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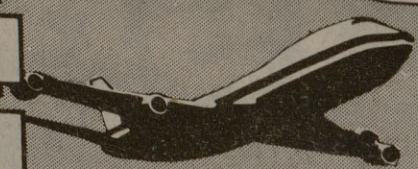
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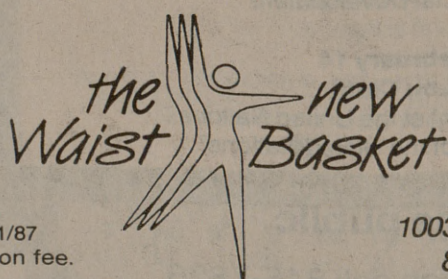


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# Honors council created to give students link to program office

By RaeAnn Warmann  
Reporter

An Honors Student Council has been organized to encourage feedback from students and to provide a link between the honors program office and honors students, the group's founder said.

Scott Shafer, a graduate student with the University Honors Program, said the council will allow honors students to have a say in the way the program is run.

"If you don't see the students, you don't find out how the courses are going or if the program is filling the needs of the students (who are) serious about honors," Shafer said.

"We hope this spring to have brown bag seminars with different department heads during lunch to talk about job possibilities and grad-

uate student possibilities," Shafer said.

Any honors students can attend the seminars to learn about different occupations.

Peer advising will be another council activity to encourage students to get involved in the honors program.

"I hope this will help keep students from shying away from an honors course because they think it will be too hard or too much work," Shafer said.

Social activities the council hopes to include are group meals or times to visit with other honors students.

The council also gathers some information on scholarships for those students in school now and those interested in attending graduate school, Shafer said.

The council had its first official meeting Monday, but Shafer said he started work on it last September. Student councils at other universities have given Shafer some ideas for the student council, he said.

"It's organized and a lot of students are interested in it," he said. Last fall, the first organizational meeting of the council drew approximately 170 to 180 people.

Shafer said students must be full-time undergraduates registered in at least one honors course to be members.

To enroll in an honors course students must have a 3.0 grade-point ratio, or an 1100 on the SAT for incoming freshmen.

An advisory committee, which gives the student council direction and suggestions, is headed by Shafer and includes four honors students

who are active in the honors program: Steve Griner, Michele Snee, Cathy Chickering and Stephen Sneed.

## Health bill passed by committee

AUSTIN (AP) — A Senate committee agreed Monday that Texas buying group health insurance policies also must be offered to those who have health care services.

The home health care coverage could be rejected by an insurance buyer.

The coverage would include visiting nurses and home nursing care.

Sen. Chet Brooks, D-Pasadena, refused to accept immediately an amendment that would require health maintenance organizations to offer home health care services.

"I'm going to talk with the HMO people and find out more about this," Brooks said later.

"I might accept an amendment when we bring the bill up for floor debate," he said.

Brooks' bill, which was proved by the Senate Economic Development Committee, passed by a unanimous 9-0 margin.

In other action, the committee also approved 8-1 a bill that exempt lump sum life insurance payments to widows and surviving children from seizure by creditors.

Sen. Don Henderson, R-Houston, said present law exempts monthly or periodic payments to not lump sum settlements.

## Teachers' associations call for \$2,900 salary increase

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas teachers' associations banded together Monday to make a joint demand to the Legislature for a minimum \$2,900 salary increase the next two years.

The associations, which have separate legislative programs, said they were making the joint demand "to keep the Legislature from making the claim that the different teacher organizations do not present a clear message on salaries."

The statement was issued by the Texas State Teachers Association, Association of Texas Professional Educators, Texas Classroom Teachers Association and Texas Federation of Teachers.

The proposal would increase starting salaries from the current

minimum of \$15,200 to \$17,080 for the first year and then to \$18,100 for the 1988-89 school year.

The current \$26,600 maximum for experienced teachers would increase to \$29,380 the first year and to \$31,000 the second year.

The appropriation bills being considered by the respective House and Senate committees do not presently contain any teacher pay raise, lawmakers said.

Gov. Bill Clements did not recommend a teachers' pay increase in his budget address to legislators last week. He said he supported rewarding Texas' best teachers and providing all teachers with an incentive to stay in the classroom, but that the present "career ladder" program es-

tablished in 1984 was not working.

Clements said he would propose specific legislation concerning the teacher appraisal system after hearing from a task force of teachers, administrators and legislators.

"I would think chances are very slim," Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby said after the demand. "I would hope so, but there is an all-around shortage of money."

The teachers' groups said their pay demands were based on findings of the Select Committee on Public Education in 1983, which recommended starting salaries of \$17,080. The special session of 1984, in House Bill 72, set starting salaries at \$15,200.

## Chief justice protests judge election system

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas Supreme Court Chief Justice John Hill sparked an unprecedented public show of high court dissent Monday by urging lawmakers to scrap the elective system of selecting judges.

Immediately after Hill's "State of the Judiciary" address to a joint session of the Legislature, several Supreme Court justices convened a news conference to assail Hill's comments and complain they had not been consulted about the speech.

Of the nine-man court, Hill is the only member who favors the appointment of judges in a system that would include subsequent review by voters.

Justice Oscar Mauzy said Hill is seeking to become more powerful by pushing a system in which the governor would select judges.

"The reason he did that is because he is interested in running for governor in 1990," Mauzy said.

Hill, a losing candidate for governor in 1978, said, "I have no self interest to serve in this matter at all. I

have no plans to run for any other office, period.

"I'm addressing a public issue I feel strongly about."

In his speech to lawmakers, Hill called for a "consensus Texas plan for selecting and electing judges that will serve our people better than the present partisan system."

The Texas Constitution provides for partisan election of all judges, including those on the Supreme Court and the Court of Criminal Appeals.

Lawmakers have filed several proposed constitutional amendments which, with voter approval, would change the system.

In addition to the system backed by Hill, lawmakers will review a proposal to keep judicial elections on the ballot, but make them non-partisan.

Hill supports what he called the "appointive, retention-rejection election" system as the best cure for "the problem of big bucks contributions that has so invaded our partisan judicial election process."

## Liquor law violations rising despite new legal age limit

DALLAS (AP) — Criminal violations of state liquor laws increased dramatically in the last four months of 1986 after the legal drinking age was boosted from 19 to 21, authorities say.

Reported violations of the drinking-age law during the last four months of 1986 nearly doubled, compared with the same period of 1985, according to records of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission.

The law took effect Sept. 1.

The quality of fake identification cards has improved in recent months, with the help of computers, said Joe Darnall, legal counsel for the TABC. A proliferation of fake IDs makes it tougher to catch violators, he said.

"It's getting to be a very serious problem for us," he said.

The normal price for fake IDs in several Texas cities is about \$40, Darnall said.

"There is a cottage industry growing up in metropolitan areas where somebody can spend about

\$600 or \$700 for equipment that can make excellent counterfeit IDs," he added.

The only defense for selling alcoholic beverages to a minor is if the buyer uses a fake driver's license, Darnall said.

There are two basic forms of the fake IDs, he said.

One is a counterfeit driver's license or other type of forged government ID; the other is an official-looking card that contains the minor's picture, physical characteristics, and the wrong age of birthdate.

TABC records show there were a total of 2,899 criminal complaints filed against businesses caught selling alcohol to people under 21 in the last four months of 1986. There were 1,587 complaints filed in the same period of 1985.

The drinking age was raised in response to the National Minimum Drinking Age Act, passed by Congress to prod states into raising the drinking age to 21.

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