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***Silver Bulletin*, Volume XII, Number 1**

Texas Silver-Haired Legislature

William J. Sagstetter

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Silver Bulletin

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National Silver Haired Congress Meets February 23 in Capital

Plans are continuing for the second annual session of the newly formed National Silver Haired Congress. It will convene in the nation's capitol from February 23 through March 1. The National Airport Hilton Hotel in Arlington, VA, will be headquarters. Resources, Inc., will handle arrangements.

Homer Lear of San Antonio has been elected President Pro Tem of the NSHC Senate. He also is Chairman of the Legislative Committee. Texas state officers of NSHC include Felix Nigh, Chair; Hazel Wright, Vice Chair; and Elmer Ingle, Treasurer. Earl Landis is a Vice Director of Region 6. NSHC Silver Senators are Homer Lear and John Hawkins, who also is NSHC Director of Region 6.

Texas NSHC members who have indicated they will attend the meeting in the nation's capitol (and the Congressional District they represent) included the following as of January 19:

(1) Felix Gibson, Paris (2) Lee Roy Fillyaw, Newton (3) Jean McCloud, Dallas (4) Hazel Wright, Sherman (5) Rachael M. Beal, Fort Worth (6) Earl M. Landis, Arlington (7) Elmer Ingle, Willis (8) Alice Stubbs, Bryan (9) Arlie Horn, Beaumont (11) Aliceanne Wallace, Belton (12) James Von Tungeln, Cleburne (13)



HON. NEWT GINRICH, Speaker of the House of Representatives, addressed first annual NSHC in 1997.

Nikki Gatlin, Amarillo (14) Jetta Roberts, El Paso (16) Vernon Haverstick, El Paso (17) Earnest Hermann, Abilene (18) Felix Nigh, Houston (19) Lewis Marshall, San Antonio (20) Naomi Norton, Midland, (21) Glen Peterson, Boerne (22) Donnie Martin, Houston (23) Francine Johnson, Haskell (24) John O. Drivdahl, Waco (26) May Della Everett, Haltom City (27) W. Gaston West, Corpus Christi (28) Dorothy Truelove, Fort Worth (29) Carrie Jones, Houston and (30) Jim Cowgill, Dallas.

Many issues will be debated at the coming session of NSHC. Some of these include a Legitimate Trust Fund for Social Security, Older Americans Act passage of Title VII (both given top priority), Medicare Fraud Prevention, Campaign Finance Reform, Cola Equity for Retirement Programs, Long Term Insurance Tax Credit, A Geriatrics Commission, Consumer Protection in HMO's and S/S COLA vs Medicare Premium Increases.

The NSHC is now operating in 27 states, addressing the most pressing issues facing the adult population of the nation. It advocates those issues actively with significant influence with the United States Congress.

Prescription Costs Are Still Soaring

Ask anyone who pays for prescription drugs regularly if there is any inflation and he'll give you a vehement "yes".

Prescription drug prices rose at an annual rate of 2.9 percent in third quarter of 1997, up from the second quarter pace of 2.3 percent. Brand name pharmaceutical prices rose by 3.8 percent.

For consumers who bought their drugs at the pharmacy, retail prices rose 3.4 percent. Brand name drugs cost 4.5 percent more.

The higher drug prices in 1997 continued to exceed the overall inflation rate of about 2.2 percent in September.

As prices increased, so did drug sales—more than 17 percent during the third quarter to \$20.7 billion—up from the same period in 1996.

The inflation price estimates were released by IMS America Inc, a Plymouth Meeting, PA, research group.

Governor's Conference on Aging Dec. 1-3 Attracts Capacity Crowds in Austin

The Governor's Conference on Aging, held at the Austin Convention Center on December 1-3, 1997 attracted national attention and a capacity audience.

Welcoming speech was given by Texas Governor George W. Bush. He pointed out that the event provided a great opportunity for older people to meet, exchange and enhance knowledge.

"More than 2.5 million Texans, nearly 13 percent of our population, are over the age of 60," the governor said. "I commend the participants of this conference for their effort to provide older Texans with information and solutions to increase the quality of their lives. In today's world new ways to maintain and improve one's senior years are constantly evolving.

"The theme of the Conference, Aging: A Lifelong Journey, highlights the importance of early planning for healthy aging.

