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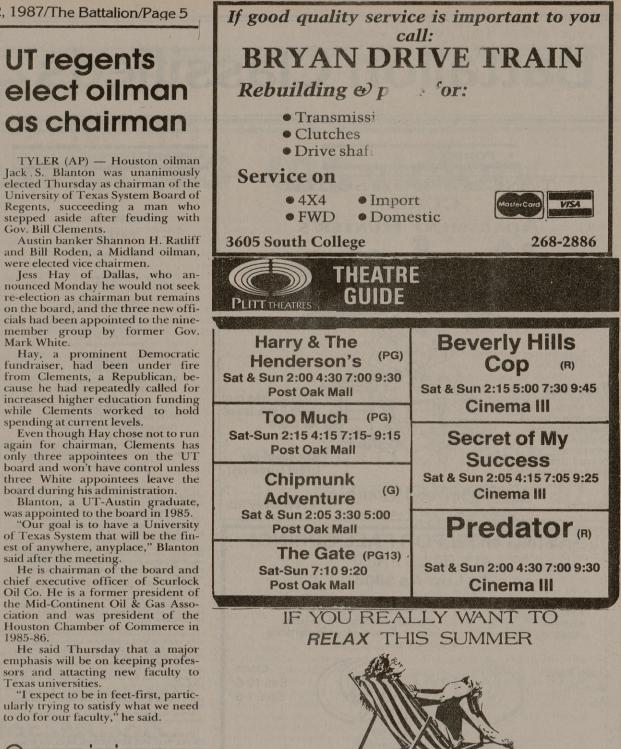
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ocal residents turn out to catch a last glimpse of Bryan City Councilman Ben Hardeman and riends on the evening before their departure on a

10,000-mile round trip to Alaska from Bryan. The group will be driving 10 model-T Fords and will take about two months to complete the voyage.

Photo by Robert W. Rizzo

Two more Texas banks fail; stagnant economy blamed



Commissioner: Bill will make highways safer

1985-86.

Texas universities.

AUSTIN (AP) — A bill awaiting the signature of Gov. Bill Clements would help make Texas highways the safest in the nation with regard to trucks, Railroad Commissioner John Sharp said Thursday.

"I think this legislation lays the foundation for us having the safest highways in the nation with regard to the trucking industry," he said. A trucking deregulation bill pushed by Sharp in the recent Legis-lotune ups amound at his recent

ature was amended, at his request,

to include safety provisions. Sharp said the bill would autho-rize the Railroad Commission to register many commercial vehicles that now do not have commission permits, and when the Department of Public Safety issues a ticket to a driver it would note the name of the trucking company as well. The measure would authorize the

commission to levy stiff penalties for safety violations. The deregulation portion of the bill would allow trucking companies

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Banking regulators shut down two more banks and a avings and loan association Thursday, the latest victims f soured loans, poor management and the stagnant exas economy

The failures bring to 31 the number of banks that ave collapsed in Texas this year, eclipsing the national ecord the state set last year with 26. Four savings and pans have now been shut down in the state

First State Bank of Milford and Northwest Commeral N.A. in Houston were closed and the Federal Deosit Insurance Corp. named as receiver, FDIC spokes-nan Bill Olcheski said.

In Texarkana, meanwhile, regulators declared Secuity Savings Association insolvent, citing bad lending practices and speculative land purchases, Federal Home Loan Bank Board spokesman Paul Olkhovsky. The S&L — which had \$424 million in assets — was a

ate-chartered stock association with 10 offices in East exas. It will reopen Friday as a federally chartered nutual association with the same name, and no one lost oney in the transfer, Olkhovsky said.

"I will not rule out a criminal investigation" against he S&L's former directors, Clifton Brannon Jr. and Don G. Jones, he said.

"After those two acquired the S&L in August 1983, it rew rapidly by 557 percent in 27 months, from \$110 illion in July 1983 and \$431 million in September 985," Olkhovsky said.

The S&L collapsed because of speculative land acquitions, development and construction loans, as well as eckless and imprudent lending practices, he said.

Meanwhile in Milford, 50 miles south of Dallas, Ellis ounty State Bank will assume about \$6.4 million in

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1,400 deposit accounts at First State Bank and will purchase all of the failed bank's assets at a discount of \$1.45million, Olcheski said.

First State Bank, with total assets of \$6.6 million, was closed by State Banking Commissioner Kenneth W. Littlefield.

Littlefield said a high concentration of poor-quality loans extended by a former bank executive to a number of out-of-area borrowers resulted in losses far exceeding the bank's capital accounts.

The bank's directors and shareholders were unable to replenish the capital funds, and no new investors found to purchase and recapitalize the bank, Littlefield said.

The FDIC also approved the assumption of the deposit liabilities of Northwest Commercial, with assets of \$12.1 million, by Jersey Village Bank of Houston. The failed bank's two offices will not reopen, but its

customers can do business at Jersey Village Bank beginning Friday, he said. Northwest Commercial Bank was closed by Kevin Blakley, director for special supervision for the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.

Northwest had a substantial increase in problem loans that resulted from imprudent lending practices of former management and poor supervision of lending practices, officials said. The declining local economy also contributed to its problems.

The Texarkana S&L was the sixth S&L to close this year in the Dallas federal home loan district, which in-cludes Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico and Texas. Eighty-eight banks have closed nationally this year.

to vary their rates 15 percent below or above a base set by the commission on shipments of 10,000 pounds or more. Between 500 and 10,000 pounds, rates could vary 5 percent. The bill bans predatory pricing. "There are shippers that do not

mind shipping overweight because they're not going to get the ticket," Sharp said in a Capitol news conference. "There are trucking companies that don't mind ordering their drivers to speed — to go recklessly through Houston and Dallas and Victoria and every other place in the state, because it is that driver that's going to get the ticket.

"That has changed, and what we're here to tell those trucking company owners, those shippers and those drivers is that the day of the Texas 'road warrior' is history, and that what they face now is not just administrative penalties of up to \$10,000 but they also face the ability of the Railroad Commission, working with the Department of Public Safety, to put them out of business." He also said that in six months or

year he might compile a list of the 10 or 20 best and worst trucking companies and "let the public judge whether they're serving the public interest.

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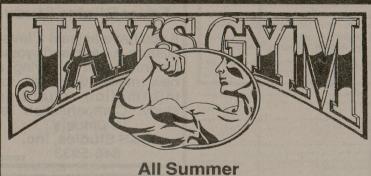
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