

Last of series

General proposition: a catch all

Associated Press

AUSTIN — The last substantive article of the new constitution is a covered-dish supper at which Texans must eat a little of everything, whether it tastes like peach cobbler or rancid butter.

Or reject it all. Under one lid, for example, environmentalists find fresh seafood. State beaches and submerged

Special News Analysis Series

lands are held in perpetual trust by the state, for the people.

But under the coffee pot lid they find bitter water. The voter-rejected Texas Water Plan, which calls for importation of Mississippi water at a cost in the billions, could be approved by the legislature.

For this reason, the Texas Committee on Natural Resources, whose board is made up of 32 environmentalists "from Athens to El Paso and Denton to Sinton," opposes Article X, the General Provisions Article.

Ned Fritz of Dallas, committee chairman, says the legislature already has done what the proposed beach provision would do, so it is unnecessary.

But this is not quite true. The constitutional provision would prevent subsequent legislatures from making exceptions and selling portions of the public beaches.

Also, the new constitution instructs the legislature to provide access to the beaches. There are stretches of up to 40 miles of public beach today that have no roads leading to them.

West Texans, of course, love the

dish that Fritz hates. Their agricultural economy depends heavily on irrigation with water from underground aquifers that are drying up and will never be recharged.

Under the new constitution, water could be taken from the Sabine River in East Texas, for example, and transferred to the Panhandle, so long as it was replaced by water from out of state. The legislature could spend money to do this, something it is prohibited from doing under the present constitution.

Also, the legislature could take water from the Sabine or other rivers on a "temporary, interim basis." But the new charter fails to define those terms, and courts conceivably could hold that "temporary" is whatever the legislature says it is.

Fritz' group also objects to the new policy of the state "to promote the conservation and development of the natural resources of the state."

"Remember that 'and' means to do both, so that 'conservation and development,' means they must develop," Fritz said.

The legislature is commanded to provide by law for: "1. the control, storage, preservation and distribution for useful purposes of storm, flood, river and stream waters; 2. the reclamation, irrigation and drainage of land; 3. the abatement of subsidence; 4. the conservation of the atmosphere; 5. the collection and disposal or recycling of wastes; 6. the conservation and development of the energy resources and forests; and 7. the navigability of the waters."

This includes development of forests. And it orders the legislature to provide for irrigation of land.

There are 24 sections in the General Provisions Article, and they deal with all of the odd-sized subjects that fit nowhere else in the constitution.

One of these says a handicapped person may not be denied a right, benefit or opportunity because of a physical or mental handicap as defined by law. "An exception to this is where the handicap prevents performance of the job sought. Conservative state Republican

Headlines

Some mislead, confuse

By ROXIE HEARN
Assistant Editor

The Ombudsman is a reader service that fields questions, complaints or comments about The Battalion. This column is a discussion of calls and letters received throughout the week.

The Battalion's weakest points this week were headlines. The titles appearing above news stories should be well-written and informative, not complicated and confusing.

This week's beauties started with "At Arlington . . . Purists get way." If you didn't know what a purist was, or what it was doing in Arlington, you weren't alone. The rather loose

Ombudsman

connection didn't appear until the end of the fourth paragraph.

"A touchy subject . . . Feeling out the situation" was definitely "cute" since the story was about breast-petting research, but it told the reader absolutely nothing about the story's content.

How about "All eight passage to surprise prof"? If you ran across that one in Friday's paper you probably read the story just to see what the headline meant.

To make sense out of any of those headlines, readers had to read the stories first, then decipher the titles.

Recently, The Battalion has been running serials on various subjects: the County's ambulance service, the campus police department and, now, A&M's bureaucratic system. The comments about the ad-

ministration articles haven't been favorable. The idea is good, but the stories are dull, superficial and poorly written. The preface to the series announces it will "analyze" the administrative bureaucracy; it merely skims the surface. Many departments are simply listed along with the person who heads them — no further information given.

One of the more poorly written sentences pointed out stated, "The value of these articles is, if you have a problem at Texas A&M, there is someone whose job it is to help solve that problem." Not too clear there.

Another problem the series has is getting the caricatures and the names matched correctly. Friday's story about Clyde Freeman was printed with the caricature of Tom Cherry, whose story will appear tomorrow.

Both drawings are printed below, correctly identified.

Wednesday's paper didn't hit the news stands until almost 7 p.m. last week, causing many people to miss it completely. The press equipment

broke down and type was set three different machines before being finally acceptable. That means three separate settings for each story and typographic errors were abundant. As a result the first sentence of the leading story didn't even make sense.

A few rather minor errors of the week: UT's coach is Darrell Royal, not "Darrel" Royal. The quote "What we have here is a failure to communicate" came from the movie "Cool Hand Luke" and not "Cool Hot Tin Roof."



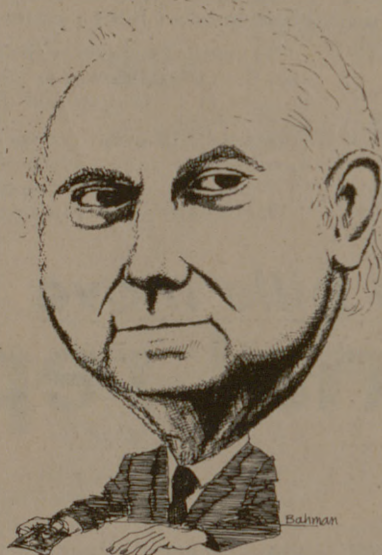
Clyde Freeman, Executive Vice President for Administration.

OMBUDSMAN

If you have a question or complaint regarding news coverage please contact our Ombudsman's office between 6 and 11 p.m., Monday through Thursday. We established the office to help you with problems requiring the attention of any top editorial personnel of The Battalion. Call

845-2611

or write Ombudsman, The Battalion, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843.

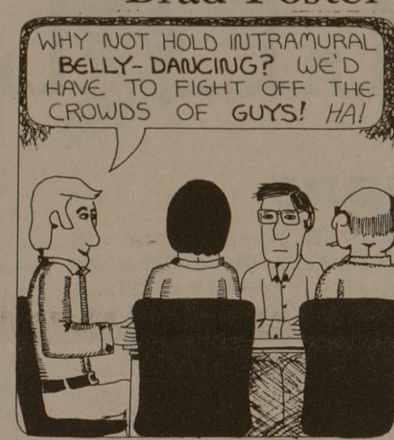


Tom D. Cherry, Vice President for Business Affairs.

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Brad Foster



The Battalion

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Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words and are subject to being cut to that length or less if longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit such letters and does not guarantee to publish any letter. Each letter must be signed, show the address of the writer and list a telephone number for verification.

Address correspondence to Listen Up, The Battalion, Room 217, Services Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

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