

## Texas behind in aid to elderly

A legislative committee studying hunger announced Tuesday that thousands of elderly Texans are having to scavenge through garbage dumpsters for food because they are forced to choose between shelter and nutrition.

And Ed Meese says there aren't hungry people in America. Maybe the ones he sees choose to be homeless.

Texas currently ranks 49th in the nation in funding programs for the elderly. Many of these aging Americans are below the poverty level. They're the ones rummaging through the trash dumpsters in search of edible garbage.

And they're the ones who depend on the free meals now offered by the Department of the Aged. Seventy percent of those who were served the meals said the lunches were their only complete meals of the day.

Those meals may go a long way for them, but don't we have more to offer?

A state in the rapidly expanding and increasing profitable Sun Belt should be able to pass along some of the benefits to its poor. And yet, our state still lags behind. Not something to be proud of.

This is one area where the usually progressive Texans are behind. They need to slow down and look into the faces and cupboards of the less fortunate, particularly the elderly.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

## Caged rabbit a part of remembered flight

ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico — He came to the Albuquerque airport in a cage. From his confinement he stared out at me.

I stood listening, my backpack slung over my shoulder, my name 20 down on the standby list.

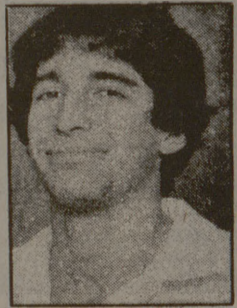
The 3:15 flight to Houston began preboarding. The old, the young and the handicapped took their positions at the front.

The attendant went down the roll call, announcing the lucky standbys who had a seat. I watched the man charge up to the check-in counter to claim the spots for his family of three.

My brother started out to the car to tell the rest of my family that my chances to make this flight were slim; it'd be the 9:58 to Houston and then the two-hour drive to College Station for me. "I'll see you in 10 minutes," I said as he exited the terminal.

"Freedman," echoed through the red pueblo interior of the airport — once again they had misspelled my name. I pushed my way across the line waiting for the 3:20 flight to Los Angeles. Reaching the desk, I handed the attendant my pre-paid ticket; she rewarded me with a boarding pass. A man at the counter asked "Last one?" as I turned and headed for the gate.

I vaulted — or more like I sat on the metal bar and lifted one leg at a time up and over — a small metal fence, and ran into the bellowed tunnel leading to the plane. I handed the plastic boarding pass to the gate attendant and took the



Donn Friedman

first seat I could find.

A few seconds later a man pounced through the oblong hatch and gave me an I-made-it smile.

The stewardess went through the required spiel, the one that they give every time you get on a commercial airliner, and just as regularly you never listen to. The one about buckle your safety belt, your seat can be used for flotation, and you're in a pressurized cabin, but just in case here's how to use the oxygen masks that drop from somewhere overhead, but not where your luggage is, all luggage must be checked or placed completely under the seat in front of you. Please put your seat in an upright position. Thank You.

