schneider and Warren Allen Schneider, June 25.

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**Congratulations...**

To the following "Mustangs" on Making the Honor Roll for the last sixth weeks grading period!!

*Tina Till, Christina Lopez, Delilah Gentry, Neida Salazar, Jaquita Woods, Brandy Brewer and Paige Vandermark*

**It's an OLD TIME PICNIC at Beason's Park July 4, 2007**

**Sponsored by the Columbus Chamber of Commerce In Cooperation With H.E.B.**

**Patriotic concert by the Columbus Community Choir at First Baptist Church - 7 p.m.**

**Fireworks will follow**

**Bring your family and a picnic and relax under the trees!**

**Texas' oldest independence day celebration!**




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