"Welcome to our capital city. Best Wishes for

a successful conference!"

Keynote speech was given by Michael Ryvarski, Senior vice President at Age Wave Communications Corporation. He was followed by Tom Sullivan, entertainer and author of "Sullivan's Rules".

More than 60 seminars and workshops at the conference included sessions on Assisted Living, Fraud and Scams, Medicare HMO's, Healthy Aging, Community Care Programs, Validation Therapy, Alzheimers Management, End of Life Decisions, Legal Aspects of Grandparenting, Sexuality and Aging, Hearing Disabilities, Elder Abuse, Volunteer Services, and Mental Health Treatment.

The Governor's Conference on Aging was sponsored by the Texas Department on Aging. Conference Coordinator Paula Johnson was commended by many for the excellent job she did, along with other personnel.

Silver Threads

By BILL SAGSTETTER

With the Super Bowl soon becoming history, football talk will now hike to a halt until next season. But there are some things about the changed rules that do not make any sense to some of us old leather helmet players. Here are rulings that are ridiculous:

"The ground cannot cause a fumble." Yes it can, if player running with ball falls hard enough. But a fumble is a fumble, no matter how it is caused. If it occurs before the umpire's whistle blows and the play is dead, then it should be ruled a fumble. On the ground or off the ground, if the ball carrier cannot hold it, then call a spade a spade and a fumble a fumble.

"Tackler is allowed to knock football from runner's hands deliberately."

Any such attempt should be ruled a foul and be given a 15-yard unsportsmanlike penalty. Dirty football should not be allowed to foul up the game.

One wonders some times if much of today's stress and nervous breakdowns are caused by overkill of the human brain capacity. A good example is the new computer technology now burgeoning in to older people's lives. If you have spent 50 or 60 years absorbing every new development in your profession, have had 12 to 20 years of schooling, attended dozens of seminars and adult education courses, you have endured change after change over decade after decade.

You now either are retired or are close to it. And looming over more voluminous, threatening to absorb your time and your mind, forcing you to accumulate a strange and confusing vocabulary, is the loaded computer technology. Small wonder that some seniors are asking to be downloaded!

The statement that media and politicians are making, that we do not now have significant inflation, seems to make little sense. Looking back only five years, compare the prices then with those now of things like prescription drugs, food, automobiles, residences, clothing, insurance and travel. And compare your present (retired) fixed income for the same period. We all know that we have less now to spend, and the necessities we purchase cost far more.

If this erosion of buying power isn't inflation, it's not a rose by any other name.

From the time his first book was published, I have been a fan of James Michener. His 1000-page masterpiece, *The Source*, ranks along with the Holy Bible as one of the greatest books ever written. Upon their high school graduation, we presented a copy of *The Source* to each of our four children. Another of his many fine books was *Texas*. Recently deceased, James Michener well deserved the "rest in peace" he is now enjoying. *Adios, amigo.*

Executive Committee Meeting of TSHL Reported

The Executive Committee of the Texas Silver Haired Legislature met in Austin on December 1, 1997, at the Austin Convention Center. Meeting was called to order by Speaker Homer Lear.

Ralph Teague gave the invocation, and minutes of the last committee meeting were approved. Visitors present included Helen Robinson, Margurite West, Joan Davis, Lee Roy Fillyaw, Dorothy Truelove and Harold Wright.

TSHL Comptroller Oris Greever reported that we had an opening balance of \$34,594.13, with disbursements in the amount of \$26,825.21 for a bank balance of \$7,768.92. Motion was made and seconded to accept the financial report. Motion passed.

Gaston West reported that three members

(Raymond Nolan, Amalie Long and Lillie Morse) paid the required money to attend the General Session at MO Ranch. Due to illness or deaths in the family, they were unable to attend. A motion was passed to reimburse these members a combined total of \$850.00, funds to come from the Operation Committee budget.

Charlotte Parks gave a report on the *Silver Directory* 1997-98 Edition. Charlotte was applauded for a job well done.

Other items: Reports were given by Areas as to how the Triple A's will handle the coming elections in May. Pete Shockey gave a proposed budget for the Seventh TSHL's consideration. Tom Perkins discussed the memorial cards as a way to raise money for the TSHL Foundation.

1998 TSHL CALENDAR

Feb. 23 — March 1 — National Silver Haired Congress convenes for second annual session at Arlington, VA.

