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***Silver Bulletin*, Volume XI, Number 1**

William J. Sagstetter

Texas Silver-Haired Legislature

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Silver Bulletin

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NUMBER 1

Official Publication of the Texas Silver Haired Legislature



TSHL Members Actively Promote Legislative Program

Members of the Texas Silver Haired Legislature throughout the state are busily engaged in promoting the passage of legislation that will include the Resolutions passed by the Sixth TSHL in September.

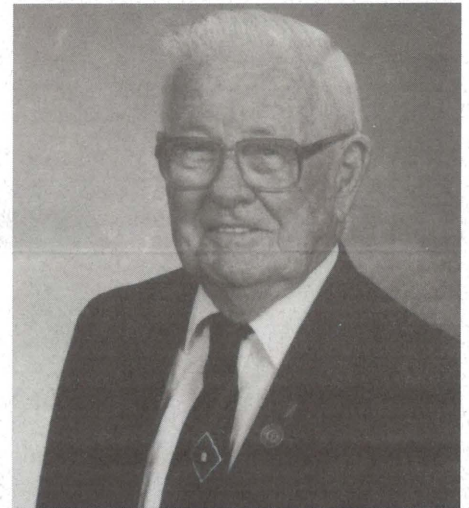
Most vigorous activity is concentrated in Austin, where members of the Legislative Action Committee are making calls on Texas Legislators and following up with letters and phone calls. Those with closest access to the capitol include veteran TSHL member John Holtermann, chairman of the committee; Bob Northington, vice chairman, and Clay Davis.

Other committee members include Alice Stubbs, John Rendsland, Dorothy McDermott, Bill Robertson, Franciene Johnson, Raymond Nolan, Doris Langton and May Della Everett.

Number One Priority Resolution recom-

mends expansion of the Options for Independent Living Program that allows the elderly to remain out of costly nursing homes. Fifteen Area Agencies on Aging presently offer this program. The resolution proposes increasing the program to include all 28 AAA regions.

Statewide interest has been stimulated in the Number 10 Priority Resolution, R-23. State Affairs Committee member "Kit" Carson of Valley View is spearheading a drive among all TSHL members to obtain at least 2,000 signatures on petitions favoring R-23. It calls for a constitutional amendment for an Initiative and Referendum Program. This would allow Texans to participate directly in legislative initiatives. State Senator Jane Nelson of Prairie View is sponsoring this proposal.



Legislative Action Committee Chairman John Holtermann of the Texas Silver Haired Legislature, and other members of his Committee, are busily advocating adoption of the priority Resolutions, during the current Session of the 75th Texas Legislature.

Texas Legislators Indicate Top Interest in TSHL Resolutions

Members of the Texas Legislature are indicating much interest in the prioritized resolutions that are being presented to them by the TSHL. This was pointed out by John Holtermann, Chair of the Legislative Action Committee.

In a report to the TSHL Executive Committee in Austin on December 5, Holtermann said many legislators have sought him out for information on the proposed recommendations. Sup-

port has already been promised for at least 18 resolutions.

Tom Perkins made the motion at the December 5 meeting that we should go back to the original 15 prioritized resolutions. This would give each committee at least one resolution. For a list of the five added resolutions, see the complete list appearing elsewhere in this publication.

"In addition to the on-going visits and advo-

cacy by members of the Legislative Action Committee, individuals who authored the many suggested resolutions are continuing to work with personal visits, mail and telephone calls. Many of the TSHL rank and file are working with their respective Representatives or Senators," said Robert Northington, Vice-Chairman of the Legislative Action Committee.

"We welcome all the help possible from other members, and requests for additional information to complement and coordinate all of the work are encouraged. Just call us at 817-877-1031 for assistance," Northington continued.

The legislature convenes January 14 in Austin. All TSHL members who can make the trip are urged to be present in the galleries that day. Gallery seating is limited, and early arrival is advised.

The 75th Texas Legislature Senate has 15 Democrats and 16 Republicans. The House has 82 Democrats and 68 Republicans. The Governor is a Republican, and the Lieutenant Governor is a Democrat.

