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SHOE

by Jeff MacNeil

Education
Legislators, teacher groups call for change

Associated Press

AUSTIN — A Senate education leader and the new president of a teacher organization agreed Tuesday that the recent legislative session did nothing to help public education in Texas.

A House member was joined by the presidents of two teacher organizations in asking Gov. Mark White to add education issues to the agenda for the special session, which began Tuesday.

"How can we be expected to meet the expectations of the public when current law allows students to come to school drunk, to curse a teacher, or to sell marijuana without fear of expulsion?" said Sue McGarvey, president of the Association of Texas Professional Educators.

Carl Parker, chairman of the Senate Education Committee, guided a measure through the Senate in mid-April that he said served notice that education reform is "here to stay."

The bill, which made changes in the educational reform measure approved by the special session last summer, never got out of House committee, and Parker was asked if the Legislature had made any improvements in education.

"None, not one," he replied.

At the last minute, Parker even tried to amend three House bills, adding portions of the measure that had cleared the Senate but the bills were struck down in the House on a point of order.

Parker, D-Port Arthur, said a member of his staff told him that one lobbyist "was over telling someone that one of these bills would lead to unionization of teachers — that is ludicrous, and either he is maliciously telling an untruth or he can't read."

McGarvey, a government teacher from Hallsville, said, "Teachers can't wait two more years. We are more frustrated today than we were at the beginning of school."

Rep. Lloyd Criss, D-La Marque, asked Gov. White to include in the special session a bill that would reduce paperwork for teachers.

"As you know, paperwork is an increasingly crushing burden on our school teachers," said Criss to the governor. "It prevents them from concentrating on the most important function — educating our children."

John Cole, president of the Texas Federation of Teachers, also asked White to fit the Legislature deal the "paperwork burden," which Cole said was "the No. 1 issue in the minds of most teachers."

McGarvey urged White to expand the legislative agenda not only to reduce paperwork but also to increase discipline, tutoring and the reevaluation of teachers.

Parker said that to say current law is "perfect" is "ridiculous." He said changes needed in education are going to harm us, because people are not going to be talking about the silly things that are there.

Mexico to increase security following stadium deaths

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — More security guards will be used for crowd control at the soccer stadium where eight people died and at least 50 others were injured in a stampede that was the worst such tragedy in the nation's history, an official says.

Fructuoso Lopez, the ranking official in the Coyoacan district of the city where the game was played, told the official news agency Notimex on Monday that the security guards would be "redoubled" at the '68 Olympic Stadium to prevent a repeat of Sunday's tragedy.

The deaths occurred just before the start of the final match in the first division of the 1984-85 Mexican Soccer League between rivals National Autonomous University of Mexico and America. The game ended in a 0-0 tie.

The stadium was the principal site of the 1968 Olympic Games and is one of the 12 sites of the 1986 World Cup soccer tournament. It belongs to the National Autonomous University of Mexico and is located in the southern part of the sprawling capital.

Lopez said there were no plans to close the stadium in the wake of the deaths, and families of those killed would receive compensation, although authorities have not yet determined who will make the payments or how much they would be.

He said the stampede was prompted by the "overflow of passions and sports enthusiasm among people who tried to enter the stadium without tickets. Most of those killed were between the ages of 19 and 21."

Local newspaper reports said the deaths were caused in large part by the overselling of tickets, insufficient security and hundreds of disoriented youths trying to enter the Olympic Stadium.

The stadium has a capacity of 72,212 people, and is the second largest in the city. But reports estimate an estimated 100,000 fans packed the stadium, including high-ranking government officials as Interior Secretary Manuel Lora and Foreign Minister Bernardo Sepulveda.

Police and Red Cross volunteers reported that hundreds of people who did not have tickets to the match crowded into the tunnels leading to the entrance gates, which were locked.

To break the tie for the championship, another match was scheduled at a stadium in Queretaro, 138 miles northwest of Mexico City. The stadium there offers less security and is on neutral ground.

Military bases adjust to state drinking law

Associated Press

Eighteen-year-old Airman Mark Kellman will become under-age Saturday. And he doesn't like it.

By order of the Pentagon, military bases around the country must conform Saturday to the drinking age laws of the states where they are located. And Kellman and thousands of other service men and women under 21 will no longer be able to drink legally.

"If I'm old enough to sign a paper saying I'm willing to die for my country, I think it's ridiculous to say I can't drink liquor," said Kellman, of Tampa, Fla., who is based at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D.

It's a sentiment shared at his base and elsewhere.

"I have been approached with, 'Airmen can work on an \$18 million jet and be responsible, but can't drink,'" said Capt. Glenn Guzza at Shaw Air Force Base at Sumter, S.C., where the legal age for beer is 20 and will rise to 21 next year.

But orders are orders. With a few exceptions, the Defense Department's new policy will mean no more on-base drinks for many 18, 19 and 20-year-olds in uniform.

Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger decided the military should honor drinking-age laws. The order was issued in March, signed by Assistant Defense Secretary Lawrence J. Korb, setting the June 1 effective date.

The Pentagon estimates that nearly 400,000 of the 2.1 million men and women on active duty are under the age of 21.

The armed forces usually have followed state laws on the sale of hard liquor, but base commanders were given latitude in allowing the sale of beer to active-duty personnel under age 21 on bases or ships.

The Navy, in fact, has had a special policy since 1973 saying beer with an alcohol content more than 3.2 percent can be served regardless of age.

But there is a national sentiment now toward moderation in drinking — and a get-tough attitude on drunken driving.

Congress last year passed a law threatening states unless they raise the minimum legal age for drinking to 21 by year. Many states are falling in.

And so too the military changed.

Korb's order provides grounds for three kinds of exceptions, where:

- At religious occasions, where there are no occasions marking "uniquely military duty or a special anniversary of a ship or organization."
- Where the military is at issue, such as bases within 50 miles of another state or where the lure of off-base drinking might promote drunken driving.
- Where commanders have applied for a list of exempted bases.

Pendleton, a sprawling Marine base near Oceanside, Calif., is in an hour's drive from Tijuana, Mexico, and 28,200 of its personnel are under the age of 21. Officials there say it has received an exemption.

It would have been just devastating, said Laura Wright, executive assistant at the largest of the base's enlisted men's clubs. "It probably should have knocked 40 percent off our business."

But they're getting ready for the change at China Lake Naval Weapons Center, near Death Valley.

"We're setting up our non-alcoholic recreation area," said June Thomas, manager of the enlisted men's club.

Students indicted for vigilante act

Associated Press

FORT WORTH — A grand jury returned 33 indictments Tuesday against eight alleged members of the Legion of Doom, a high school vigilante group accused of targeting acts of violence at other students.

The eight young men were charged with an array of felonies and misdemeanors stemming from pipe bombings and other activities at Paschal High School.

The group, comprised mostly of honor students and athletes, resorted to violence in a misguided attempt to rid the school of crime and drugs, police officials said.

According to the indictments, the youths constructed an explosive device and bombed an automobile, threatened another student with a gun, killed and damaged a cat and left it in a car, and damaged a school locker and other property.

The incidents occurred in January, February and March of this year, according to the indictments.

Tarrant County Assistant District Attorney Scott Wisch, who presented the cases to the grand jury, said he expected the defendants to surrender as soon as they learned of the indictments.

The prosecutor said the youths, who are present and former Paschal students, were getting preferential treatment. Some of the defendants are members of prominent families.

"They have been investigated just like any other citizen and have been indicted by a grand jury and will go to court just like any other citizen," Wisch said.