February 27 — Petitions for TSHL candidacy must be turned into your Area Agency on Aging.

March 19 — TSHL Executive Committee scheduled for Austin, TX, 10:00 a.m., SW Bell Bldg.

May 26 — Ballots will be cast for election of TSHL candidates for two year terms.

July 26-31 — Orientation session of TSHL to be held in T.C. Jester Hall, University of Texas, Austin.

Sept. 14-18 — TSHL Legislative Session, House of Representatives, State Capitol, Austin.

Speaker's Corner

By HON. HOMER LEAR

Recently I was asked by the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission to address a series of questions regarding the operation of and relationship with TSHL and the six Texas Departments (TDH, CRHI, DHS, EDI, MHMR, TDOA). The Sunset Commission is charged with determining if an agency's functions continue to be needed, if those functions could be better performed by another agency, and if the agency's statue should be changed to improve its operation. The Commission will make recommendations in these areas to the 76th Texas Legislature.

I was not comfortable with addressing the specific questions; however, the following was included in my answer to the Commission.

"My observations are restricted to TDOA; however, my specific comment applies to each Agency i.e. 'There is no mandated leadership from the legislature.' This results in each Agency at all levels protecting its turf without direction, responsibility and/or authority. Yes, there is duplication of effort among the various groups and consolidation is the apparent answer."

On a new subject; The TSHL Executive Committee will meet on Thursday, March 19, 1998 at 10:00 a.m. Austin, Texas in the Southwestern Bell Building. We request that each area be prepared to discuss the election process in area and the number of candidates who have filed for office. All petitions for candidacy must be turned in to the appropriate Area Agency on Aging by the last day of February.

Another subject: What do you expect from the Seventh TSHL Session? Should you have some thoughts on this question, please send me a written note (with or without signature) for discussion at the Executive Committee meeting.

Happy New Year!

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

ORIS GREEVER, Abilene

Comptroller

WILLIAM J. (BILL) SAGSTETTER

Editor

Material submitted for publication in the *Silver Bulletin* is welcomed and should be sent to 118 Oaktree Drive, Rockport, TX 78382. FAX: (512)-729-6939. Publications devoted to the elderly are invited to reprint articles from the *Silver Bulletin*, with or without credit. Exchanges welcomed.

The Silver Haired Legislature Computer HOME PAGE is located at [<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/tshl>].

TSHL Members Landis and Everett Featured in Fort Worth Newspaper

Their interest in the Older Americans Act of 1965 has gained recognition for TSHL members Earl Landis and May Della Everett of the Tarrant County Area. A recent issue of the *Star Telegram* carried a story, from which excerpts follow:

Failure to reauthorize the Act in 1995 has resulted in bickering, and it has operated through a continuing resolution since then. In 1997 a total of \$1.44 billion was authorized for the fiscal year.

May Della and Earl know from experience that the future holds no guarantee. As members of the nonpartisan Texas Silver Haired Congress, they want the act reauthorized. It needs more funding as a sign of the nation's commitment to its elderly.

"Almost everything that has been done for seniors, like funding for the Area Agencies on Aging, stems from the Older American Act," said Landis. "Lately Congress has wanted to amend it, but it has become a political football."

Everett said, "We want the act as it is supposed to be, in its original form. We know it's an uphill battle. The process at the national level is much tougher than the state level. And while politics cannot enter into the things we do, we also have to make friends on both sides of the aisle."

The sixth Texas Silver Haired Legislature saw 16 of its 25 prioritized resolutions become the basis of state laws in 1997. Everett and Landis authored two of them.

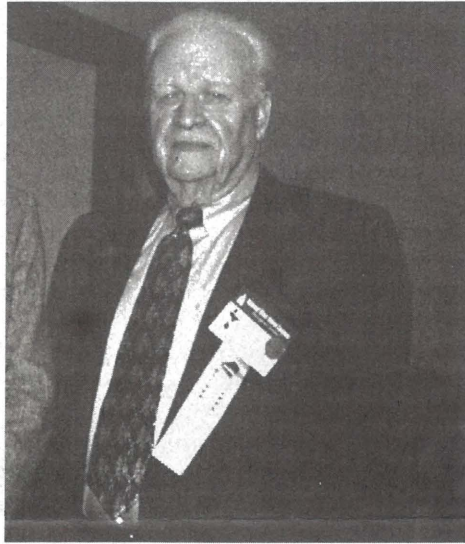
Everett's proposal for a guardianship statute for nursing home residents became part of the Senate bill 586. A Landis resolution directed at HMOs joined Senate Bill 386. It allows lawsuits against HMOs, expands patient protection, governs managed care rules and transfers oversight to the Department of Insurance from the Department of Health.

