



Ink, Paper Still Best Safeguard for Truth

We know about root rot, but “link rot”? It’s the term for the loss or removal over time of content at a particular Uniform Resource Locator on the Internet.

The average lifespan of a web page is 44 days, says Sara Deforge Hough. But “in an ironic twist, the source of this statistic is no longer available on the Web.”

That’s why we still believe in print. Especially for public records and public notices.

What goes on the web can be changed on the web. And while forensic specialists may be able to trace down deleted emails and the like, they first have to be armed with a search warrant.

Average citizens can’t do this. If somebody changed or deleted the data, we’ll never know. Not so with ink on paper.

Link rot is just one more reason we still need print, even in a digital age.

— Larry Jackson

Letters to the Editor

Power Lines Affect Land

To the Editor:

I’m writing you to let the newspaper become aware of CenterPoint Energy’s intent to route new large power lines from the power plant in Fayetteville to their station in Houston. As you can see by the graphic on the Web site below, there are a couple options for routing, but the route will affect someone and some family’s property in this area.

My family owns land and a ranch in Austin County. My family was just notified in a letter on April 25 (that was received on April 27). The first public hearing is scheduled for May 5. Of course, you can tell that’s not a good lead time for notice and to let landown-

ers organize to fight this.

We’ve begun to organize and created a web site – www.savecatspring.com. Cat Spring is our neck of the woods, but the lines could affect many more homes and communities along the way.

You can find all of the pertinent information and documents there including the letter from CenterPoint.

The meeting in Fayetteville will be 5-8 p.m. Thursday, May 5, at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, 205 East Bell St.

I appreciate your help in getting this message out. This will affect many citizens in Fayette and Austin counties.

Jason Jarrett
Austin

So How Would You Fix It?

To the Editor:

Concerning Mr. M. Lewis’ letter, “Tax System Broken,” firstly, a fact can be defined as a “truth known by actual observation,” according to Webster’s Dictionary. Mr. Lewis presents us with “A few facts.” He then goes on to ask four questions. A question IS NOT A FACT; is not now, and never has been.

Here are some facts from the CBO, the Congressional Budget Office. These facts are about INCOME TAXES, not payroll taxes, not gasoline taxes, not excise taxes, not sales taxes, not property taxes; this information from the CBO is about income taxes, reported on Form 1040 and due April 15 of the year following the income.

FACTS: in 2008 the top 1% of income (adjusted gross income) payers paid approximate-

ly 40% of the total income taxes paid to the US Treasury.

The top 5% of income paid about 60% of the total income taxes; the top 10% of income payers paid 70% of the total and the top 25% of income paid 87% of the total income taxes collected by the US Treasury.

Another fact: Approximately 47% of tax filers in the US paid NO federal income tax! That means almost half the households filing a 1040 tax form, paid NO TAX and in fact, many of these received a refund.

So Mr. Lewis, if you think the system is broken, as you apparently do, it is not particularly helpful to present these questions unless you can also provide answers. Let us all hear how you want to fix our tax system.

H. Mercer
Round Top

At Least Read a Diploma

To the Editor:

Back in the late 1960s, the Board of Education of the State of Virginia issued an edict that in order for a student to receive a high-school diploma he would have to be able to prove he can read, write and perform basic arithmetic computations.

What a novel idea. I wonder if that rule still applies today?

Bill Rogers
La Grange

Editor’s Note: That’s exactly why Texas established the TAKS tests and those that followed. The Texas Education Agency states “Students must pass their classes as well as all four sections of the exit level Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in order to receive a diploma and graduate from a Texas public high school.” Basically, that means reading, writing and arithmetic, and now science.



