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# Guidelines to help disabled

## Brazos Valley's Better Business Bureau sets standards

By Christi R. Ray  
The Battalion

Six new industry-specific guides published by the Council of Better Business Bureaus' Foundation have been set up to tell businesses how to be accessible to people with disabilities.

"The goal is to bring together leaders of the business community and leaders of the disabled community," Barbara Bode, executive director of the Council of Better Business Bureaus' Foundation, said.

The guides explain the public accommodations provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act which is the first comprehensive civil rights law for people with disabilities.

The guides apply to owners and managers of retail stores, auto sales and service businesses, restaurants and bars, health and outpatient facilities, grocery stores, and fun and fitness centers.

"Virtually every business has to become accessible to the extent that it does not create an undue burden," Bode said. "There are 'cheap and easy' ways businesses can comply."

All guides follow basically the same format. There are a number of questions posed in the guides and what each business must do to comply.

For example, retail stores do not have to print their price tags in braille for their seeing impaired customers, but they must be willing to read them aloud.

"In the auto sales and service businesses, an interpreter may be required for hearing impaired customers if he or she is serious about buying a car and the transaction can not take place through writing notes or using computers," Bode said. "During test-driving, portable hand controls can be placed in cars in ten minutes if someone with a mobility impairment wants them. The dealer is required to buy these controls or at least have them available."

"In restaurants and bars, the whole issue is treating the handicapped like any other customer," she said. "Restaurant owners must serve handicapped customers in the same way, but be willing to accommodate those with disabilities."

Health and outpatient facilities must be as accessible as anywhere else, Bode said. There may be a need for an interpreter in cases such as explanations of complex medical problems.

Grocery stores need to focus on widening and clearing aisles without giving up valuable space, she said. Help should also be available for people who have disabilities.

Fun and fitness centers cannot keep people with disabilities out of the centers, and they must allow trained service animals, Bode said.

"The whole idea is to make things more convenient but not to put an unfair burden on businesses," Larry Lightfoot, executive director of the Better Business Bureau of the Brazos Valley, Inc., said. "New structures will have to be built in accordance, but without unfair or unjust expense."

The compliance deadline for mid-sized businesses was July 26, and the deadline for small businesses is January 26, 1993.

# Texas farm profits will fall 14 percent this year as result of many problems, study says

DALLAS (AP) — Profits on Texas farms will fall about 14 percent this year because of bad weather, lower prices, higher costs and lower government payments, a Texas A&M study says.

Earnings will fall to about \$2.4 billion this year from \$2.8 billion in 1991, said Carl Anderson, professor and cotton marketing economist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service of the A&M System.

If the forecast holds true, 1992 would be the second straight year of declining profits on Texas farms.

Total income should remain steady, but the continued decline in profitability and inflation is taking a toll on farm and ranch land value, he said.

The average value of agricultural land and buildings in the state will be about \$466 an acre, the lowest level since 1980. Land values peaked at \$694 per acre in 1985.

"While the income look is rather dismal, that doesn't mean that the agricultural sector in total is shrinking or destined to be pushed aside," Anderson said.

"What it does show is that people and resources now in agriculture are getting very low returns, and that we really need to put forth every effort to expand our share of the international market," he said.

Too much rain and unseasonably cool temperatures slowed the progress of crops in many parts of the state.

The state's biggest crop, cotton, grown in the 25-county region around Lubbock, was hit hardest.

About half of the 3 million acres of cotton planted there was destroyed and replaced by other crops. Estimates of the loss to the region's economy run as high as \$1.5 billion.

"I don't know if you'd say it is bad, but it is not real good," said Kary Mathis, who leads the Agricultural Economics department at Texas Tech. "The cotton sector was severely hurt by weather for the second year in a row."

Prices Texas farmers have received for all commodities have fallen 2 percent in the past two years while production costs have increased 3 percent, Anderson said.

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# Lawyer representing taxpayers fights against property tax for public schools

AUSTIN (AP) — A lawyer representing Texas taxpayers said Tuesday he will go to the U.S. Supreme Court in his fight against the county education district property tax for public schools.

Lawyer Jim Keahey said he hopes to file a petition with the court Wednesday. The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans Monday refused to stop collection of the tax, which has been found to violate the state constitution.

If Keahey does not succeed in having his petition heard at the U.S. Supreme Court, or if a ruling is unfavorable, he said he will go back to state court and pursue appeals to the U.S. Supreme Court again.

"Until these issues are settled in federal or state court, I suggest everyone wait to pay their 1992 CED (county education district) tax. Bills go out Oct. 1 and the last day to pay without penalty is Jan. 31, 1993," Keahey said. "Once the CEDs have your money, there's little or no chance of getting it back if we win."

But Ron Dusek, spokesman for Attorney General Dan Morales, said the issue is settled, at least for now, "and the law is people have to pay their taxes."

"Responsible citizens wouldn't even consider not paying their taxes," he said.

Lawmakers created the current school finance system in an effort to meet a Texas Supreme Court mandate to equalize school funding.

It was designed to shift hundreds of millions of dollars from wealthier to poorer school districts within new taxing regions made up of one or several counties.

But the Texas Supreme Court in January ruled that the plan violates the Texas Constitution by imposing a statewide property tax, and by levying a property tax without voter approval.

However, the state Supreme Court gave lawmakers until June 1, 1993, to fix the system. And it delayed the ruling's effect so that it would not interfere with the collection of 1991 and 1992 property taxes in the 188 new county education districts.