In the 1996 fiscal year, Texas received \$50.7 million of Congress \$838 million allocation—fourth in the nation behind California, New York and Florida, said James Grabb, an information officer with the Texas Department on Aging.

"One of the biggest disagreements is whether employment programs for seniors would be administered nationally, or by a split between state and national," said Grabb. There are also consolidation issues, as well as disagreement over funding formulas."

Landis has been active in TSHL, serving on the Legislative Action, Health & Human Resources and Communications Committees. He is also Vice Director of Region Six of the National Silver Haired Congress. May Della Everett has served with distinction as Chairman of the TSHL State Affairs Committee and a member of the Legislative Action Committee, plus belonging to NSHC.

Other TSHL members in Tarrant County include Howard Stone, William Bugeholl and Raymond Nelson, all from Fort Worth.



Earl Landis



May Della Everett

May Della Everett Gets Recognition

Veteran TSHL member May Della Everett of Haltom City on October 25 received well deserved recognition from the following story in the Fort Worth *Star Telegram*:

Throughout her life, adoption has been a constant for octogenarian May Della Everett.

More specifically, Everett was on intimate terms with the Gladney Center, the international nonprofit agency that is celebrating 110 years in the adoption business this weekend.

"When I retired, I said I had the start of my life and the end of my career at Gladney," Everett said in an interview from her home in Haltom City.

Shortly after she was born in her aunt's Abilene home in 1917, Everett was placed with the Texas Children's Home and Aid Society in Fort Worth.

She was adopted by a couple who lived in Stephens County, grew up there, graduated from Texas Tech and started teaching in 1940.

Within a few years, Everett had moved to Fort Worth, and in 1985 she retired as principal of New Lives, the Fort Worth school district's school for pregnant students, and as principal of the district-certified school at the Gladney Center, the descendant of the Texas Children's Home and Aid Society.

In between infancy and academic retirement, Everett adopted a son, Bill, although not through Gladney. "He's my life," Everett said of her son, youth minister at Western Hills Church of Christ.

Today and this evening, May Della will be among the more than 1,000 adults and children from around the world who are expected to attend Gladney's 110th anniversary and homecoming. By invitation only, events will include a carnival, parade and circus on the Gladney campus at 2300 Hemphill Street.

TSHL Election Process

On page 11 of the TSHL Election & Credentials Manual, the following procedures and dates are listed:

January—Candidates may begin picking up candidacy forms and petitions from Area Agency Aging offices.

February—All petitions for candidacy must be turned in to the appropriate AAA. Petitions must meet the authorized regulations.

March 17—Deadlines for submission of ballots for printing.

April 21—Ballots distributed to AAA and other authorized distribution points.

May 1-21—Absentee ballots may be filed.

May 26—Election will be held for all TSHL candidates for two year terms.

Check your nearest AAA office for details.

AGING FACTS

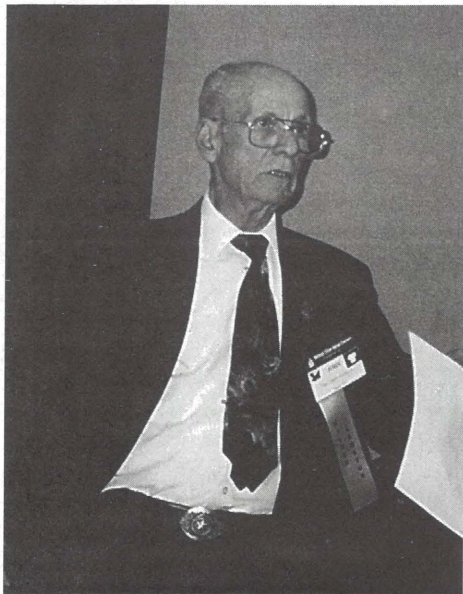
+ In 1900 average life expectancy was 47. Today it is 76.

