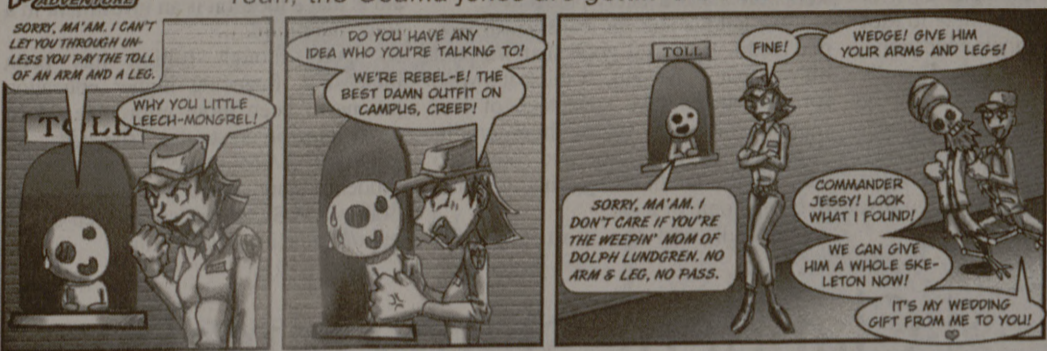


Full Moon

by R.DeLuna



By I.FLORES "So That's Where He's Been All This Time." Yeah, the Osama jokes are gettin' a bit stale...



Perry

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Democrats have a 17-15 advantage in the Texas congressional delegation. Republicans, led by U.S. Majority Leader Tom DeLay of Sugar Land, say they want a majority in the delegation and cite GOP-leaning voting trends in the past few statewide elections.

Last week, the Texas House approved a plan that could give the GOP as many as 21 seats in the delegation. Some senators, unhappy with that plan, are drafting their own maps.

Senate tradition dictates that it takes two-thirds, or 21 senators, to agree to bring a bill up for debate before it can be considered on the floor of the Senate, which is ruled 19-12 by Republicans.

Ratliff, the former acting lieutenant governor, and the 10 Democrats would be enough to stop the bill under the rule.

Dewhurst, however, said he would evaluate all of his options, including changing the tradition, if it becomes clear that there are not the 21 votes to bring the bill up for debate.

Senators appeared divided on whether the tradition should be changed.

Sen. Jeff Wentworth, R-San Antonio, said he would support changing the rule but only on the issue of redistricting and only in a special legislative session.

"I ran for public office the first time in 1974 and I've watched the Democratic majority kick Republicans around for 30 years and we've just taken it because we have been out-voted and the very first time we get a majority, what do they do? They run off and hide in Oklahoma in a parliamentary sneak attack and if that's the way they are going to play the game, the majority needs to exercise its will," Wentworth said.

Republicans in the House tried to get a plan passed during the regular session, but 51 Democratic representatives fled to Ardmore, Okla., and blocked a quorum in the chamber, killing the redistricting bill.

Sen. Ken Armbrister, a Democrat from Victoria who said he is undecided about whether to support a redistricting plan, said he would not support suspending the tradition.

"There is no issue that I have seen in 20 years

that is more important than the traditions and protocol of the Texas Senate and I will never vote to suspend the two-thirds rule," Armbrister said.

Under Senate rules, senators are required to debate bills on the floor in the order they get out of committee. Senators typically put a "blocker bill" at the top of the list, forcing lawmakers to get support from two-thirds of the senators if they want to take up another bill first. A blocker bill already is on the agenda this session.

If Perry calls another special session, lawmakers may decide not to put a blocker bill at the top of the list, which could mean that only a majority of senators could be required to support a bill for it to get a Senate floor debate.

Armbrister warned against that type of "gamesmanship."

"Any kind of gamesmanship that violates the traditions of the Texas Senate, they won't have a quorum," Armbrister said, suggesting that a number of senators would boycott the Senate.

The two-thirds rule has served the Senate well, said Sen. Robert Duncan, a Lubbock Republican who is chairman of the Senate Jurisprudence Committee. The committee continued to take testimony on the House redistricting bill Tuesday even though a new Senate bill had not been unveiled.

Some Republicans say there is precedent for not following the tradition and point to a 1992 special legislative session when senators did not use the two-thirds rule when debating redistricting.

"I think on redistricting, the precedent was set in the past," said Sen. Jon Lindsay, R-Houston. "I would predict that in 18 months everyone will have forgotten about it, and the two-thirds rule will be back in place. But in the meantime there will be some pretty raw feelings."

DeLay, meanwhile, attempted to play down Ratliff's declaration.

Ratliff "has grave concerns that he wants to see met and he's sort of exercising his prerogative as a state senator and publicly airing those concerns," DeLay said.

Ratliff said Monday he was planning to add his name to a statement signed by 10 other senators promising their "unalterable opposition" to any motion to bring up congressional redistricting for debate.

Claudette

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stuff in the streets."

By 10 p.m. Tuesday, the center of the storm, downgraded again to a tropical storm, was about 70 miles southwest of San Antonio. All weather warnings for the Texas coast were discontinued.

