

# State and Local

## Propositions

Majority of of constitutional amendments approved

Associated Press

AUSTIN — Texans appeared to favor a proposed constitutional amendment Tuesday that would allow prison officials to ship troublemakers out of state, and partial returns showed they also went along with a proposal to get farmers and ranchers started on good financial terms.

With 102 of 254 counties reporting, some incomplete, voters also liked a measure that would prevent appeals courts from throwing out criminal convictions on the basis of certain technicalities.

A proposal expanding the program to assist veterans in buying homes also was comfortably ahead in early tallies.

Leading, but by a closer margin, was a measure that would allow the Legislature to enact laws specifying what types of service hospital districts must provide.

At the top of the ballot, which contained 14 amendments, were two proposals to finance a statewide water plan, which held commanding margins.

Wichita Falls Sen. Ray Farabee, sponsor of the proposal to transfer certain prisoners out-of-state, said the measure is "particularly relevant to breaking up gangs." Supporters say this would be valuable in controlling prison violence. It led 59,193 votes to 31,140 votes.

Speaker Gib Lewis has endorsed as a "very noble program" a proposal that would provide low-interest loans to buy farm and ranch land. Proposition 10 would authorize the issuance of up to \$500 million in bonds, with the proceeds being used to make loans. The early margin, however, was 44,359 to 41,590.

To be eligible for the Farm and Ranch Finance Program, a person must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of Texas for five years, have been a member of a household in which at least 35 percent of the gross income from farming or ranching for the preceding three years, and have a net worth of less than \$250,000.

A minimum purchase of 50 acres is required, and a state loan shall be for a maximum of \$95,000 with a minimum down payment of \$5,000. The loan would be for 40 years.

Loan applicants would be screened by a committee of farmers or ranchers and a banker in the applicant's home county.

The Veterans Housing Program, favored 56,592 to 32,029 in first reports, received bipartisan support with an endorsement by State Land Commissioner Garry Mauro and state Republican Party chairman George Strake.

"George Strake and I have finally found something we can agree on," Mauro said. "We both agree that Texas has the best veterans pro-

grams in the U.S., and that we need to pass Proposition 8 to keep them that way."

The proposal would give the Veterans Land Board \$500 million in additional bonding authority to continue making \$20,000 low-interest loans to Texas veterans. The board made more than 21,000 loans during the first 17 months of the program, and approval of the amendment would permit the board to make another 25,000 loans.

Republican attorney general candidate J.E. "Buster" Brown, Lake Jackson, has campaigned for a proposal that would let the Legislature set standards governing the process of charging people with crime. Brown said the intent is to prevent appeals courts from reversing convictions based on technicalities that no prosecutor or grand jury could anticipate.

A bill to implement the constitutional amendment would require defendants to object to defects in an indictment prior to trial or else waive the right to object to any defect on appeal. The proposal was out front 54,498 to 29,780.

Opponents claim the proposal would wipe out decades of judicial precedent guaranteeing people accused of crimes sufficient notice of the charge against them.

## SCONA sets \$100,000 funding goal for '86 conference on Middle East

By CRAIG RENFRO  
Staff Writer

The Student Conference on National Affairs (SCONA) is trying to raise \$100,000 through fund drives and foundation donations for its 31st annual conference, "The Myriad Challenges of the Middle East," to be held at Texas A&M Feb. 12-15.

SCONA already has raised \$45,000 in fund drives in Houston, San Antonio and Waco. Fund drives will be held in other major cities throughout Texas this month. A drive is being held in Bryan-College Station through this week and next, said chairman Linda Thomas.

The fund-raising process begins during the summer as SCONA members go to previous donors and ask them for references, Thomas said. During the fall new contacts are made for the fund drive.

Dates are chosen in the fall for the big city fund drives. Every member has to go on two fund drives, she said.

"Two or three weeks before the fund drive we publicize our drive, make phone calls, appointments and decide on the number of people to go to businesses to ask for money," Thomas said.

SCONA delegates visit top executives to ask for donations that are tax-deductible, she added.

SCONA's biggest supporters are former SCONA members, she said, but they also are supported well by the oil industry.