It is customary for the Texas Legislature to honor the members of the Texas Silver Haired Legislature with a special TSHL Recognition Day. This year it is tentatively scheduled for March 6, same date as the Executive Committee meeting. All our members are urged to be present on that date to be recognized.



Speaker speaks to speaker at the recent session of the Texas Silver Haired Legislature. Shown here in the Chambers of the House of Representatives are (left) Texas House Speaker "Pete" Laney with TSHL Speaker Homer Lear.

SOUND OFF



Your pilot issue of the *Silver Bulletins* arrived here yesterday, and it was read with considerable appreciation immediately--by me and my wife. It is simply great, reflecting your many years of education and publishing experience.

Thank you for doing this, Bill. I'm sure that all of the TSHL bunch will enjoy the new publication, and it is, in my view, an excellent means of spreading the word. As we have discussed in Austin, informing the general public and particularly the senior citizens of Texas may be the most important activity we can be involved in.

John Holtermann, Clay Davis and I are gearing up for our attack on the Legislature--planning to acquaint key players with our "top 15" resolutions prior to their January 1997 convening for the 75th time. In this connection I am hoping that our budget will enable you to send the *Silver Bulletin* to many of the Texas House and Senate members--perhaps all of them.

Thanks again for a wonderful job--BOB NORTHINGTON, Marble Falls, TX.

* * *

The following action has been taken by the undersigned TSHL Representative on behalf of the citizens of Texas.

I recently purchased a new TV Satellite Antenna and installation kit from a local electronics dealer for \$506 and received rebate certificate for \$200 from DIRECT TV in Phoenix Arizona good on the purchase of TV Satellite programs. I paid tax on the total amount. After installing it I contacted DTV for their programming. Today I received a bill from DTV for \$354.95 plus \$22.18 state tax (@6.25%). I had been taxed twice for the \$200 rebate. I pay enough tax without this kind of error.

I called the Texas Office of Budget and Management (Mr. Eli Amaya) first to see if a firm in Arizona was authorized to collect Texas state tax. They are and they do, under the provisions of a Federal law passed last February covering telecommunications. However Mr. Amaya stated he had spoken to DTV and instructed them to collect tax only on the difference between the total charge for their service of \$354.95 and the \$200 rebate, which would be \$177.13 and the tax would be \$11.07. And I was overcharged \$12.50.

If you also have been charged by DTV you may call Mr. Amaya phone 1-800-252-5555 or call me at 1-817-526-8421. If you call my number you may need to be prepared to leave your name, subject and phone number on my answering machine--EARL ROBINSON, Killeen, TX.

* * *

Send us your comments by writing SOUND-OFF, *Silver Bulletin*, 118 Oaktree Drive, Rockport, TX 78382. Or Fax to 1-512-729-6939.

Prioritized 15 TSHL Resolutions

Here are the top 15 resolutions, in order of priority, passed by the Sixth Texas Silver Haired Legislature.

1. Expansion of the Options for Independent Living Program that allows the elderly to remain out of more costly nursing homes. Increase the present program from 15 Area Agencies on Aging to include all 28 AAA Districts. Proposed by Health & Human Resources Committee member Vernon Haverstick of El Paso as R-9.

2. Restore Nursing Homes Residents' Rights to prevent mental and physical and health care abuse. Amend H.B. 2644 to restore means of prosecution. Proposed by Criminal Justice committee member Bill Robertson of Athens as R-15.

3. Preserve the Texas Homestead Act in its present form and continue the opposition to Equity Loans and Reverse Mortgages on homesteads. Proposed by Retirement & Aging Committee member Carrie Jones of Houston as R-19.

4. Support and Expand If Possible the Home Delivered Meals Nutrition Program for the elderly under Title III of the Older Americans Act. Continue to provide sustenance and nourishment for thousands of older Texans. Proposed by Human Services Committee member Howard Dunaway of Gonzales as R-38.

5. Increase Funding for Nursing Home Residents. Raise the funding allotted for personal needs from \$30.00 a month to \$60.00. Proposed by Ways & Means Committee member Howard Stone of Fort Worth as R-4.