As Claudette closed in, Gary Lawrence watched the wind topple the roof over gas-line pumps at a Shell Food Mart where he works just east of Carancahua Bay on Texas Highway 35 between Palacios and Port Lavaca.

"It was real gradual, then it went down," he said, speaking through a broken front window of his store as he was pelted by rain.

Palacios, a coastal fishing community of 4,500 bordered by rice fields and grazing pastures, was without power Tuesday. The roof at the municipal airport was damaged and a shed covering golf carts at a golf course blew apart.

At Bayfront RV Park, directly on the shore of Matagorda Bay, three trailers were flattened and two others were overturned.

"I went around and checked all of them and there is nobody inside," Jack Linney, who was securing his boat nearby, said.

"We do have a lot of tree damage, roof damage too," Matagorda County Judge Greg Westmoreland said. "We've got a lot of cleanup to do."

Dale Porter, 52, owner of the Ace Hardware in Palacios, already was doing that, sweeping away debris from broken windows and a damaged ceiling so he could be back in business quickly.

Iraq

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political system was already under way with the establishment of the 25-member council — the first national postwar Iraqi political body, largely hand-picked by him.

"The next step is the launching of a process to write a new constitution for Iraq... Once approved, democratic, free and fair elections can be held in Iraq for a fully sovereign Iraqi government. Then our job, the coalition's job, will be done," Bremer said.

"We have no desire to stay a day longer than necessary," he said. "The timing of how long the coalition stays here is now in the hands of the Iraqi people."

The Governing Council, whose members were selected rather than elected, is meant to be the forerunner of a 200-250 member constitutional assembly that is planned to start drawing up a draft constitution in September. That process is expected to take nine months to a year and free elections to pick a government are expected to follow.

"If I've got to get a calculator with a hand crank on it, we'll do it," he said. "We won't let our customers down."

No serious injuries were reported along the 350-mile Texas coast, which for several hours was entirely under hurricane watches or warnings.

The Coast Guard had to rescue two men, brothers Tony and Lam Nguyen, of Biloxi, Miss., after their 92-foot shrimp boat based in Houma, La., began sinking about five miles off Sabine Pass at the extreme eastern edge of the hurricane warning area. They were not hurt.

Once the storm fueled by the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico made landfall, it began losing its punch as it swept west across South Texas and headed into northern Mexico. Preliminary radar estimates showed heaviest rain, from 4 to 6 inches, hit Matagorda and Brazoria counties along the coast.

At Sargent and Surfside Beach, cars were overturned and stairways on the beachfront homes built on stilts were swept away by the waves and tidal surge.

At Galveston, waves crashed over the 17-foot protective seawall.

With the storm moving on, oil and natural gas companies quickly began sending workers back to Gulf of Mexico production platforms and drilling rigs that had been evacuated in the previous days.

Houston was only grazed, with highways wet but no flooding.

In Austin, Gov. Rick Perry signed a disaster relief proclamation to help speed state and federal response and author-

ized use of Texas National Guard soldiers and equipment to assist in rescue and recovery.

Later Tuesday he announced President Bush for a federal disaster declaration to make counties eligible for federal grants and employment and housing assistance. Counties cited were Aransas, Brazoria, Calhoun, Delta, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Jackson, Karnes, Matagorda, Refugio, San Patricio, Victoria and Wharton.

The Texas Department of Health warned people to eat food that had been in contact with flood water and warned of dangers from snakes and other wildlife that may have sought shelter in homes and vehicles.

The Matagorda Bay area no stranger to hurricanes. O'Connor was destroyed by hurricane in 1919 and again Category 4 Carla in 1988. Hurricane Celia struck July 1970, the last major hurricane to hit the region.

Claudette had defied predictions, heading north of what forecasters initially anticipated.

"It's called the unpredictability of tropical storms," Gene Hafele, a Houston-based National Weather Service meteorologist, explained.

Claudette had developed week ago in the Caribbean brushing Jamaica, the Cayman Islands and Mexico's Yucatan peninsula before entering the gulf.

It's the first hurricane to strike Texas since 1999, when Bret slammed into a largely unpopulated stretch between Corpus Christi and Brownsville.

EJSA

Continued from page 1

Bryan-College Station Eagle and Class of 1989, said she wants Johnson to get a better understanding of what students and employers want.

"I don't expect Johnson to change his mind overnight," she said. "But my hope is that he walks away with a better understanding of the needs of both journalism students and employers in the communication industry."

Steffy said he thinks it is vital for students to emphasize how important this issue is to them and voice their concerns by writing letters to the administration.

"For a university the size of Texas A&M, this is a big step backward," he said.

"Once A&M has a reputation of not having a journalism program, it will do damage to future, current and even former students."

A group of students started a petition to gain support for the program. Johnson said he is looking forward to having a positive meeting and sharing different concerns with those who attend.

"I want to talk to EJSAs about ideas and pathways students might take for a journalism career," he said.

Johnson said he wants to invite EJSAs to be part of the process for that consideration.

