Little people

Newly weds Steve Nerden, four feet, two inches tall, and wife Patricia, four feet, say their biggest problem is not their size, but finding a job. "We don't figure we're handicapped. . .we just figure it's harder than anything to get a job," said Nerden. The couple is seated on a chair with its legs cut off to accommodate their size. Their home is in Boulder, Colo. (AP Wirephoto)

Legislators Respond to Ratings

Most Disclaim Knowledge of Investigating Group

By LORETTA FULTON
State Editor

Big Country legislators Tuesday responded to their voting records on environmental issues and most said they had never heard of the organization which rated them.

The Texas League of Conservation Voters Monday said that 78 of 181 members of the 1975 legislature either voted "wrong" on six key environmental issues, failed to vote or voted "right" only once.

"I never heard of them," State Sen. Tom Creighton of Mineral Wells said. "I don't know anything about them and I don't care." The league said Creighton cast three "bad" votes, one "good" vote and was absent on one issue.

Sen. Ray Farabee of Wichita Falls said he wasn't familiar with the group either but did know of the league's coordinator, Ned Fritz. Farabee said he disagrees with Fritz's opinions but added, "I respect his sincerity."

The league said Farabee cast four "bad" votes and one "good" one. Farabee said he thinks the ratings are misleading. He said the league seems to think that if a legislator votes contrary to the league's point of view, he is voting against the environment.

"We have to protect the environment but we have to approach it reasonably and on an area by area basis," he said.

For example Farabee voted for a resolution asking Congress to stop enforcement of environmental laws until the energy crisis is over.

Farabee said he thinks many times Congress is unrealistic and insensitive in certain situations. Laws are passed for the entire country which realistically are applicable in one area and not another, he said.

"I hope this (the resolution) did something to wake them up," he said.

Rep. Mike Ezzell of Snyder was given a "wrong" vote on all six issues.

"I felt like the votes I cast reflected the interests of my area," he said.

The league said Rep. David Stubbeman of Abilene cast four "bad" votes and "two" good votes. Stubbeman said that he had never heard of the league either.

The league said Rep. Elmer Martin of Colorado City had five "bad" votes and "one" good vote. Martin, also, was not familiar with the Texas League of Conservation Voters.

Martin said he was vice chairman of the environmental committee and pointed out that it passed the state's first strip mining bill.

Martin said he thinks West Texas voters should be commended for the way they voted.

Rep. Lynn Nabers of Brownwood was given a rating of four "bad" votes, one "good" vote and one "no vote."

"I'm sorry I've never heard of them," Nabers said. Nabers said he was surprised the league had even rated him.

"They didn't contact me on any votes," he said.

Other Big Country legislators rated by the league were Sen. Grant Jones of Abilene, four "bad," one "good"; and Rep. Joe Hanna of Breckenridge, six "bad." Both were out of town and unavailable for comment.

The six issues were: 1. a resolution asking Congress to stop enforcement of environmental laws until the energy crisis is over; 2. a constitutional amendment doubling the amount of water development funding without environmental restraints; 3. a second vote on the water bonds amendment; 4. a motion to table an amendment making the land commissioner, rather than soil conservation districts, the regulator of strip mining of iron, sand and gravel; 5. a motion to table an amendment giving any person the right to oppose permit application in the strip mining bill; and 6. a motion to table an amendment "gutting" the regulation of uranium strip mining.

Christians Retain Sexuality, Dallas Preacher Says

By DAN McDONALD
Associated Press Writer

DALLAS (AP) — Christians don't lose their sexuality just because they are Christians, the founder of the nation's largest religious organization for homosexuals said Tuesday.

"We don't ask people about their sexual orientation when they come in the front door," the Rev. Troy Perry, of Los Angeles, moderator of the Universal Fellowship of the Metropolitan Community Church, told a news conference.

"We're not a homosexual church," said Perry, who added that he expects 2,500 persons to attend the organization's annual meeting here which ends Sunday.

"Christ died for our sins, not our sexuality," Perry said following the organization's opening worship service attended by over 600 persons—both lesbians and male homosexuals.

Perry said his group has over 17,000 members in 89 church centers in eight countries. He said when he held his first church service in 1968 the total membership numbered 12 persons.

"I believe established churches have utterly failed in reaching out to homosexuals," Perry said. "Many homosexuals who go to their minister, priest or rabbi to talk about their situations usually are met with hysteria."

"We (the church) honestly fill a need in the community," he said.

"The difference between our church and the established churches is that when you're Christian we feel you don't lose your sexuality," said Perry, who has said he left his wife, two children and the Pentecostal church because he was disillusioned.

Perry said his organization and its members have been treated courteously by people in Dallas. "We want them to know we're not freaks or child molesters," he said.

Lack of Funds Deprives Abilene of Convention Bids

A shortage of funds by the Abilene Convention and Visitors Bureau may have cost the city two successful convention bids this month, the ACVB manager said Tuesday.