Keahey then filed the class-action lawsuit in federal court, saying continued collection of the levy denies taxpayers due process, violating the U.S. Constitution.

U.S. District Judge James Nowlin in Austin sided with taxpayers on that point, but refused to issue an injunction stopping collection of the tax.

Keahey then appealed to the 5th Circuit, which said the federal court did not have jurisdiction. It vacated Nowlin's judgment and sent the case back to him, with an order that he dismiss it.

# Negative economic reports leave investors cautious

NEW YORK (AP) — Stock prices finished mixed in subdued trading Tuesday with little news to extend the market's five-day rally and leaving investors cautious ahead of key economic data.

The Dow Jones average of 30 industrials fell 11.08 points to 3,384.32.

Advancing issues narrowly outnumbered declines on the New York Stock Exchange.

Volume on the floor of the Big Board came to 166.74 million shares as of 4 p.m., up from 164.44 million in the previous session.

The Dow's five-session rally had progressively lost steam, and the average edged up just 1.62 points on Monday.

Most of the good news about second-quarter corporate earnings is already out, and the market is nervous ahead of the July unemployment report, scheduled for release on Friday, Dodge said.

Economists expect a gain of 110,000 in nonfarm payrolls for July and a decrease in the unemployment rate to 7.7 percent. In June, payrolls fell 117,000 and unemployment reached 7.8 percent, prompting the Federal Reserve to trim interest rates. That has helped push stock and bond prices higher.

The market reacted little to as expected economic data released Tuesday. The government said its chief forecasting gauge of future economic activity, the Index of Leading Indicators, fell 0.2 percent in June, its first decline in six months.

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# Bush aides try to breathe life into campaign

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Republicans gave President Bush boxing gloves on Tuesday to invoke a fighting image as he and his top aides worked to regain control of his lagging campaign. But many GOP insiders expressed dismay over recent events and Bush's continued slide in the polls.

Bush and Vice President Dan Quayle participated jointly in a meeting with Senate Republicans designed to signal party unity after weeks of bad news on the economy and in the polls.

In a good-natured gesture, Bush was given a pair of boxing gloves — one labelled "Democratic" and the other "Congress" — and a plaque with an oversize Olympic gold medal marked "heavyweight champion."

Afterwards, Senate Republican Whip Alan K. Simpson, of Wyoming, said, "George Bush is fully engaged, ready to let her rip."

Later, Bush met at the White House with a group of Republican business leaders. They emerged from the session with much the same message.

"The president has the fire in his belly and is ready for the fight," said PepsiCo Chairman Donald M. Kendall. At the same time, Kendall conceded, "There's no question that the president wants help. That's why we're here."

"He won't do it, but what he needs to do is a little confession and avoidance. If the issue is how have you been as president for the past four years, he's going to lose," said John Sears, who managed Ronald Reagan's 1976 primary challenge against President Gerald Ford.

"Bush needs to get that off the table and to say, 'things didn't go as I planned. But I've learned a lot and I can do better,'" Sears said.

Eddie Mahe, a GOP consultant and sometimes adviser to the Bush campaign, said that this week's flap over the criticism of Clinton by the campaign's political director, Mary Matalin, was "a sideshow."

He said that Bush needs to rely more heavily on advertising. "The first thing they've got to do is persuade rank and file Republicans who are expressing doubts that they should not have those doubts," Mahe said.

Bush commercials focusing on the family, law enforcement and government spending began running Monday night.

Bush's meeting on Capitol Hill with 38 Republican senators "was not a gripe session," said Sen. Connie Mack, R-Fla.

Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas, chairman of the GOP senatorial campaign committee, said Bush and Quayle "will carry the ball across the goal line. If anything's certain in American life, that's certain."

Bush and Quayle both attended, apparently foreclosing any talk about whether Quayle should remain on the ticket.

Bush was asked by reporters in Senate GOP Leader Bob Dole's office about estimates that up to a third of the party's senators may pass up the GOP convention later this month in Houston.

"I don't know that's true at all," Bush said. "But I'll tell you one thing — the Republican senators at the Republican convention, people are going to be able to see them. They're not going to be hidden in the basement."

The GOP lawmakers applauded the apparent reference to the relative lack of participation in the Democratic convention of Democratic congressional leaders.

Bush said as he left the Capitol that it "was a great meeting, very, very positive... upbeat."

"We are getting ready for our convention and much more, we're getting ready to take them on in this election," Bush said. "It was a good unified meeting."



Bush

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# Workers install bullet-proof glass for podium at GOP convention

HOUSTON (AP) — Bullet-proof glass went up on the speaker's platform Tuesday as the Houston Astrodome continued to be transformed into a convention hall for the Republican National Convention.

The panes of glass form a waist-high rail at the front and sides of the podium.

"It was deliberate to have it clear and transparent for an open effect," Mike Miller, director of operations for the convention, said.

Crews lifted the panes from a truck and slid them into place on the platform, then peeled off paper stickers that warned: "Caution: Install This Surface Toward Threat."

Other security measures outside the Astrodome neared completion as workers were installing a 9-foot-high chain-link fence between the stadium and the parking lot.

And bulldozers began clearing a vacant lot across the street from the stadium for use as the "official" demonstration site.

"We're still ahead of schedule," Miller said. "Almost everything is in place except for chairs and the raised floor. Obviously, a lot of things still need to be covered and decorated."

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