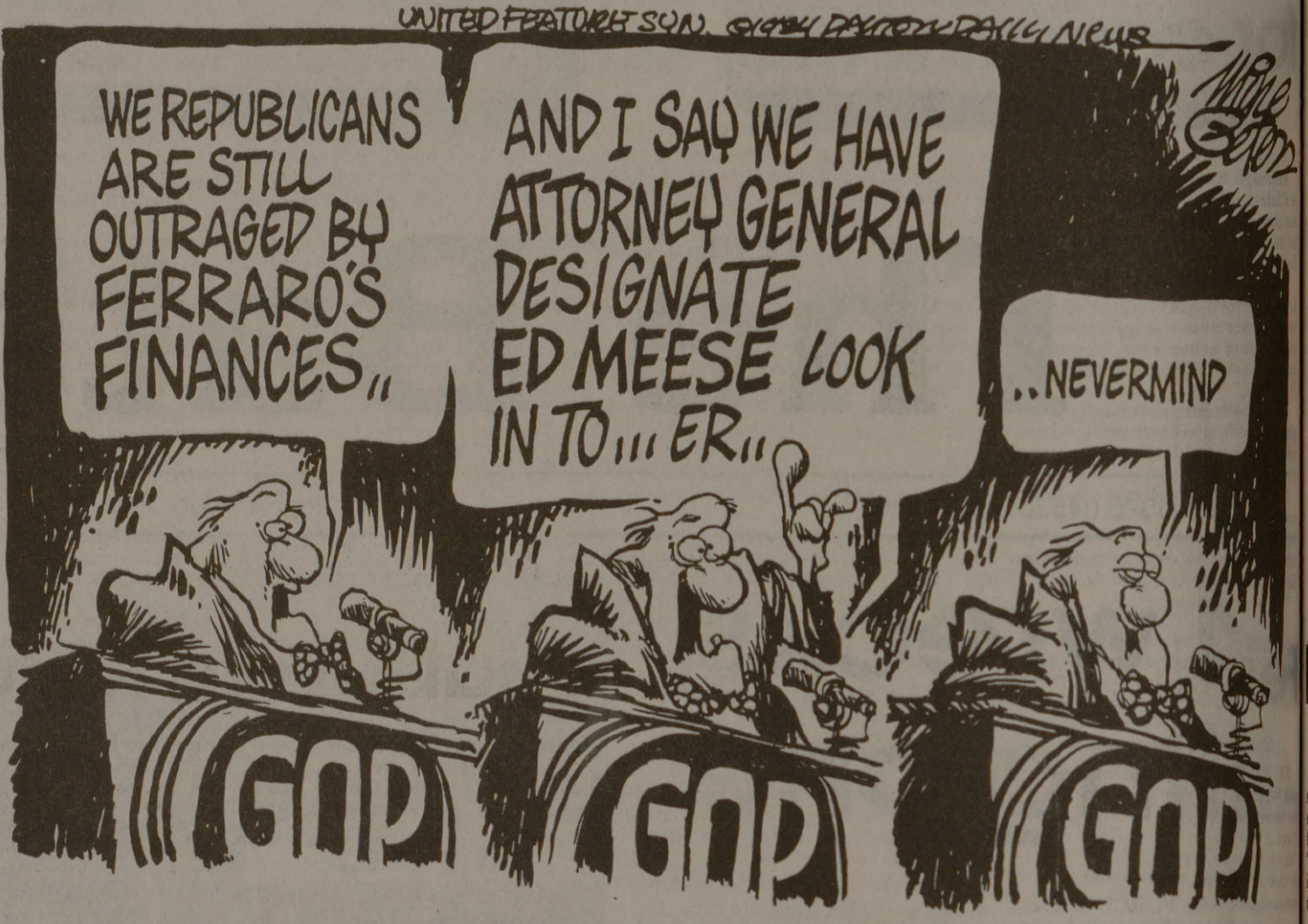
The stewardess turned and walked up to a little cowboy — dressed to travel with scuffed boots and gray flannel pants — and asked, "Do you understand," as she unraveled the oxygen mask, "what you're supposed to do with this?"

The boy giggled, newly missing teeth left gaps in his smile. Holding a stuffed bunny in his lap, he nodded and softly repeated the orders. The stewardess winked and smiled.

For one hour and 30 minutes the hustle and bustle of commercial airfare continued. People fought their way up the narrow aisle to relieve their bladders after feeling the pressure of 25,000 feet, and the stewardesses dispensed beverages to insure a constant flow to the bathrooms — excuse me, they're always called lavatories.

The plane set down at Dallas Love Field and the little cowboy prepared to disembark.

He took Whiskers, his brown bunny, from his lap and pulled a plastic container from under his seat. Whiskers left the airplane in a white plastic cage.



## GOP can't resist Ferraro issue

By ART BUCHWALD  
Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

What I admire about the Republicans is how reluctant they are to make political hay out of Geraldine Ferraro's financial disclosures.

It's impossible to get a Reagan supporter to discuss them.