6. Enforce a Zero Tolerance Policy Regarding Long-Term Care Facility Deficiencies. Comply with already existing laws and regulations governing such facilities. Proposed by Health & Human Services Committee member C. Loyd Collier of Nacogdoches as R-11.

7. Oppose Deregulation of Retail Sales of Electric Power so it will be available to all to maintain and improve our standard of living. Proposed by Utilities & Natural Resources Committee member Franciene Johnson of Haskell as R-30.

8. Require Insurance Firms to Report Cancelled Auto Liability Insurance to the Department of Public Safety, to protect policy holders from uninsured motorists. Revoke driver licenses when a policy is cancelled to avoid the law. Proposed by Insurance Committee member Jetta Roberts of El Paso as R-14.

9. Help Lower Exorbitant Prescription Costs in Texas by requiring Medicare Supplement Policies to offer reasonably priced coverage of costs of medication with reasonable maximums, minimums or deductions. Require volume discounts be equally allowed to all providers of Medicare prescriptions. Proposed by Retirement & Aging Committee member Bill Sagstetter of Rockport as R-28.

10. Support the Initiative and Referendum Process to allow Texas people to participate directly in legislative initiatives. Submit this as a constitutional amendment. Proposed by State Affairs Committee member "Kit" Carson of Valley View as R-23.

11. Amend Chapter 102, Human Resources Code, Relating to the Rights of the Elderly to reflect changes resulting from nursing home reform legislation. Proposed through Retirement and Aging Committee by John Holtermann of San Marcos as R-11.

12. Pass a Statewide Guardianship Statute for Nursing Home Residents/Seniors to protect the elderly who currently risk abuse and neglect without guardians. Proposed by State Affairs Committee member May Della Everett of Haltom City as R-6.

13. Require Adult Foster Homes to be Licensed where the vulnerable elderly are cared for on a 24-hour basis. Proposed by Human Services Committee member Dorothy McDermott of LaMarque as R-41.

14. Educate Consumers on Long Term Health Care Insurance and to establish nonforfeiture in such insurance. Proposed by Human Services and Insurance Committee members Dorothy McDermott of LaMarque and Raymond Nolen of Fort Worth as R-40.

15. Oppose the Use of School Vouchers for Pay in Private Schools at Public Expense. Proposed by Education Committee member Clay Davis of Moody as R-3.



Three members of the Texas delegation to the National Silver Haired Congress will be (left to right): Silver Representative Arlie Horn from Beaumont, Silver Senator John Hawkins from Snook, and Silver Representative Bill Sagstetter from Rockport. TSHL Speaker Homer Lear of San Antonio will be the other Silver Senator at the NSHC. Silver Representatives (all from TSHL) will attend the Congress from all 30 Congressional Districts of Texas. Silver Congressmen from all 50 states are being asked to attend.

National Silver Haired Congress Convenes February 8 - 14, 1997

The first National Silver Haired Congress (NSHC) will be held near Washington, D.C., from February 8-14, 1997. It will convene at the Washington National Airport Hilton Hotel in Arlington, VA.

Registration forms have been mailed to those Texas Silver Haired Legislators who have been appointed as Senators and Congressmen from the TSHL Ranks. In order to guarantee hotel accommodations, the registration forms and a \$300.00 fee deposit were to be sent by December 20, 1996.

John Hawkins was elected Chairman of the Texas Delegation at a meeting in Austin on December 5, 1996. Felix Nigh is Co-Chairman, Randie Cook is Secretary and Elmer Ingle is Treasurer. Silver Senators are Hawkins and Homer Lear.

Registration for the NSHC is set at \$600.00, which includes two meals a day. Registration begins on February 8, followed by a Training Session, welcoming dinner and Regional Caucuses.

Complete funding is not yet certain for all the delegates, according to John Hawkins. Those attending have agreed to provide as much of their own funding as necessary.