When asking for money from previous donors, the success of last year's topic is discussed, as well as what this year's topic will cover, Thomas said.

"For someone who has never donated, we emphasize that we are student-run and organized," Thomas said. "We tell them our past history and tell them about this year's topic."

"They (executives) will ask who else is donating, and, if their competition is donating, there is a good chance they might."

A major portion of SCONA's budget comes from foundation drives, Thomas said. The Houston Endowment Foundation, M.D. Anderson and the Exxon Education Foundation are all supporters of SCONA, she said.

Approximately \$15,000 is raised from delegate fees, she said.

The money raised is used for administrative costs and for paying speakers at the conference, Thomas said.

She said the Middle East conference will discuss the economics of the region, modernization and Islamic revival, security issues and world power involvement, the Arab/Israeli conflict and prospects for peace.

"We (SCONA), will try to present a good overview of what the issues are surrounding that region of the world," said Thomas. "We will show how that area is important to the rest of the world with their oil, and how the U.S. is important to them with the influence of Western culture."

Three speakers have been confirmed for this year's conference. Bill Stewart, chief diplomatic correspondent for Time Magazine, will open the conference with an overview of the Middle East. Dr. B.J. Fernea from the University of Texas will discuss the role of women and the family in Islamic society and Dr. Moshe Maoz of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem will represent the Israeli viewpoint in the Arab/Israeli panel.

"The main goal of SCONA is to exchange ideas with other people and accept them with an open mind," Thomas said. "We make no conclusions about who is right or wrong."

## National study finds fewer Texas jobless getting benefits

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Of the 11 most populous states, Texas had the smallest percentage of jobless people getting unemployment benefits in October, according to a study released Tuesday by an independent research group.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities said unemployment coverage nationwide dropped to an all-time low last month, with 25.8 percent of the nation's jobless receiving benefits.

John Bickerman, the center's research director, attributed the reduction in benefit recipients to budget cutbacks and continued high unemployment.

"One (reason) certainly is policy," he said. "And it's been the policy of the federal government to really coerce states to cut back their programs."

According to the group's figures, just over half a million Texans were unemployed but not receiving benefits, for a percentage of 16.3. Michigan was second-lowest, with 17.4 percent of its unemployed covered, according to the group.

"Here we are in the midst of a strong recovery, so we hear, and yet the number of unemployed workers who are not getting any benefits is as high now as it was in the depths of the recession when unemployment was 10.7 percent," Bickerman said.

"For the people who are out there slipping through the safety net, it hasn't gotten any better."

The national unemployment rate in October was 7.1 percent. Texas' rate was 8.1 percent.

The center said it only had figures for the 11 states with the largest populations. Among that group, Massachusetts had the biggest percentage

of unemployed getting benefits, about 50 percent.

The highest unemployment rate among the 11 states was Michigan at 10.3 percent.

California had the largest number of unemployed, 923,000. Texas was second.

John Kruse of the Texas Employment Commission said the state's low percentage of coverage could be affected by several factors.

"It varies from state to state how universal coverage is," he said. In Texas, for instance, very little agricultural work is covered, he said, though it is in some other states.

Kruse said for the week of Oct. 19, only 1.5 percent of the state's work force, or about 120,000 workers, were covered by unemployment insurance.

Bickerman blamed the reduction on the federal government.

## Expecting the Tribe Over for

# Thanksgiving



When the entire colony invades your home this Thanksgiving, make sure you're prepared for the feast. Think Party Time first.

Whether you're serving 10 or 110, think Party Time for a Thanksgiving you're sure to remember.

