

# The Battalion

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Tuesday, June 1, 1993

## Richards signs school finance reform bill

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — One day before a court deadline for school finance reform, Gov. Ann Richards signed into law Monday a bill giving property-rich school districts options for sharing some wealth with poorer ones.

"We've had three school finance plans that have been struck down since 1989, and we pray that this fourth try will produce the charm," said Richards, with an eye toward a Tuesday court hearing where state lawyers will present the plan to a judge.



Richards

The governor — surrounded by Democratic and Republican lawmakers and by students start-

ing their summer vacation — signed the bill at Pease Elementary, built in 1876 and touted as Texas' oldest operating public school.

The Texas Supreme Court set Tuesday's deadline for lawmakers to come up with a plan to even out funding available to school districts with differing property wealth.

Missing it would have meant a court-ordered cutoff of state education aid. Leaders warned that would have started the process of school closings as funds ran out, since school districts rely on state funds and local property tax money.

State District Judge F. Scott McCown, who presides over the long-running school finance case, will hear Tuesday from state lawyers armed with the new plan and attorneys for school districts that have successfully challenged previous school funding laws.

The plan was designed in the

last month, after voters on May 1 soundly rejected a share-the-wealth proposal that would have authorized the state to redistribute some local property tax money from richer to poorer school districts.

Asked if the new plan — which didn't require a statewide vote — is a better one, Richards said, "I think that this bill will have the support of the people, and therefore, it has to be better."

"Sometimes it seems as if you finally come to a conclusion of the right thing to do when you've winnowed away all of the wrong things to do," she said.

The Democratic governor praised the bipartisan effort that led to the new law, which is meant to ensure that none of Texas' 1,048 school districts has more than \$280,000 in property wealth per weighted student. Students with special needs are counted as more than one pupil in the weighted system, to make up

for the extra cost of educating them.

The 109 districts that exceed the maximum level can choose among several options for giving away some wealth: Merging tax bases with one or more poorer districts; sending money to the state; contracting to educate stu-

dents in other districts; consolidating voluntarily with one or more districts; or moving some property to another district's tax rolls.

If school districts don't choose an option under the plan, the state education commissioner will order commercial taxable property to be moved. If that's not enough,

there will be forced consolidation.

The bill anticipates a \$1.1 billion state spending increase for public education over the next two-year budget period, but leaders have said that's still not enough to continue current per-pupil spending with growing enrollment.

## Governor blasts concealed gun referendum

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — A combative Gov. Ann Richards on Monday renewed her criticism of lawmakers who pushed a bill to put a handgun referendum on the Nov. 2 ballot.

Richards, who vowed to veto the bill, said the legislators were playing games because they couldn't win support for a bill to legalize carrying of handguns in

Texas.

"The gun (referendum) bill is a joke," Richards said.

"What was done in these last waning hours was nothing more than a subterfuge. They felt they couldn't win any other way, so they would try to reconstruct the issue," she said.