Austin’s Budget Battles Continue

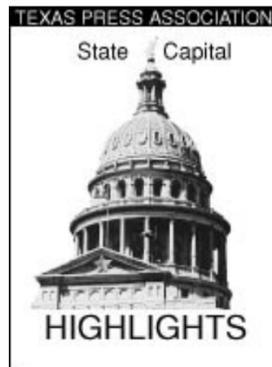
By ED STERLING
Texas Press Association

AUSTIN – Big bills continue to rumble around the state Capitol with less than a month remaining until May 30, the last day of the regular 82nd session of the Texas Legislature.

The full House and the Senate Finance Committee have passed versions of the state budget, but last week there was not enough collective will in the Senate to bring the matter up for floor debate: too much disagreement on the particulars. We’ll have to wait a little longer to see a state budget both houses consider fit for delivery to the governor.

In their current forms, the House version cuts spending by \$23 billion while the Senate Finance Committee’s version, which pulls \$3 billion from the state’s Rainy Day Fund, cuts \$17 billion.

Meanwhile, the Senate approved SB 1811 by Robert Duncan, R-Lubbock, to pump \$4 billion in non-tax revenue into the 2012-2013 state budget. Duncan’s bill would make use of accounting strategies, such as moving the state’s final payment of the fiscal year to the Permanent School Fund (more than \$2 billion) from August into September, the first month of fiscal year 2011-2012. It would also move up the collection of the state’s franchise tax a month early in 2013 to bring in about



\$800 million.

Another key piece of budget legislation was passed by the Senate: SB 23 by Jane Nelson, R-Flower Mound. Nelson’s bill would save about a half billion dollars in health care costs over the next biennium by moving Medicaid prescriptions into managed care and increasing managed care for Medicaid patients in South Texas.

TxDOT bill returns to Senate

In the raft of “sunset” bills that determine the fate of state agencies, the House set aside its own version of the Texas Department of Transportation sunset bill, then took up the Senate version, SB 1420 by Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa, D-McAllen, and passed it with 78 amendments. The bill now goes back to the Senate to see if that body will concur in all those amendments. It probably won’t, and the bill, which shifts more road-

building projects into private hands and allows the creation of more toll roads, will be assigned to a conference committee.

House passes redistricting

A big piece of legislation the House passed was HB 150 by Burt Solomons, R-Carrollton – the redrawing of House district boundaries.

The bill is structured to help Republicans hold on to power for the next 10 years, even though 2010 U.S. Census data show most of the state’s 4 million population gain in the last decade was overwhelmingly Hispanic. Hispanic Texans do not vote as a bloc but history shows a majority favoring Democratic candidates.

House Speaker Joe Straus, R-San Antonio, thanked Solomons, who chairs the body’s Redistricting Committee, and House members in general “for their commitment in passing a map that is fair, legal, and that reflects the demographic changes that our state has experienced over the past decade.”

Solomons, during House floor debate, told members who challenged his map, that he used current Census data to draw the lines and that the state constitution requires him to use that data as the basis for redrawing district boundaries. The federal voting rights law calls for districts to be compact and contiguous and do not disrupt communities of interest.

Twisters Ravaged Texas This Week in 1930

By BARTEE HAILE

A freak storm swept across Texas on May 6, 1930 spewing tornadoes from the Red River to the Gulf of Mexico and leaving a trail of broken homes, broken dreams and broken bodies.

The first twister of that terrible day touched down near Childress on the southeastern edge of the Panhandle. Two farmhouses were flattened, and four people were treated for minor injuries.

As the boiling, black tempest rolled east, gale-force winds wreaked havoc from Bowie to Brownwood. Tornadoes danced through the wide-open countryside, where settlements were few and far between, without taking a life.

But it was a different story in the more densely populated counties south of Dallas. Twisters killed three at Ennis and Ensign in Ellis County and 19 more next door in Hill County at Bynum, Irene and Mertens.

The merciless monster then invaded Navarro County. At Frost, a farming community of 800 sixteen miles due west of Corsicana, frightened inhabitants sought shelter in the brick business district. For many that snap decision was a fatal mistake.

