



Battalion photo by Steve Lee

One of the reasons the economy of Bryan-College Station is booming is the rash of construction projects around the area. This project is the Bryan Building and Loan (BB&L) building near the corner of Villa Maria and Texas Avenue in Bryan.

**Kids get ahead**

**Head Start a hit**

By STEVE LEE  
Battalion Reporter

Both A&M Consolidated and Bryan school districts believe in giving certain pre-school children a head start before entering kindergarten.

In fact, "Head Start" is the name of a program implemented by both school districts, designed to give disadvantaged children preparation for elementary school.

The program is funded by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare with funds from the Office of Child and Human Development in Dallas.

The two school districts share the money, with Consolidated being the grantee agency and Bryan the delegate agency.

For this fiscal year, the total figure given to the districts for Head Start is in excess of \$150,000. Approximately \$70,000 of that is sent to the Bryan school district, says Dr. H.R. Burnett, assistant superintendent of Consolidated.

The children in the program usually start at age three and continue two years to facilitate a smooth entry into kindergarten.

To determine eligibility, the children from both school districts are screened to ascertain if they are from families that are economically deprived or without the benefit of education. Physically and mentally handicapped children are also screened for inclusion.

No more than 10 percent of the students can be from higher-income families. There are 16 handicapped students enrolled at Consolidated with seven of those being from higher-income families.

Burnett outlined four purposes of the program—to provide educational development, health services, nutritional information and to encourage parental involvement.

Bryan holds an eight-week summer session for Head Start children with half-day classes.

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**B-CS unemployment among nation's lowest**

By CHARLES HARPER  
Battalion Reporter

Probably a lot of folks still think of Bryan-College Station as a whistle stop and a collection of small shops.

In truth, the area is a growing metropolis with an economy to match.

In June, figures from the Department of Labor, published through the Texas Employment Commission, show employment in the area up 11 percent over the last year.

O.H. Patterson, labor market analyst for TEC, says even at these rates the labor force does not meet the community's demand.

On the other hand, the unemployed in the Brazos county area were estimated to comprise 3.5 percent of the labor force, according to TEC sources. The figure is down from last year's rate of 4.7 percent.

Current figures are lower than both state and national figures 5.2 and 6.3 percent, respectively. In 1977 as a whole, Bryan-College Station ranked fourth lowest nationwide in unemployment.

However, per capita income of Bryan-College Station ranked 258th

out of 265, was among the lowest in the nation.

Sources at the State Comptroller's office credit this low figure to the fact that the student population, consisting largely of non-wage earners, is counted in the local census.

Since the per capita figure is derived by dividing annual personal income by total population of an area, this would produce a misleadingly low per capita income.

Figures compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Statistics indicate that Bryan-College Station is a good place to do business—for some

businesses. Those enjoying the greatest amount of prosperity are non-manufacturing businesses, with eating and drinking places at the top

and insurance and mining companies among those doing the least business.

In the first quarter of 1977 places to buy food and-or drink had a

gross income of almost \$7 million, according to Department of Commerce figures published by the state comptroller's office. Food stores were next, doing a whopping \$16 million business.

Many local bankers say that although the oil industry's entry to the local community may have sig-

nificant results in the long run, much of the economy still hinges on Texas A&M University.

Bankers say that business has been booming, but will probably level off. One banker went so far as to say that the local economic welfare is directly related to the enrollment at Texas A&M.

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