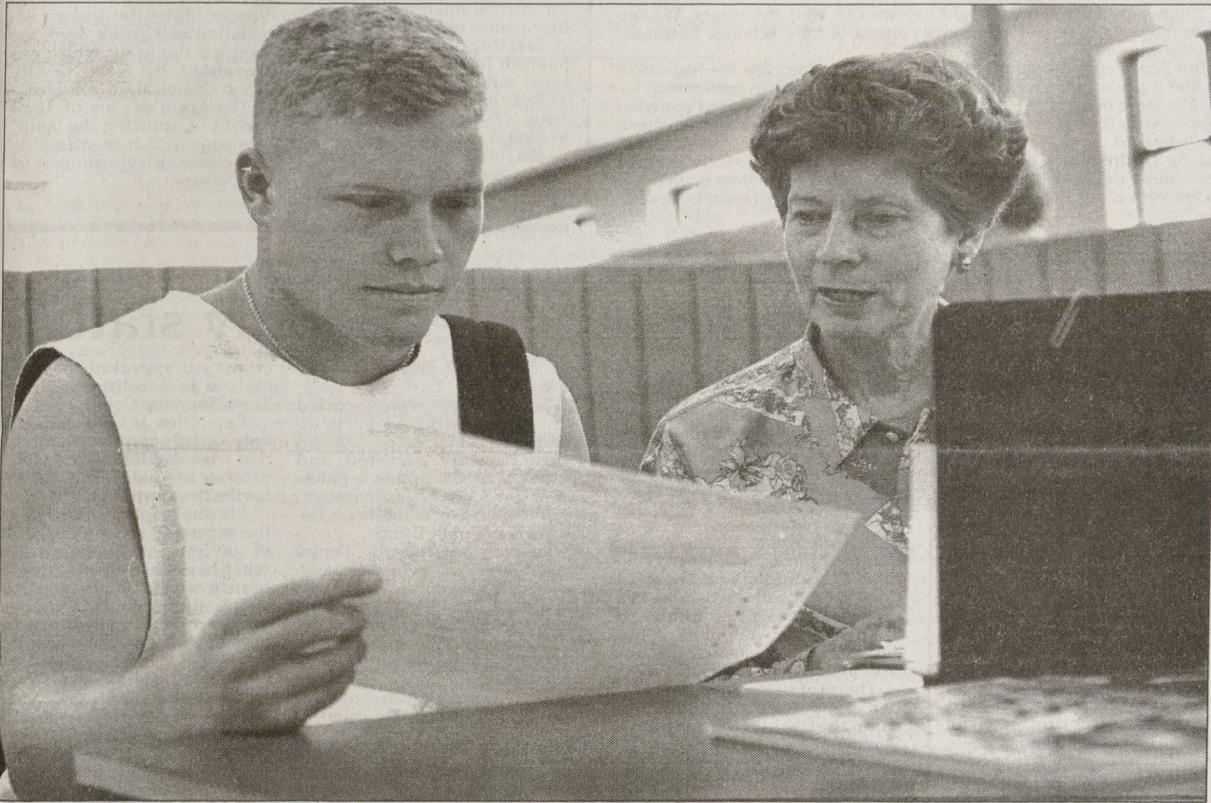
Richards called the referendum a tax-supported poll for handgun interests.

"It's a \$60,000 pricetag to the

people of Texas to run a private poll for the proponents of handguns. I think they ought to do that in the private sector, where there are people who conduct polls. They ought to pay for it themselves," she said.

"I'm going to veto that bill." Lawmakers on Sunday gave final approval to the handgun referendum. It would place a non-binding resolution on the Nov. 2 ballot.

## Schedule madness...



John Swindall, a junior kinesiology major from McKinney, and Martha Dixon discuss schedule changes Monday afternoon in the

Pavilion. The Pavilion was packed yesterday as students tried to sign up and pay for classes.

MARY MACMANUS/The Battalion

## COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

### Jones named interim dean

By MICHELE BRINKMANN

The Battalion

Dr. Woodrow Jones Jr., associate dean of Liberal Arts, was named interim dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Texas A&M last Tuesday.

Jones was appointed to replace Dr. Daniel Fallon, who announced he was leaving Texas A&M to accept the position of vice president of academic affairs and provost at the University of Maryland.

Jones will begin his service as interim dean of the College of Lib-

eral Arts June 15. He said he is looking forward to a great year.

"We have a lot of things to work on in the College of Liberal Arts," he said.

Jones said he will be satisfied if he can get his three main goals accomplished.

"I plan on improving the working conditions of the faculty to help retain our staff," he said. "I also plan on improving services to undergraduate students to help them choose a career and find employment."

Jones also said he wants to develop a graduate program that

will improve graduates' job performances.

Jones, a professor of political science, has served as associate dean for academic services and undergraduate affairs. He has been with the University for the last six years.

Dr. E. Dean Gage, Texas A&M senior vice president and provost, said he appointed Jones based on an evaluation of his qualifications and recommendations from the College of Liberal Arts.

"It is clear that Dr. Jones has the support and trust of the facul-



"I ... plan on improving services to undergraduate students to help them choose a career and find employment."

-Dr. Woodrow Jones Jr., interim dean of Liberal Arts

## Mixed reactions greet Clinton at Vietnam Veterans Memorial

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President Clinton, who opposed the Vietnam War and once thanked a mentor for "saving me from the draft," marked Memorial Day with a visit to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial after promising to keep the United States "free, strong and proud."

