

Boosted oil fees possible

United Press International

AUSTIN — Gov. Mark White, who has said he is opposed to new taxes, will unveil a proposed budget Tuesday that could include a substantial increase in oil producer's fees, administration officials say.

White, faced with a \$1.02 billion budget shortfall, is considering increasing the \$100 drilling permit fee to as much as \$1,000, it has been learned.

The governor is also planning to ask for an increase in out-of-state, foreign and professional school tuition in his 1986-87 budget and may increase other undisclosed fees.

Bill Hamilton, head of the governor's Budget and Management office, said both White and House Speaker Gib Lewis have expressed an interest in increasing the drilling permit fee but will stay away from the oil and gas severance tax.

Hamilton and Bob McPherson, head of the Planning and Intergovernmental Relations office, are helping to draft White's budget.

McPherson said the drilling permit fee is just one of many that are being examined for a possible increase.

"We are looking at drilling permit fees, water permit fees and others," he said. He declined to say if the governor has reached a decision on any of those fees.

The Legislative Budget Board, composed of House and Senate leaders, in its 1986-87 budget avoided increasing fees as a way of responding to the state's declining tax revenues.

Even before the formal announcement of the governor's budget, opposition to an increase in drilling permit fees was mounting.

Oil producers already bear one of the heaviest tax burdens and are facing higher federal taxes, he said.

Railroad Commission Chairman Buddy Temple said he would not oppose or support the new fee. "I don't intend to take a position on the tax increase," he said. "How we are funded is legislative prerogative."

McPherson said White's budget will be a combination of increases in fees and cuts in agency budgets with the cuts making up more than half of the \$1.02 billion shortfall from the previous two years.



Photo by WAYNE L. GRABEIN

Don't forget to leave your fountains running...

Despite freezing temperatures College Station and the rest of Texas has been experiencing recently, the fountain in front of the

old Chemistry Building continues to flow. Ice that covered the bricks slowly began to melt away late Sunday afternoon.

Jaycees honor paralyzed man

United Press International

TULSA, Okla. — The president of the American Paralysis Association said traveling to raise money to find a cure for paralysis is worthwhile if it leads to helping people to walk again.

Kent Waldrep, 30, of Dallas, was honored as one of the U.S. Jaycees Ten Outstanding Young Men of America for 1985 at the national convention this weekend in Tulsa, the national Jaycees headquarters.

"I want to make that day when I and tens of thousands can get out of their wheelchairs as soon as possible," Waldrep said Friday.

And to do that, he talks to organizations across the nation in an effort to raise money and convince people that a cure for paralysis can be found.

"Within this particular responsibility we have an enormous task of educating the public," he said of the non-profit charity. "The American public is not as aware of paralysis as cancer."

Waldrep said 3.5 million Americans are paralyzed due to injuries and strokes, and many health professionals carry the attitude that paralysis is incurable.

Waldrep was injured as a junior at Texas Christian University. He was playing tailback in a football game

against the University of Alabama and was carrying the ball on a sweep play when he was tackled.

He was flipped upside down and landed on his head, cracking the fifth vertebrae, instantly paralyzing him.

Waldrep said he had not seen a report issued Thursday from the University of California, San Francisco, that a new drug that could be used at accident scenes to block paralysis in spinal cord injury victims is ready for tests on humans. The drug is a synthetic, thyrotropin-releasing hormone (TRH).

Researchers are working to determine whether chemical changes due to hemorrhaging at the site of the injury cause the paralysis.

Winners of the Jaycees award are selected on the basis of their achievement in several areas including personal improvement, financial success and economic innovation and overall leadership ability.

This year's other nine honorees are magician David Copperfield, Florida state judge J. Allison DeFoor II, prosecuting attorney Jose C. Feliciano, pilot Capt. Mike Gould, broadcaster Bruce Jenner, computer systems analyst Capt. Larry Sabato, company president James H. Shepherd Jr. and American Paralysis Association president Kent Waldrep.

Ballet star waiting for U.S. citizenship

United Press International

HOUSTON — Sen. Lloyd Bentsen and Rep. Mike Andrews will ask Congress to speed up citizenship for a Chinese ballet star so the man can participate in a Moscow competition.

Li Cunxin, 24, caused a stir in 1981 by announcing he would stay in the United States as a ballet dancer instead of returning to China at the end of a guest appearance with the Houston Ballet.

He received U.S. permanent resident alien status in August 1981, but immigration law requires a five-year wait for citizenship.

Li wants to compete in the Moscow International Ballet Competition in June, but officials fear that if he is not a U.S. citizen he may be disqualified if he wins.

Bentsen and Andrews, both Democrats, will introduce legislation in the Senate and House to expedite naturalization for Li. The two congressmen are circulating packets of information on Li to their colleagues.

A controversy over Li's decision to remain in the United States erupted when representatives of the Chinese consulate in Houston questioned whether the dancer was being forced to remain against his will.

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