

Redistricting failures delay filing deadlines

United Press International
AUSTIN — Aborted redistricting attempts have cost the state millions of dollars — with three separate filing deadlines presently set for candidates seeking congressional and state offices.

Advanced technology and early planning by the Legislature have failed to prevent 1981 redistricting from resembling a replay of the last reapportionment when litigation carried on for several years.

The Legislature had high hopes for early acceptance of a new plan, but the political nature of the process prevented such a wish.

Opposing factions cropped up within political parties from the start and black and Hispanic legislators began fighting among themselves.

Lawsuits were filed against each plan, sometimes only days after passage.

Both Democrats and Republicans agree there should be a better way to reapportion the state, but no one is willing to take the job away from the Legislature.

"I would hope there is a better way to do it," Gov. Bill Clements said. "But anyone who thinks they are going to take it away from the Legislature has a pie-in-the-sky attitude. The Legislature is very jealous of its right to redistrict."

The Legislature began planning for redistricting more than two years ago and invested millions of dollars in staff hours, computer time and legal talent.

Redistricting was considered throughout a legislative session, a special session and the 60-day existence of the Legislative Redistricting Board. In the end, none of the Legislature's or LRB's plans are being used for the elections.

Clements and a ruling by the state Supreme Court voided the Legislature's first plans for the Texas House and Senate, giving the task to the redistricting board.

By October, the LRB passed two new plans, but the U.S. Justice Department last week killed those proposals and passed the task of reapportionment on to a three-judge federal panel.

While stating their grudging

acceptance of the responsibility, the judges also said the process of redistricting should be revised.

At the very least, there should be some procedure by which negotiations could take place with the Department of Justice, the judges said, and if necessary, agreed changes in a redistricting plan could be implemented without the necessity of costly time-consuming legislation.

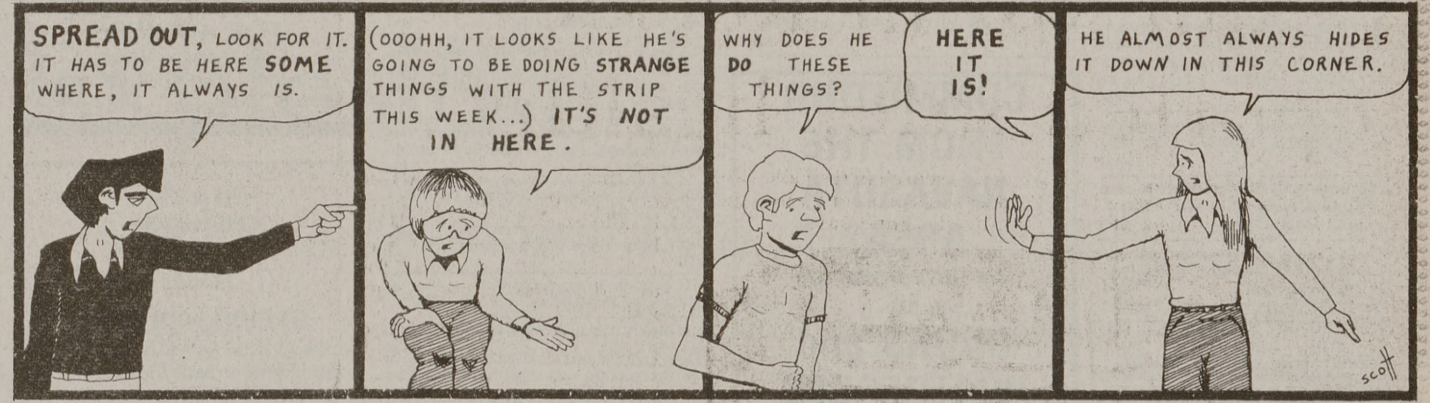
The judges have delayed the filing deadline for statehouse seats until March 19 while new districts are drafted.

The Legislature's plan for the state's 27 congressional districts also was thrown out. The Justice Department rejected the congressional plan on Friday the grounds it dilutes the voting strength of the Mexican-American community in two districts.

To accommodate potential candidates, a federal court in Austin earlier delayed the congressional filing deadline until Feb. 22 for 16 of the districts. The deadline for filing in the 11 other districts was Monday.

Warped

By Scott McCullar



Ad brings 600 responses

Spouse hunt successful

United Press International
DALLAS — Judy Culbertson answered Harold Stern's advertisement for a bride last Tuesday, met him for lunch Wednesday, met him again for dinner Wednesday night and accepted Stern's marriage proposal during dessert.

The couple married Saturday in Las Vegas at the Candlelight Wedding Chapel, which Stern, 43, selected from the Yellow Pages.

"It's been a wild week," Stern said. "I wouldn't have believed it in a million years. I think I'm going to write a book — that is if the phone ever stops ringing to give me time to do anything. The women keep calling and calling."

The women have been calling the dental laboratory operator since the news media publicized an ad Stern had placed in a Dallas tabloid.

The ad read:

"Wife wanted — that means marriage, that also means immediately. Wife is to be 23-35 years of age. I am 5 foot, 10 inches, not good looking, not ugly and warm heart. And one more thing, this is no long courtship, two-three weeks, then marriage. This ad is for real."

Stern said more than 600 women from all over the United States and Canada responded. Some sent him flowers and telegrams, one woman had her mes-

sage delivered by a stripper and another from Pennsylvania was even prepared to throw in her Lear jet to win his hand.

Harold, who kept a notebook on all the callers, picked Culbertson who got a four-star rating.

"That's because she wasn't silly," he said. "She didn't play around. She just sounded sweet — and serious."

19-inch snowfall puts freeze on St. Louis

United Press International
ST. LOUIS — The heaviest snowfall in 70 years imprisoned St. Louis residents in their homes Monday, closing schools and businesses and forcing police to make emergency calls in four-wheel-drive vehicles.

The 19-inch accumulation recorded Sunday was the heaviest 24-hour snowfall since Feb. 12, 1912.

Downtown St. Louis, normally clogged with 100,000 workers, was eerily silent and white at dawn without normal rush-hour traffic. Only two streets in the entire downtown were cleared and entrances to parking garages were blocked by huge snow drifts.

"We're snowed in pretty good," policeman Floyd Bohler said. "Some main routes are getting plowed open, but the secondary routes — there's just no way."

Bohler said National Guardsmen were helping police patrol the downtown to prevent looting. Some occurred early Sunday, he said. Private citizens volunteered four-wheel-drive vehicles to carry police to

emergency calls.

"That's the only way we can get around — in four-wheelers," Bohler said.

Drifts were making interstates impassable or restricted to one lane, and a 10-mile stretch of U.S. 40 was closed in west St. Louis County. Police say people who ventured out into the

zero-degree weather often were stuck, and abandoned cars complicated plowing efforts.

Bi-State buses were unable to travel — the first time in many years St. Louis had no bus service — and spokesman Tom Sturgess said no buses would run today.

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