Richard Marcentel told the board of directors that he could not justify the expense of out-of-town presentations to a national field archery association and a Corpus Christi group of 250 planning a convention.

After Marcentel's announcement, the board of directors passed a resolution authorizing ACVB president Cal Young to release funds from the bureau's surplus should a promising bid opportunity come up.

Marcantel said of the national field archery meeting, "If we had more money to work with, we could have gotten them."

Ray Little, an ACBV member, responded, "If we are losing conventions we should go into the surplus. Attracting conventions is the purpose of us being in business."

The ACVB listed a $30,000 cash position as of May 31, which included certificates of deposit in excess of $20,000. The bureau expects to remain within its $60,000 budget this year, according to treasurer John Hatchel.

New ACVB board members installed Tuesday were Raydell Bishop, manager of Wyatt's Cafeteria; Bobbie Ohre, co-owner of Taco Bell; Jan Davis, owner of the Inn; and Pat Kasimirs, owner and manager of the Royal Inn.

Bishop is president and Ohre is secretary of the Texas Restaurant Assn., Abilene chapter, while Davis is president of the Abilene Hotel-Motel Assn., and Kasimirs is secretary of the organization.

In other business, Charles Parsley, chairman of the advertising committee, said planning for the upcoming Cowboy Campfire Cook-Off here Labor Day "is better off" than at the same time last year.

Common Cause Rejects Freebies

AUSTIN, Tex. (AP) — Common Cause Inc. told state officials and legislators Tuesday that its interpretation of a new law prohibits them from accepting free plane rides or even a free meal.

Common cause, a privately-financed organization calling itself a "citizens lobby," said in a letter to all state officials and legislators that the old law on campaign reporting "only required reporting contributions and expenditures related to campaigning for office.

The new law requires all office holders, whether a candidate or not, to file on Jan. 15 of each year contributions received and expenditures made in the performance of their duties or activities in connection with the office they hold, which are not reimbursable by the state.

Texas Hospitals May Form Own Insurance Company

By GARTH JONES
Associated Press Writer

AUSTIN (AP) — The Texas Hospital Association said Tuesday it does not want to get into the insurance business but is taking the step to keep Texas hospitals from paying "unreasonable" rates for malpractice insurance.

"Texas hospitals can no longer afford the luxury of inadequate and overpriced malpractice insurance markets," said Ray Hurst, president of the association at a news conference formally announcing formation of the Reciprocal Insurance Exchange.

The association, which represents 675 Texas hospitals and health care facilities, plans to file a charter Friday for a nonprofit insurance company that would be owned and operated for member hospitals by the Texas Hospital Association.

"We anticipate that our insurance company will be the prime writer of hospital professional liability insurance in Texas," Hurst said. "Our company will write the entire liability coverage for our member hospitals. In turn our company will cede or place a portion of the coverage on each hospital with other carriers such as the Joint Underwriting Association and other major insurance companies."

Dean Davis, legal counsel for the association, told the news conference that the new company hopes to be operating by Oct. 1, or perhaps even Sept. 1, because there may be 75 Texas hospitals without insurance by that time.

Davis said the current insurance firms writing malpractice coverage for hospitals, primarily Argonaut Insurance Co., have sent out a number of cancellation notices to hospitals. "We have indications there probably will be 75 hospitals cancelled out by Oct. 1, maybe Sept. 1....We plan to be in operation Oct. 1 but if there are too many cancellations we will have to try to be ready by Sept. 1."

Hurst said one reason the new company could offer lower rates "is because we do not have to look for 15 to 20 per cent profit for our stockholders like the others. We will be geared solely for hospital problems. Malpractice insurance is just a sideline with most companies now."

Harry Stuth, casualty insurance consultant for the new firm, estimated the Reciprocal Insurance Exchange could offer malpractice insurance to hospitals at 15 to 20 per cent below current rates. "Hopefully about 50 hospitals, maybe 200, will find it advantageous to belong," he said.

Loyalists Want Reunion With Mother England

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Now, upon ground once trod by Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson, comes a counter-revolutionary band of loyalists who would finally return prodigal America to the forgiving arms of Mother England.

Already these latter-day Tories have collected $83 and the support of 150 U.S. citizens who envision a happier life in a colony restored. If only another 200 million or so sign up, their petition may be ready for the Queen when she arrives for a Bicentennial visit next July.

Otherwise, the Bicentennial will be nothing but "a big fake, a piece of propaganda trying to cover up the mistakes we've made," says John T. Ambrose, co-founder of the Committee for Reunion with England.

"It's time we realized that the Revolution was nothing more than the self-serving acts of a bunch of hotheads and caused a lot of problems for this country which now can be corrected only by reunion."

According to the committee's Declaration of Reunion, the corruption and injustice which have troubled America's 199 years could have been avoided if the rebels had only been patient enough to work within the system.

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