

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"Haven't you ever been curious about how much foam is in one of these things?"

Commissioner charged in bribery scheme

Associated Press

CONROE — Montgomery County Commissioner Weldon Locke was charged with bribery Tuesday in connection with an alleged scheme in which thousands of dollars in expenses were submitted for work not done, a prosecutor said.

District Attorney Peter Speers said County Auditor Marilyn Thomason was suspended Tuesday morning by district court judges, so financial records in her office could be examined.

Justice of the Peace Gary Collier submitted his resignation Tuesday morning and agreed to cooperate with prosecutors, Speers said.

Bond was set at \$20,000 for Locke, who was arrested Tuesday by Texas Rangers. Locke was taken into custody at Thomason's house, where Speers said the commissioner had been living.

Invoices approved Monday by Montgomery County commissioners involved invoices for \$8,800 submitted by Locke for traffic, road and signal maintenance work that was not done, Speers said.

A woman who answered the phone at the Montgomery County auditor's office, but would not give her name, said the office was closed Tuesday by order of district court judges.

GOP claims poll shows White vulnerable

Associated Press

AUSTIN — The battle of opinion polls began Tuesday in the 1986 governor's race, the day after the Democratic and Republican parties found out who all the players would be on May 3.

The filing deadline for places on the primary ballot passed Monday with five Democrats challenging Gov. Mark White for the party nomination.

The winner will face the survivor of a three-way Republican primary.

State GOP Chairman George Strake said Tuesday that a new poll taken in mid-December, financed by his party, "indicated the next governor of Texas will be chosen in the Republican primary."

White's pollster, based in New

York, disagreed with the GOP report.

"We polled 600 likely voters Jan. 10, and 52 percent said they would choose Gov. White over 41 percent for Bill Clements if the election was held right now," said Dick Morris, who also was pollster for White in his successful 1982 defeat of Clements.

"Right now, Mark White would defeat Bill Clements by a wider margin than he did in 1982," Morris said.

Strake refused to name a choice from the field of former Gov. Bill Clements, U.S. Rep. Tom Loeffler and former U.S. Rep. Kent Hance.

Strake said a Washington-based polling firm, hired by the national GOP, contacted 880 registered voters in Texas — 41 percent Republi-

cans, 44 percent Democrats. The rest were independents.

"Fifty-two percent of the voters said Mark White has not performed well enough to deserve re-election and they believe it is time to elect someone else as governor of Texas," Strake told a news conference.

On another subject, Strake said the Texas Republican Party showed big gains Monday with record numbers of GOP candidates running in Dallas and Harris counties. He said there would be a total of 145 Republican candidates on the primary ballot in Dallas County, 88 in the Houston area and 36 in San Antonio.

Strake said there are a total of 75 candidates for the Texas House of Representatives including most of the 55 Republican incumbents.

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