

Vacated House seats draw crowds

United Press International
AUSTIN — Texas congressmen aspiring to higher office in the Senate have left vacancies in U.S. House seats that have generated crowded races for Saturday's party primaries.
 Republican Reps. Phil Gramm and Ron Paul and Democratic Rep. Kent Hance all have left their seats in Congress up for grabs by entering the race to succeed retiring GOP Sen. John Tower.
 The Democrats are anxious to seize Gramm's seat back from the GOP, which took over the seat when Gramm switched parties last year and won a special election as a Republican.
 The three Democrats vying for the seat include former state Rep. Dan Kubiak of Rockdale, a businessman-rancher who lost to Gramm; former Fort Worth

Mayor Hugh Parmer, now a state senator; and Duncanville businessman Jesse M. "Rip" Van Winkle.
 The GOP primary has drawn four candidates: Max Hoyt, a Conroe businessman; Patsy Hale Friedrichs, a Navasota real estate broker and wife of a county GOP chairman; Joe Barton, an Ennis engineer; and Bob Harris, a Bryan attorney.
 In Paul's staunchly conservative, Republican district in Houston, six GOP candidates are vying for a spot in the general election against one of two Democratic primary candidates.
 The Republicans are Dr. Joe Agris, a Houston plastic surgeon; J.C. Helms, a Bellaire businessman; Gary Engebretson, a Sugar Land business executive; Tom DeLay, a state legislator and businessman from

Sugar Land; Don Richardson, a Houston businessman; and Ellen Heath.
 The two Democrats are Houston government analyst W. Douglas Williams and Jim Mooney, a Pearland chemical plant analyst.
 The third crowded race affected by the Senate campaigns is in the Lubbock area, where eight candidates are entered in primary contests.
 The Democrats are Gary D. Condra, a Lubbock agricultural economist; Don Richards, a Lubbock attorney; and Lubbock farmers Delwin Jones and Thomas Richards. In the GOP race are Tom Schaefer of Lubbock; Larry Combest, a former aide to Tower and son of a Panhandle farmer; Ron Fleming, a Lubbock certified public accountant; and Richard Wilder,

a retired military man from Lubbock.
 Three races have candidates in only the Democratic party primary, meaning the candidate who wins Saturday will be virtually assured of the seat before the November election.
 Those races include districts represented by House Majority Leader Jim Wright of Fort Worth, who faces Janet Leach in the primary, and Dallas Rep. Martin Frost, who is opposed by Dan Leach.
 Democrat Charles Wilson of Lufkin, a target of a Capitol Hill drug use investigation last year, faces four Democratic opponents in another race without GOP contenders. His opponents are Mitchell A. Hickman, a Silsbee real estate salesman; Jerry K. Johnson, a Nacogoches businessman-rancher;

Lloyd T. Dickens, a Livingston school consultant; and William B. Duncan of Livingston.
 The GOP also fielded no candidates in the South Texas district held by incumbent Rep. Abraham "Chick" Kazen, who faces former Bexar County Judge Albert Bustamante and Laredo professor Stanley C. Green in the primary.



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Testimony begins today in alien transporting case

United Press International
BROWNSVILLE — A federal jury was impaneled Thursday to try a Colorado religious activist on charges she transported two illegal Salvadoran aliens around Border Patrol checkpoints.
 Stacy Lynn Merkt, 29, has pleaded innocent on grounds she was following her religious convictions and that the Salvadorans were not illegal aliens, but instead were bonafide refugees from the war in Central America.
 The case that is being closely watched by members of the so-called Sanctuary Movement that has been affording refuge to Central Americans denied political asylum by the U.S. Government.

U.S. District Judge Filemon Vela scheduled testimony to begin today in the trial in which defense attorney Daniel Sheehan, who represented the family of Karen Silkwood, has indicated he will attempt to try the morality of U.S. involvement in Central America.
 A member of the Bijou House religious community in Colorado Springs, Merkt has

has actively protested against U.S. military policy and condemns the government's current role in Central America.
 She has been arrested twice in Colorado — once at a protest at an ordinance factory and another time when she chained herself to the chapel door at the Air Force Academy to protest a church being located at a military establishment.
 A Catholic nun arrested along with Merkt, two adult Salvadorans and a Dallas newspaper reporter, may testify as government witnesses in the trial.
 The Justice Department never sought an indictment against Dallas Times Herald re-

porter Jack Fischer, saying it wanted to investigate further whether he had any intention of violating the law. Fischer was working on a story about the Sanctuary Movement, which immigration officials term a modern-day version of the "Underground Railroad."
 Last week, Assistant U.S. Attorney Jack Wolfe announced that Sister Dianne Muhlenkamp, 36, of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ at Fort Wayne, Ind., had entered in an agreement termed a "pre-trial diversion," a form of deferred adjudication in which she might never be tried.

VOTE MAY 5th

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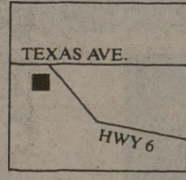
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