"I recognize the strong feelings about the recommendation, but my aim is to listen, explain and invite them to be part of that process," he said.

POLICE BLOTTER

- CSPD**
7/14/03 10:29 a.m. Recovered stolen vehicle, Wellborn/Te. 2001 Ford pickup.
- 7/14/03 10:37 a.m. Major accident, 200 Southwest Pkwy. Head and neck injury.
- 7/14/03 3:20 p.m. Warrant arrest, 1700 George Bush.
- 7/14/03 5:10 p.m. Theft, 1500 Harvey. One arrest.
- 7/14/03 7:56 p.m. Burglary of a vehicle, 2102 Texas. Taken: stereo.
- 7/14/03 8:29 p.m. Burglary of a vehicle, 9104 Timber Knoll. Taken: radar.
- 7/14/03 9:07 p.m. Burglary of a vehicle, 2418 Texas. Taken: stereo.
- 7/14/03 9:33 p.m. Burglary of a vehicle, 1001 Harvey. Taken: purse and accessories.
- 7/14/03 10:23 p.m. Aggravated assault, 3511 Longmire. Scrapes.
- 7/15/03 12:20 a.m. DUI, Southwest Pkwy/Wellborn. One arrest.
- 7/15/03 1:06 a.m. Theft and possession of marijuana, 301 University. Three arrests.
- 7/15/03 1:44 a.m. DWI, Boyett/Church. One arrest.
- 7/15/03 1:43 a.m. Burglary of a vehicle, 505 University. Taken: drill in case, bag with tools.
- 7/15/03 3:04 a.m. Burglary of a vehicle, 1100 Spring Loop. Taken: wallet and contents, cash, shoes, paintball gun, watch and pants.
- 7/15/03 3:36 a.m. Burglary of a vehicle, 1100 Spring Loop. Taken: stereo.
- 7/15/03 3:38 p.m. Burglary of a vehicle, 1100 Spring Loop.

Taken: stereo and wallet.

UPD

- 7/9/03 11:50 p.m. Minor in possession, Parking Area 77.
- 7/10/03 10:09 a.m. Theft, Heep Center. Taken: cell phone, \$20 stolen from fourth floor room.
- 7/10/03 2:15 p.m. Theft, G. Rollie White Coliseum. Taken: monitor, DVD drive, ZIP drive, RAM card stolen from first floor room.
- 7/10/03 5:02 p.m. Warrant arrest, North Bizzell.
- 7/10/03 10:25 a.m. Burglary of a vehicle, Southside Parking Garage. Taken: three pairs of slacks from vehicle.
- 7/11/03 12:04 a.m. Minor in possession, Parking Area 77.
- 7/11/03 1:31 a.m. Public intoxication, Northgate Post Office parking area. Two arrests.
- 7/11/03 7:43 a.m. Harrassment, Bell Building. Arrest warrant issued.
- 7/11/03 11:47 p.m. Criminal trespass warning, All Faith's Chapel. Warning issued to subject sleeping in a closet in Chapel.
- 7/12/03 1:57 a.m. DWI, George Bush Dr. One arrest.
- 7/14/03 9:34 p.m. DWI, Olsen Blvd. One arrest.
- 7/14/03 11:13 a.m. Theft, Physical Plant Carpentry Shop. Taken: nine pieces of leatherette with A&M logo.
- 7/14/03 9:34 p.m. Theft, Student Recreation Center. Taken: gym bag with clothing, wallet, three credit cards, Texas driver's license and keys.

NEWS IN BRIEF

A&M opens San Antonio prospective student center

Texas A&M formally opened the new San Antonio Regional Prospective Student Center Monday to encourage more students from the area to consider attending the state's first public institution of higher learning.

The center makes it easier for parents to obtain information about admissions, scholarships and financial aid.

A&M President Robert M. Gates, who headed a large University-wide delegation, said in A&M's 127-year history, much has changed.

"What not has changed, nor will it, is our commitment to developing leaders with the knowledge, skills, vision and principles to continue guiding Texas and the world through transformations yet to come," he said.

Ag

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years ago, the Department of Agricultural Education evaluated the agricultural journalism program. It found a need for agricultural journalists to communicate broad, technical topics such as science, technology, food and natural resources to a variety of audiences. It also needed faculty members able to train students to fulfill industry needs, he said.

Shinn said there are currently 78 official agricultural journalism majors, but that the number is an underrepresentation of all who are actually involved with the major. He said the agricultural journalism program would be able to meet industry needs when it grows to 200 to 250 students in

the major.

Maintaining a good student-faculty ratio plays a major role in the Department of Agricultural Education's strategy to becoming a mature program, Shinn said. Agricultural journalism employs three full-time faculty members.

Gary Wingenbach, assistant professor for agricultural journalism, said an important aspect of maintaining the good student-faculty ratio is faculty background.

"Our students take 30-plus hours of agricultural sciences, and as faculty members we all have backgrounds in agricultural sciences," Wingenbach said. "So our students rely on that asset and bank of knowledge to talk about things that aren't necessarily related to agricultural journalism courses but are still a part of the bigger program."

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