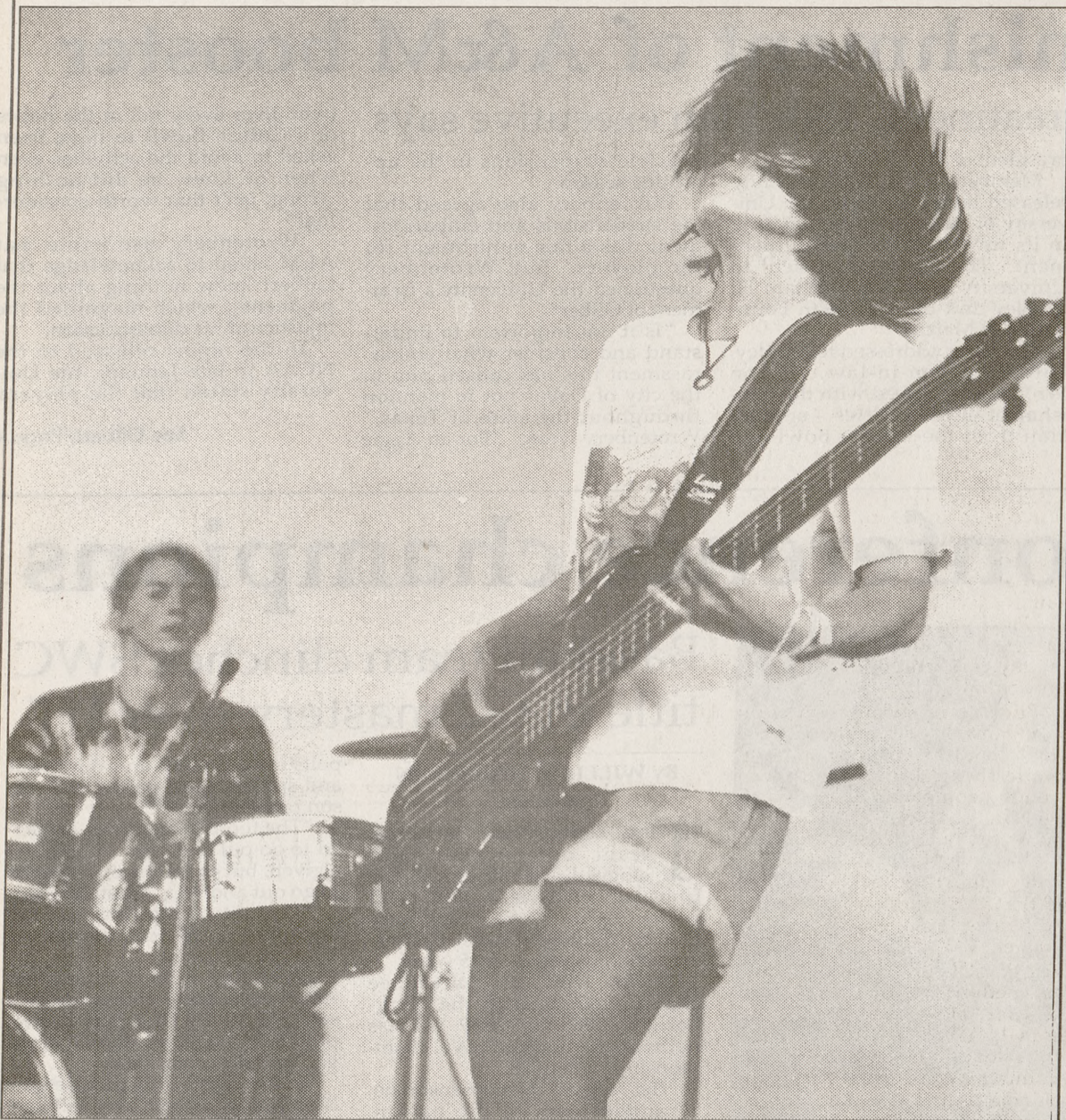


Aggiepalooza



DARRIN HILL/The Battalion

Annie Change, bass guitar player for the band Crossbone Butterfly, plays during Aggiepalooza at the Grove on Sunday. The event was a way for local bands to get exposure in the area. This is the second semester for Aggiepalooza to be held on campus.

School finance rejection

Lawmakers must beat deadline to keep state funding

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — State leaders, who hoped to be in the homestretch of the school funding crisis by now, instead found themselves back in the starting gate Sunday after voters rejected all three school ballot proposals.

"We're really racing the clock now," said Senate Education Committee Chairman Bill Ratliff, R-Mount Pleasant, a sponsor of the share-the-wealth Proposition 1.

"If the Legislature is unable to come up with a solution, then our greatest fears are realized," Gov. Ann Richards said.

Texas faces a court-ordered cutoff of state aid to schools if lawmakers don't devise a constitutional plan to equalize school funding by June 1.

Schools rely mainly on state aid and local property taxes.

Richards had pushed the ballot measures defeated Saturday, in-

cluding Proposition 1.

Top state leaders had considered that proposal for limited property tax redistribution the most practical way to address court-ordered school finance reform.

Related ballot proposals would have provided for bonds to help with school construction, and exempted school districts from future state mandates that aren't funded.

Leaders immediately began polishing up alternative plans to Proposition 1.

Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock discussed the funding issue with senators and also planned to meet Sunday with Richards and House Speaker Pete Laney, a spokeswoman said.

The Supreme Court repeatedly has told lawmakers to come up with a constitutional way of making similar money available to school districts that tax locally at similar rates.

Differing property wealth his-

torically has created large disparities in how much money school districts can raise.

Proposition 1 would have authorized the redistribution of some property tax money among school districts statewide and regionally.

Regional tax-sharing currently takes place under a 1991 effort by lawmakers to meet the court's order for equalized school funding.

But the Supreme Court said last year that system violated the constitution because it created a state property tax and lacked voter approval.

Among remaining alternatives, state leaders have said, are school consolidation or local elections to authorize the continued regional redistribution of some property tax money.

Under a version of the latter plan by Ratliff, school districts that don't approve the regional tax-and-share system would face spending caps.

Long night for Richards, GOP says

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — Although she disputes the notion, it must have been a long election night for Ann Richards.

The popular Democratic governor, who faces re-election next year, saw voters reject all three of the school funding proposals she had pushed.

Her handpicked U.S. senator, Bob Krueger, finished second to a surprisingly strong Republican contender.

The three leading Republican Senate candidates, who spent much of the campaign criticizing one another, combined for about 57 percent of the vote. The top three Democrats received only 40

percent.

Republicans were quick to crow.

"It's a very, very bad night for Gov. Richards," said Texas GOP Chairman Fred Meyer. "The citizens of this state clearly turned down her candidate for senator and turned down her school tax increase."

"This was a referendum on Bob Krueger and 70 percent of the people of Texas said no," said the state's senior senator, Republican Phil Gramm.

Democrats saw the results differently, noting that Kay Bailey Hutchison's margin was a less-than-staggering 497 votes.

"This election was really about which Republican was going to end up in a runoff against Bob

Krueger," said state Democratic Chairman Bob Slagle, whose party had endorsed the appointee.

"It wasn't a Richards referendum," said Ed Martin, the party's executive director. "Gov. Richards doesn't run until 1994, and heaven knows what political water's going to run under the bridge between now and then."

The governor campaigned hard for the lead school measure, share-the-wealth Proposition 1, and loaned staff to the Save Our Schools campaign.

Proposition 1 failed 37 percent to 63 percent.

The governor spent weeks looking for a replacement for Bentsen, finally settling on Krueger, then a Railroad Commission member.

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