+ About 60,000 people topped age 100 last year. And four million beat 85, almost double that of 1980.

+ By 2020 the U.S. Bureau of Census expects 214,000 centenarians and seven to eight million people over 85.

+ One in nine Baby Boomers may live to be 100 years old. At the end of World War II, only one in 500 made it.

+ Women typically live six years longer than men.



John Hawkins

Social Security Group Appoints John Hawkins

John Hawkins, Silver Senator from Texas for the National Silver Haired Congress, has been named a State Advocate Representative (STAR) for Texas.

"We chose John Hawkins because he has demonstrated exceptional abilities as an activist for seniors," President Martha McSteen said of the Snook resident. National Committee volunteers have been chosen for each state. Duties will include representing the National Committee at state events, communicating with other advocacy groups in the state, and informing the National Committee about important news affecting seniors at state level.

National Committee staff members traveled from Washington to host a Texas two day orientation session to prepare Hawkins for the new position.

The National Committee to Preserve Social Security has more than 5.5 million members and supporters nation-wide, including 280,000 in Texas. It may be contacted at 10G Street, NE, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20002, Phone 1-800-998-0180.

Hawkins pointed out that important legislation concerning Social Security is now being considered by our national congress.

Above story was excerpted from an article in the *Burleson County Citizen Tribune*.

Hawkins served several terms as a TSHL delegate from Snook in the Brazos Valley Area. He was one of the key planners and founders of the National Silver Haired Congress and has been Region 6 Director and a Silver Senator from Texas. Region 6 includes Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

Communications Committee Responsibility and Duties Re-worded in Policy & Procedures Manual of TSHL

At the September 9, 1997, General Session of the Texas Silver Haired Legislature, new wording was approved for the functions of the (newly re-named) Communications Committee.

The copy on page 18 of the TSHL Policy & Procedures Handbook should now be replaced with the following wording:

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Communications Committee will be responsible for internal and external communications that reflect the image of TSHL. Any project that provides information to help the smooth and efficient operation of this organization should be supervised by this committee.

Primary responsibilities of the committee involve the prompt preparation, printing and distribution of a regularly scheduled official publication—such as a bulletin, news letter or magazine. Kind of publication and its frequency will be decided by the committee, subject to approval by the Executive Committee. Ideas for funding of such a publication should originate with or be approved by the Communications Committee.

Any matter that concerns the public image of TSHL is under the jurisdiction of the Communications Committee. This can involve news releases, press conferences, receptions, speeches, TSHL promotional brochures, form letters, Computer Web pages and official statements of policy. Such activities must originate with or be approved by this committee. Local or area press releases are at the discretion of individual TSHL members, but must not contain any declaration of TSHL policies. After issuance, such local news releases should be copied to the committee chair.

Maintaining a cordial relationship with other

senior organizations is a function of this committee. This includes exchanging of publications, news releases and resolutions. Committee members should publicize locally and regionally that they are available to speak before any group.

Within 90 days following the Legislative Session of TSHL, the Communications Committee Chair will present a comprehensive plan of action, and a budget, to the Executive Committee of TSHL for review and comment.

As listed in the 1997-98 *Silver Directory*, present members of the TSHL Communications Committee include: Tom Adams, Allegra Bush, Walter Carroll, Calvin Stewart, Viola V. de La Rosa, Charlynnne Elliot, De Lois Garrett, Harrison Holloway, Sallie Johnson, Antoinette Lucania, Dorothy McDermott, Bill Sagstetter, Ralph L. Neubert, Lydia Piper, Earl Robinson, Jo Ruthart, Ingram Smith, Charlotte Parks, Howard Stone, William Zermeno, Earl Landis and George Boyd Turner, and Elizabeth Hieken.

As with other Administrative Committees, following each biennial election, TSHL members from each Area/District shall meet to assign one of their number to the Communications Committee.

One of each of four members from each district shall be assigned to each of the four Administrative Committees. If elections have been held in each district, then 29 persons will have been assigned to each of the Administrative Committees of TSHL.

Some of the current Administrative Committees do not have 29 members listed in the *Silver Directory* because this procedure was not followed in 1996.

For further details, see "Procedures for the Formation of Administrative Committees" on page nine of the TSHL Policy & Procedures Handbook.

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