Recognizing the distinctive roar of the approaching tornado, the superintendent hurriedly herded students into the basement. The funnel cloud passed directly over the school ripping off the roof, but his

quick thinking saved the children.

A father felt his boy would be safer at home and came to fetch him moments before the evacuation. The man lost his son as well as his wife in the collapse of their frame dwelling.

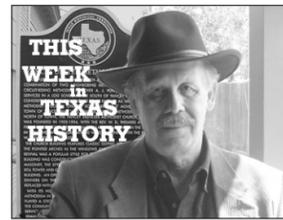
“It looked like a long plume of smoke coming from the southwest,” a merchant remembered. “It hung for a moment over a small lake and then was on us with a burst of fury.”

The tornado tore the heart right out of Frost reducing everything to rubble except the local jail. The pharmacist and a teenaged customer, who was sipping a soda at the counter, perished in the drug store. A delivery driver dashed inside the grocery just in time to die, while his truck sat untouched at the curb. A baby was snatched from its mother’s arms never to be seen again.

Both banks were completely destroyed, but a thick vault shielded employees and customers from flying debris. A like-minded butcher found similar sanctuary in his walk-in refrigerator.

With the funeral parlor wrecked, a private home was pressed into service as a temporary morgue. Before graves could be dug for the 22 victims, shattered tombstones had to be cleared away at the cemetery.

The pessimistic mayor of Frost predicted, “I doubt if the town will ever be rebuilt to the extent it was before the storm.”



Fortunately his constituents were made of stronger stuff.

The ferocious front moved south growing in size and strength by the minute. Twisters struck as far east as the Louisiana border claiming two lives in Bronson and as far west as San Antonio, where one fatality was recorded. But the worst was yet to come.

A tornado split the seven-mile difference between Nordheim and Runge, agricultural centers which straddled the DeWitt-Karnes county line. Thirty-six died in a kill zone 300 yards wide and 15 miles long.

Tenant farmer Saragoza Garcia and his brother-in-law were plowing a field, when the clear sky suddenly darkened. The helper went indoors with Garcia’s wife, six children and mother-in-law, but Saragoza ignored their shouts and kept on working.

A snake-like finger shot out of the clouds and struck the ramshackle residence dead center. The house exploded scattering the remains of the nine occupants over a quarter-mile radius. Though seriously hurt in a collision with a flying plow, Saragoza Garcia forced

A Lehmann’s Opinion

Americans Loved The Wedding

By LINDA LEHMANN

As my husband left for work Friday morning, after viewing about an hour of the marriage of Prince William to Catherine Middleton, he commented, “This is so Un-American.”

Yes, it is something we Americans do not witness in our own country – all the pomp, splendor and traditions. But some of us find it intriguing. Why are so many Americans interested in the royals and their lifestyle?

I love to see the tiaras. The only time we Americans see a big tiara is when someone is crowned homecoming queen, Miss America, Miss USA or Miss Universe.

I was given a tiara once at a scrapbook party. I wore it for a short time and it made my head hurt. The fake tiara has turned brown but it was fun briefly imagining the life of a royal.

I can’t imagine wearing “The Crown Jewels.” The very thought of the weight of the tiara astonishes me. It was reported that Princess Diana had a headache the day of her wedding due to the weight of her tiara and veil. I guess one has to sacrifice when wearing something that expensive and grand.

Their lifestyles also interest me. Having someone wait on you at your every beck and call must be heavenly. I often wonder what they do all day with their leisure time.

The very thought of \$30 million being spent on a wedding is beyond my wildest imagination. Horse drawn carriages, the finest automobiles, a reception honoring the newlyweds given by the Queen, dinner and dancing hosted by Prince Charles, the future king of England, and the finest clothes money can buy were all part of a day fit for royalty and British aristocrats.

Every single part of the wedding was newsworthy.

I, for one, couldn’t wait to see Kate’s dress – the best kept secret in the world. I kept wondering if it was going to be as grand as the late Princess Diana’s or was

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