Clinton was applauded by the crowd as he arrived at the black

granite name-inscribed wall, accompanied by Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. But there was also scattered heckling, boos and chants of "Where Was Bill?" Protesters in a roped-off area for demonstrators waved signs saying "Draft Dodger."

Some veterans had criticized Clinton's decision to visit the memorial.

See Clinton/Page 4

## Fraternity offers summer camp for black teens

By LISA ELLIOT

The Battalion

The Texas A&M alumni chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity is trying to change some of the problems facing black men in society by offering a summer camp for teenage boys.

The Alpha Institute, which will concentrate on "Unendangering the Black Male," will take place in Snook June 25-27.

Edward McGruder, member and former president of Alpha Phi

### Institute to focus on social problems

Alpha, said this event will help surround these young men with positive male role models.

"What we're doing is putting on a summer camp to revert the problems that we have identified in the black community," McGruder said. "This is not a separatist type of event."

McGruder said the camp will concentrate on five major areas: health, male-female relationships, leadership development, career

development and African history and cultural enrichment.

There will be experts and professionals in each of these areas to counsel and work with the teens, he said.

Mentors and counselors will chaperone the young men throughout the weekend.

"It (the Alpha Institute) will benefit not only the mentors and the students, but also those professionals that participate," Mc-

Gruder said. "It will put them in check with these young men, and it will be a way to give back to the community."

This is the first year the Alpha Institute will be available to youths in the Brazos Valley, but McGruder said it is not new to Alpha Phi Alpha, which has sponsored the camp in other areas.

The camp is available to black male teenagers who are in the top half of their class and will be entering the 9th through 12th grades this fall. The Alpha Institute is free.

## Group criticizes pay of university administrators

By STEPHANIE PATTILLO

The Battalion

The Texas Faculty Association (TFA) is criticizing high university administrators' salaries and benefits, which they estimate average over \$109,000 a year.

In a press release last month, TFA President Marsha Self said that TFA has "a problem with the magnitude of the compensation received by public college and university CEOs."

"We want to reaffirm our position that higher education in this state is woefully underfunded and that bringing compensation of chancellors, presidents and other administrators under control will not in itself solve higher education's critical funding problems," she said.

TFA conducted a study using informa-

### 'Magnitude of compensation' too high, TFA says

tion gathered through the Open Records Act about the salary and benefits of 114 chancellors and presidents in Texas. They concluded that the salaries for 35 public university presidents averaged \$120,989, and the salaries for six university chancellors averaged \$178,000.

J.D. Phaup, TFA legislative committee chair, said TFA did this study because it "is important to know what our chief executive officers earn."

"We do not see why TFA should have to go through the work of filling out well over a hundred open records requests to get this information," he said.

According to TFA, the University of Texas system's chancellor heads the pay scale for public university chancellors in

Texas, earning \$234,023 in 1992-93. Texas A&M system chancellor Dr. Herbert Richardson makes \$198,420.

UT-Austin pays its university president \$185,000 a year, the highest of any school in the state. Texas A&M University president Dr. William Mobley is paid \$175,100 a year.

Dr. E. Dean Gage, A&M provost and senior vice president said the high salaries of University officials are necessary if A&M is to be competitive in recruiting people with leadership and scholarship.

The overall salaries at Texas A&M are at the bottom of the top 10 of the most populated state schools, he said.

"The assessment of salaries here as compared to other leading institutions is at the lower end of the scale," he said.

TFA has made several recommendations as a result of its study.

One recommendation advises the tracking and controlling of the salaries and benefits of all major administrators in public colleges and universities by the legislature so that they know what these cost the state annually.

"The salaries and benefits of all high ranking administrators should be routinely collected by the Legislative Budget Board or other appropriate state agency," Phaup said.

A&M's administration determines the salaries of deans, department heads and faculty during the recruitment process. Gage said the University president's salary is set by the chancellor and must be approved by the entire A&M system Board of

See Salaries/Page 2

## Inside

### SPORTS

- Baseball: A&M pitching highlights of 1993 season
- Burnett: Indy 500 not as American as apple pie

Page 3

### TEXAS

- Politics: A look back at the 73rd Legislative Session

### CARTOONS

- Bangkok: Where is Tubularman?

Page 4