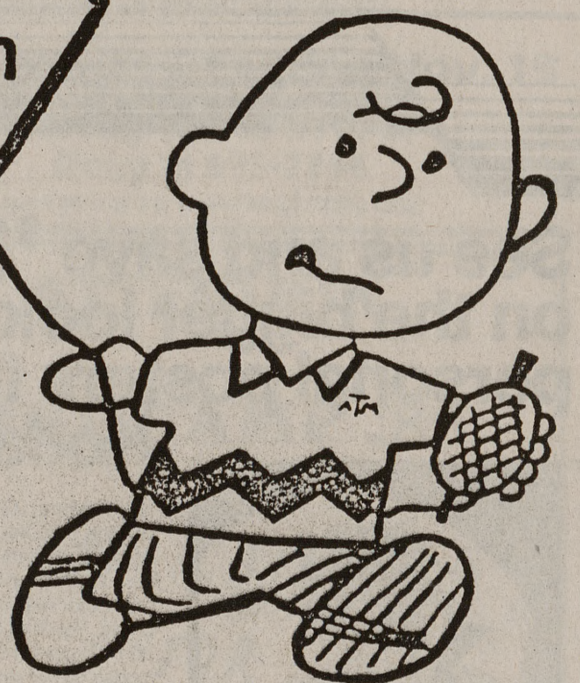
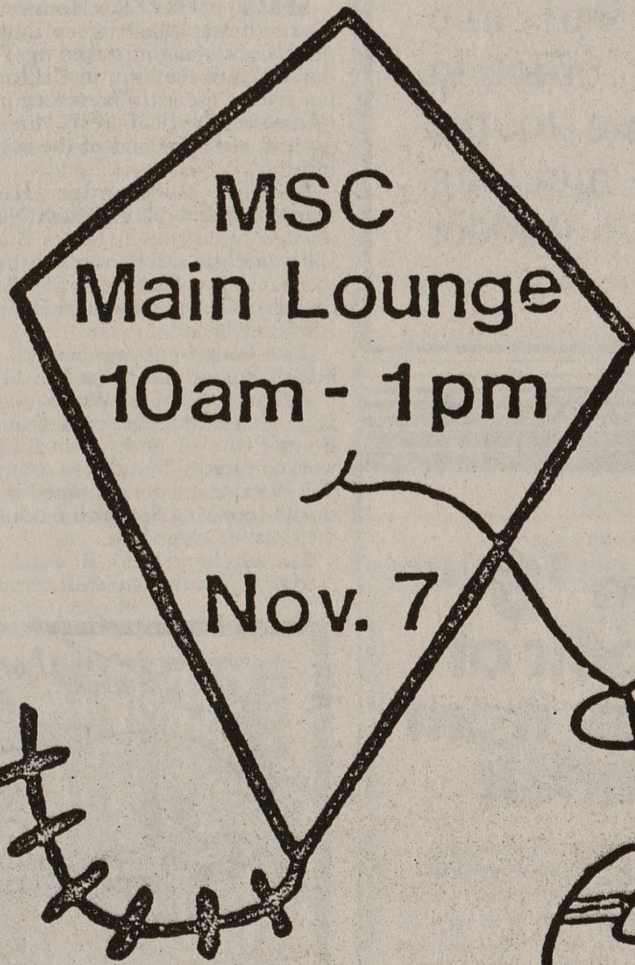
Coffee pots, serving bowls and utensils, silverware, glasses and goblets. Serving platters and trays, roasters to fit even the biggest gobbler. Party Time has it all. Tablecloths and napkins in every color. Complete place settings. Tables and chairs in sizes to fit everyone from Little Running Water to Uncle William Bradford.

## PARTY TIME

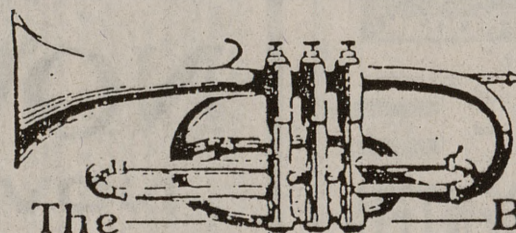
"We Rent Fun"

Park Place Plaza College Station 696-5555  
U RENT M Location:  
1904 Texas Ave. Bryan 779-0085

# MSC LOST & FOUND AUCTION



CALCULATORS, SPORTS EQUIPMENT, UMBRELLAS, JEWELRY & MORE  
cash only



SPREADING  
THE NEWS

The Battalion Since 1878

Solid Wood, No-Frills Furniture for Today's Lifestyle

# TOUGH STUFF

CASUAL FURNITURE  
1623 Culpepper Plaza  
409/696-4489  
Visa/Master Card

## SALES & RENTAL