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PG

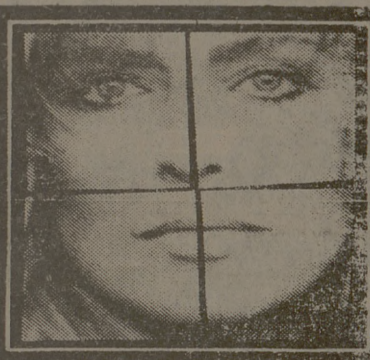
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R

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# Writing Outreach offers opportunity to improve skills

By Lydia Berzsenyi  
Reporter

Writing Outreach, a series of non-credit, free mini-English courses, begins its fall schedule with a workshop on Sept. 16 called "What is Writing and What Does it Mean to be a Writer?"

Sponsored by the Freshman English Studies Program and the department of English, the program extends an open invitation to anyone interested in improving writing abilities.

With topics ranging from "Writing Essay Exams" to "What is a Paragraph?" and "Punctuation: Accessories to the Word," the series provides a wide range of topics to help many factions of the local population, graduate student Rick Evans, coordinator of the program said.

"People come to use these sessions as a form of self-enhancement," he said. "This is a good way for these people to get the kind of help that they think they want."

However, improving writing skills is only one goal of the program. Writing Outreach also is designed to show the English faculty and staff different ways of designing and presenting instructional materials and to provide them with additional teaching experience.

The English department's faculty and staff teach the sessions on a volunteer basis, Evans said.

In its early stages, the program attracted only 300 to 400 people a semester, Evans said. However, enrollment rapidly increased and the Fall 1985 series attracted over 500 people.

Last spring when Evans began coordinating the program under the direction of Dr. Gwendolyn Gong, director of Freshman English Studies, several changes were made. Evans cut the number of sessions by almost 40 percent, leaving only 26 sessions.

Despite the cut in the number of sessions, Evans reports a 12 percent increase in attendance, with each session averaging 10 to 16 people. A steady increase in this fall's attendance is expected, Evans said.

Evans also lengthened some sessions, making 17 of them two-hour intensive workshops and 13 of them one-hour special help sessions. The long workshops offer lectures on the given topic and hands-on experience, while the shorter sessions are more concerned with addressing particular writing problems.

The sessions are funded by a \$1,000 grant from Texas A&M's Center for Teaching Excellence.

# White says answer to fiscal problems includes tax hike

AUSTIN (AP) — Lawmakers are well on their way to solving the state budget crisis and they will find the solution has to include a tax hike, Gov. Mark White said Thursday.

White made a quick visit to the House to deliver his proclamation opening the current special session agenda to a minor bill. After chatting with Speaker Gib Lewis, White said, "I'm pleased by the progress he's making and I think we're going to see a resolution of our problem."

Asked what Lewis had told him about a tax hike, the governor said, "He's working to the bottom line. That's where we're all trying to go."

The bottom line in balancing the budget must involve spending cuts and a tax hike, White said.

The governor is pushing a temporary increase in the sales tax, raising it to 5 1/4 percent from the current 4 1/4 percent through August 1987.

Lewis has been the prime opponent to the tax hike, saying he would not consider a tax bill until spending cuts are approved.

The 10 negotiators striving to settle the difference between Senate and House versions of spending cuts for 1987 met Thursday afternoon but reached no final decision.

Lewis said any tax bill brought to the House floor before the cuts are made would fail.

"The membership I talked to feels the same way that I do, that we have a well-defined and laid-out game plan, that we first try to make reductions... and then at that point if we find ourselves short in reaching the end of this biennium without going into the red, then we will consider a tax bill," Lewis said.

Comptroller Bob Bullock has projected the state will face a \$2.8 billion deficit when the current fiscal year ends next August.

On Thursday, the House gave tentative approval to a measure pushed as a way to make \$30 million

for the state by temporarily eliminating the sales tax reimbursement kept by retailers.

Under current law, retailers who pay their sales tax on time are allowed to keep 1 percent of the total they collect. The bill by Rep. Bill Blanton, R-Farmers Branch, would suspend the reimbursements until September 1987.

# Clements says White cut ties with Reagan

AUSTIN (AP) — A big reason the state's oil and agriculture industries are in so much trouble is that Democratic Gov. Mark White severed Texas' ties with the White House, Republican challenger Bill Clements charged Thursday.

Clements, the former governor ousted by White in 1982, said White has been so critical of Reagan that when Texas needs help, the administration won't listen.

Clements, who spoke to the Austin Young Council of Realtors, said that White has damaged the state's ability to get federal attention on issues involving oil, gas and agriculture.

For months, White has urged Reagan to impose an emergency tariff on imported oil to help bolster the price of Texas oil and refined petroleum products. But Reagan consistently has refused.

Clements noted that when Reagan called a White House summit meeting on oil problems, he invited the governors of Oklahoma, Wyoming and West Virginia, but not White.

# 'Free college' project may begin in Dallas

DALLAS (AP) — An impromptu offer that paved the way for disadvantaged New York students to attend college could be copied in Texas if a Dallas organization can raise the funds and muster volunteers.

Eugene Lang, a New York businessman who six years ago offered to pay the college tuition of Harlem sixth-graders who graduated from high school, is now working with officials of the STEP Foundation to initiate a similar program for 1,000 sixth-graders from six different schools.

Lang said his impromptu offer in Harlem turned into "the most rich, rewarding experience of my life."

Officials said the volunteers, which may include Sunday schools or businesses, will help students with academic problems and anything else affecting their schoolwork.

"We are looking to endow the lives of young people who, because of circumstances, have no reason to hope," Lang said. "We hope to endow them with a reason to dream."

He said Dallas-area residents will

be the first outside of New York to participate in the program he calls the "I Have a Dream Project."

Lang had not planned on making the offer in June 1981 when he made a graduation speech at Public School 121. Instead, he had planned a commencement speech on his attendance at the school 50 years ago.

"I decided to change the message because of my perception of my audience, that my being there seemed to be irrelevant," he said. "There we were, living in the same world, and it was though we were centuries and light-years apart, and I thought, 'What can I do about this?'"

He promised the students he would set aside \$2,000 for each to pay for their college education. He told them if they would stay in the school, he would add to the fund annually.

Fifty of those students are now high school seniors and Lang expects 47 to graduate in June. Of those, 20 to 25 will be eligible to attend college, he said.

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