

State and Local

Water plant threatening Austin plant

AUSTIN (AP) — Comparing the situation to a monster movie, city officials say an exotic water plant called hydrilla is threatening one of Austin's electric-generating plants.

The hydrilla's tendrils are reaching continuously toward the water intake gates at the power plant in east Austin.

The hydrilla forms floating mats that blot out the sunlight and bring death to other aquatic plants and some fish. It has covered up to 80 percent of the shore of Decker Lake, an artificial lake created to provide cooling water to the electric plant.

"We should call it 'hydrilla meets Godzilla' and charge for tickets," quipped City Council Member John Trevino. "We could use the money."

The council approved a proposal that a herbicide approved for use last year be sprayed into the water to rid a 20-acre arm of Decker Lake of the hydrilla. The recommendation also had been approved by the Parks Board and the Environmental Board.

In addition to the chemical warfare, which will be repeated annually, the staff will continue to use a pontoon boat outfitted as a weed harvester to clear the plant from the lake.

The cutting operation actually compounds the problem because the hydrilla plant, an import originally thought to be from Central Africa, has the nightmarish ability to reproduce itself from the smallest section cut loose from a main tendril.

"Every time we cut it, we send hundreds of little buds off to set up a home further down the lake," Jordan said.

Official refuses to swear in VP appointees for Senate

By Christi Daugherty
Staff Writer

In an unexpected development at the first spring Student Senate meeting Wednesday night, the chairman of the judicial committee refused to swear in the student body president's appointees to the vice presidential posts.

Basing her decision on what she called a misinterpretation by President Mike Sims of the constitutional section dealing with presidential appointments, Jennifer Huang said she would wait at least one to two weeks to allow those who would like to object but feel intimidated by the Senate to come to her with their objections.

The disputed section of the constitution is in Article II, Section 3, and reads, "All executive offices and committees shall be open to all members of the student body of Texas

A&M University, providing they meet qualifications for serving in these capacities."

Huang said she felt proper notice of the vacant positions was not made public, thus effectively eliminating the possibility of students applying for the positions. Sims had tentatively appointed two Senate members, Jay Hutchens and Brian Banner, to the two vice presidential positions.

When Huang came forward with her objections, there was confusion and debate among the senators, and protestations by Sims.

"If there are those among you who feel I have acted inappropriately, I am willing to go — I am willing to face charges before the judicial board," Sims said. "The consideration that goes into appointing these positions is extensive. If I had conducted a widespread search,

I would still have made the same selection in the end."

In legislative action, the Senate unanimously approved a bill that changes the way senior football tickets are distributed beginning with the 1987 football season.

Instead of allocating second deck seats between the 20-yard lines on the first day, seats between the 35 yard lines will be distributed first, and only when that supply is depleted will the rest of the seats between the 20-yard lines be allocated.

The Senate also approved a bill making a section of bike racks located between the Library and the L.F. Peterson Building into a moped rack, and a bill recommending that undergraduate teachers and courses be evaluated by their students at least once each academic year.

The bill stipulates that evaluation results be made public.

U.S. citizenship may be available only for those who can afford it

AUSTIN (AP) — U.S. citizenship may be available only to illegal aliens with money because immigration officials failed to seek enough funds to cover the paperwork costs for all who are eligible, a state lawmaker said Wednesday.

Rep. Al Luna, D-Houston, said Congress authorized \$420 million a year for carrying out immigration reform legislation passed last year.

But the Immigration and Naturalization Service has requested only \$138 million for 1987 and \$194 million for 1988, he said.

The budget requests may cover the costs of enforcing the new law, but won't be enough to pay for the administrative process of granting legal status to aliens, Luna said.


"The INS proposed instead to pass off the cost of legalization to the undocumented themselves" by charging them a citizen application fee of \$150 or \$200, Luna said.

"The high fee added to the other legal fees that are going to be involved will limit legalization to only those eligible who can afford to purchase legalization status," he said.

Under the immigration reform law passed by Congress, illegal aliens can gain legal status if they have been living in the United States continuously since 1982. The new law also imposes penalties on businesses, which knowingly hire illegal aliens.

Rick Swartz, president of the National Immigration Forum in Washington D.C., said, "There's quite a bit of concern expressed by some members of Congress already that the Reagan administration may be in the process of starving the bill to death" by failing to provide sufficient money to implement it, Swartz said.

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