Following Resolutions adopted at the 1995 White House Conference on Aging are also expected to be given priority at the 1997 NSHC Conference:

1. Full protection of current Social Security benefits.
2. Strong support for Medicare and Medicaid benefits presently enjoyed.
3. Reauthorization of all existing programs

- under the Older Americans Act.
4. Increased expenditures for all forms of Aging Research, especially Alzheimers.
5. Diversity of programs must be considered to fund rapid growth of elderly.
6. Long-term care must be essential element in future health care policies.
7. Help grandparents in their new and increasing caregiver roles.
8. Support senior volunteer efforts in communities across the country.
9. Special attention to issues related to older American Veterans.

Silver Bulletin

Published quarterly by the Texas Silver Haired Legislature, an advocacy group for the elderly.

HOMER W. LEAR, San Antonio
Speaker

FELIX NIGH, Houston
Speaker Pro Tem

TOM PERKINS, Smiley
Deputy Speaker Pro Tem
JEAN McCLOUD, Dallas
Secretary

HOWARD DUNAWAY, Gonzales
Comptroller

WILLIAM J. (BILL) SAGSTETTER
Editor

Other publications devoted to the elderly are invited to reprint articles from the *Silver Bulletin*. Material submitted for publication should be sent to 118 Oaktree Drive, Rockport, TX 78382. FAX: (512) 729-6939.

Speaker's Corner

BY HON. HOMER LEAR

Here are just a few quick items as we approach the legislative session of the 75th Texas Legislature.

It was my pleasure to have attended the 16th annual Legislative Session of the California Senior Legislature (CSL) in the assembly chambers of the state capitol in Sacramento the week of October 22, 1996.

With two exceptions, the TSHL and the CSL have the same mission/organization purposes. The CSL is funded through voluntary contributions made to the state income tax checkoff, line 49, the "California Fund for Senior Citizens". These monies are given to the Executive Director, California Commission on Aging, who controls the distribution and allocation of aging programs, including CSL.

The speaker of the CSL and I addressed the merits of funding our respective groups and concluded that with a non-partisan mission--the TSHL Foundation System is the best.

The other difference is that CSL has two bodies --40 Senior Senators and 80 Senior Assembly Members.

Approximately 115 proposals were debated during the week by the CSL. Some of the issues addressed in the proposals included long-term care and other related concerns, housing and transportation for elderly and senior advocacy programs. Ten state and four federal legislative proposals were adopted by the CSL as their top priorities.

It is now time to look forward and dream new dreams.

In that respect, we are approaching some very busy days before the committees of the regular legislature. During our recent Executive Committee meeting, we received good news from the TSHL Legislative Action Committee---that we have considerable support for our top 15 resolutions. Now we have to execute by appearing before the committees.

1997 TSHL Calendar

JANUARY 14 -- Texas Legislature convenes for 75th session in Austin.

FEBRUARY 8-14 -- National Silver Haired Congress holds initial organizational and orientation session in Arlington, VA.

MARCH 6 -- Executive Committee meeting of Texas Silver Haired Legislature in Austin.

MARCH 6 --(tentative) --Special Recognition Day for TSHL members during Texas Legislature Session at Capitol in Austin.

SEPTEMBER 9-12 -- General Session of Texas Silver Haired Legislature, MO Ranch, Hunt, TX.

February 28 Will Be Silver Directory Final Closing Date

Deadline for turning in advertisements for the 1997-98 *Silver Directory* will be February 28, according to Charlotte Parks, Chair of the Directory Committee. Other members of the committee include Claude Andrews, Dan Roberts and Allen Grobe. The Directory will be distributed in April.

New advertising rates have been approved at the price of \$500.00 for full pages inside, \$600.00 for covers, \$350.00 for half page and \$250.00 for quarter pages. These new rates will apply only for new advertisers, as old customers will retain the old rates from the 1995-96 Directory.

Ms Parks asked that no covers be sold without first clearing the sale with her. She can be reached at phone 903-852-6221 at Ben Wheeler. She has had the recommended sales brochure prepared by the Information Services Committee distributed to the membership. It is a useful mailer and leave-behind.

"It's time again for the production of the *Silver Directory*," said Charlotte. "I need your help as a Texas Silver Haired Legislator, because the funds we raise selling ads are for all of us to help pay TSHL expenses. All I ask is for you to try. As a team working together, we could far exceed the amount of money raised in the past."