I met Lance Worthington, a White House political strategist, for lunch, and the first thing he said to me was, "I hope you're not going to ask me questions about Geraldine Ferraro's tax returns, because if you do I'll walk out of the restaurant."

"I promise I won't."  
"We consider Ferraro Mondale's problem, not ours."

I said, "I'm glad you people are taking the high road."

"Of course there are a lot of questions the American people are entitled to have answers to concerning the loan her husband made to her in 1978."

"I thought you didn't want to talk about it," I said.

"I don't. But isn't it peculiar that after John Zaccaro discovered he had

made an illegal contribution to his wife's congressional campaign in 1978, she repaid it with \$100,000 she received from the sale of a building she only had a \$25,000 interest in four months previously?"

"It does seem rather weird," I said. "What's your theory on it?"

"I told you I didn't want to discuss it," he said angrily.

"I'm sorry. Let's talk about the Reagan campaign."

"We were right on schedule until the Ferraro business interrupted it. How do you suppose she and her husband wound up with a net worth of \$4 million?"

"I'd rather not say."

"That's the trouble with the media. You make a big deal over a lousy \$50,000 loan to Ed Meese, but you refuse to discuss the finances of one of your own."

"I will. But you said you didn't want to talk about it."

"I don't. But that doesn't mean where there is smoke, there isn't a smoking gun. I have nothing against Geraldine Ferraro because she's a wo-

man."

"Neither do I."  
"But when a person runs for vice president the public should know everything there is to know about her husband."

"That doesn't seem to be a problem any more," I said. "I know more about John Zaccaro's finances than I know about my own son's."

"I suppose you think the White House is happy about all this investigative reporting into the Zaccaros' financial affairs."

"I had a secret feeling you were."

"Well, you're wrong. It only detracts from our campaign. Frankly we wish the issue would go away so we could campaign on the Republican platform. President Reagan and Vice President Bush are sick and tired of being asked questions about Geraldine Ferraro."

"What would they rather be asked questions on?"

"Walter Mondale and his inability to pick a vice president who isn't under a cloud."

"That makes good political sense," I said.

## This hometown not an asset

by Dena Brown

Much like "name, rank, and serial number," one of the standard series of questions asked at Texas A&M is the ever-popular "name, major, and hometown."

Invariably, some wise guy says, "Aw, you wouldn't know where I'm from."

Falling for the bait you say, "Oh, tell me, I might know where it is."

To which he replies, "Well, it's a little ol' town called Houston."

Ha, ha.

Well, I can say that a lot of people really don't know where my hometown is. The conversation usually goes something like this:

"Where are you from?"  
"Lake Jackson."  
"Jackson, Texas?"  
"No, Lake Jackson."  
"Fort Jackson. In Louisiana?"  
"No! Lake Jackson, near Freeport."  
"Oh, Shreveport, Louisiana!"  
"No! Freeport!"  
"Freeport, Maine?"  
About this time I just smile sickly and say, "Yeah, that's right."  
Actually, Lake Jackson is a town south of Houston where about 20,000 people live.

It has a short history dating back to the '40s when Dow Chemical Co. needed a place for employees to live.

They began developing a large piece of swamp about 10 miles down the road. As the story goes, the man who planned the streets didn't want to cut down any trees, so all of them wind and twist (actually, my grandfather says the man came into the office drunk that day).

I live on Sycamore, one of the tree streets. All the flower streets run parallel to each other and perpendicular to the tree streets which also run parallel to each other. Confused?

As new subdivisions were built, the people who name streets really began to dig deep. Can't you imagine a football player saying, "Yeah, I live on Pansy Path."

Then, there are all the "way" streets. This Way, That Way, His Way, Her Way, Center Way, Circle Way. All "way" streets lead downtown — except His Way, which leads to a church.

Downtown, if you can call it that, is a circle. In fact, the whole town is rather circular.

All I can say in defense of Lake Jackson is, at least I wasn't born there. One of my friends was. And lived in the same house for 20 years.

Humble beginnings, maybe. But that's not my idea of the road to fame.

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