"Make checks out to Texas Silver Haired Legislature and send with camera-ready ad copy to Joe McAlester, PO Box 927, Kilgore, TX 75663-0927."

Any questions concerning the Directory may be directed to Dan Roberts, President of TSHL Foundation, 2201 Park Place, Phone 817-927-2478, Fort Worth, TX 76110. He has assumed full responsibility for the *Silver Directory*:

At the December 5 Executive Committee meeting, Speaker Pro-Tem Felix Nigh strongly urged that alternate means of financing TSHL be adopted to assure the continuing flow of necessary funds for efficient operation.

Water Quality Protected by Efforts of Long-Time Silver Haired Legislator

Long-time Texas Silver Haired Legislator, Vernon Haverstick, of El Paso was the recipient of a 1996 Groundwater Hero Award, for his outstanding volunteer work in protecting drinking water resources on a binational level.

Haverstick has been in the TSHL for eight years and is the vice-chair of the Health and Human Services Committee. He is the author of the Number One Priority Resolution calling for expansion of the options for independent living.

At the Watershed '96 Conference in Baltimore, he was honored by the Groundwater Foundation, a national non-profit organization

dedicated to educating the public about the value and protection of wells, rivers and lakes that provide our drinking water.

The program has become one of RSVP's most far-reaching and meaningful projects. It has been replicated throughout Texas and the United States and has developed into an international cooperative between U.S. and Mexico.

Over the years, Haverstick has served as a mentor for University of Texas at El Paso students participating in AmeriCorps ground water protection projects.

Reprinted from an article in *Aging Texas* newsletter, September 30, 1996.

TSHL Publicity Is Getting Results

Public relations efforts of members of the Texas Silver Haired Legislature are resulting in increased recognition of our advocacy group.

This activity, combined with added mailings of the *Silver Bulletin*, has resulted in favorable publicity in El Paso, Dallas, Conroe, Houston, Amarillo, Fort Worth, Corpus Christi, Rockport, Valley View and other places. In addition, considerable space has been given to the priority resolutions in Senior newspapers and newsletters.

Aging Texas, official newsletter for the Texas Department on Aging, in its September 30 issue devoted a full page to summaries of the TSHL priority resolutions. *Gray-Gazette*, a regional newspaper, also gave a write up on the same subject. *Gray Gazette* then awarded the title of outstanding Senior of 1996 in Aransas County to TSHL member Bill Sagstetter of Rockport. Veteran TSHL member Delphia Griggs of Dallas was featured in a recent *Austin American -Statesman* article. Mourned by many, Delphia passed away in December. She was 84.

The *Silver Bulletin* with this issue has increased its press run (and postage bill) to accommodate additional mailings to all Texas Legislators, TSHL members, TDOA Texas Area Offices, major print and broadcast media and all known publications of Senior organizations.

In addition, regular news releases will be sent to all media when any TSHL event takes place. When suitable, photographs will accompany press releases. Local news releases by TSHL members can be tailored to feature TSHL members.

Bob Northington, TSHL member from Marble Falls, has photocopied page 3 of the October *Silver Bulletin* and used it as an enclosure with letters he is writing to Texas Legislators. In every issue of our newsletter, material can be found to be copied for enclosures or leave-behinds.

General Session Is September 9-12

The General Session of the Texas Silver Haired Legislature will be held at the MO Ranch at Hunt, Texas, September 9-12, according to W.G. West, Chairman of the Operations Committee.

The entire membership is expected to attend this meeting in the beautiful hill country of Texas. MO Ranch is near Kerrville, about 50 miles from San Antonio. It is a well equipped Dude Ranch, offering horseback riding, hiking, horseshoe pitching, swimming and other recreation. Fees for the three-day sojourn will include meals and will be \$125.00 per person for double occupancy and \$200.00 for singles. Spouses are welcome.

This meeting usually includes a review of the policies and proceedings of the Texas Silver Haired Legislature and recommendations for the future. Membership will be notified and sent registration forms later in the summer.

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