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Transportation News

NOVEMBER 1979

FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE TEXAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



Public Transportation Advisory Committee members Ellis Watkins, Bob Farris and Jim Fisher explain their recommendations to the Transportation Planning Division staff.

Learning Transit's Problems

□ In an effort to provide better guidance and support for the public transportation sector in the state, the Department sponsored a special meeting of the Public Transportation Advisory Committee in Austin Oct. 10.

"We are, all of us, increasing our knowledge of one another's problems, and the whole idea is serving the people of Texas with a good transportation system," Engineer-Director Luther DeBerry told representatives of the taxicab

owners, the intercity bus operators and the transit industry. "It's going to take the concerted effort of everyone and every related industry to accomplish this matter, with the growth of Texas and the reduction in *natural resources or fuel resources.*"

Although there was a great deal of discussion as to how the Department could help the various transportation industries with State legislation and recommendations on federal regulations, the overriding topic of interest was fuel allocations.

"We are recommending that the Department set up a system whereby it could serve as a go-between for the users of the fuel in public transportation and the Governor's Committee on Energy when the users have been unable to effect a satisfactory solution," Bob Farris told the Administration on behalf of the Intercity Bus Operators Committee. "We couldn't get fuel. We would do what we were instructed to do and call the Governor's Committee on Energy Allocation, but the phones were tied up. It might have taken two or three days before our phone calls were returned."

"The continued increase in the cost of diesel fuel is an alarming problem with us," Ellis Watkins said on behalf of the Transit Industry

Advisory Committee. "If I may use Dallas as an example, a one cent increase per gallon means \$40,000 on an annual basis. We've seen this price escalate from about 11 cents to where it is today. That is a tremendous problem."

"We would ask that a resolution be drawn up to add the taxicab industry to those receiving their fuel needs rather than a basic allotment from a year or two back because we have had some growth in some of the areas, and the allotment based on 1978 and 1977 is not sufficient," Jim Fisher said on behalf of the Taxicab Owners Advisory Committee.

Although fuel allocations seemed uppermost on everyone's mind, there also was considerable discussion of other assistance needed for public transportation development throughout the state, a topic the Administration expressed a great deal of interest in.

"Our Department's position has got to be to support the public transportation industries of Texas for many, many reasons," Asst. Engineer-Director for Operations Mark Goode said at the conclusion of the meeting. "Regardless of how the fuel situation goes, the need is going to be there for public transit." ■

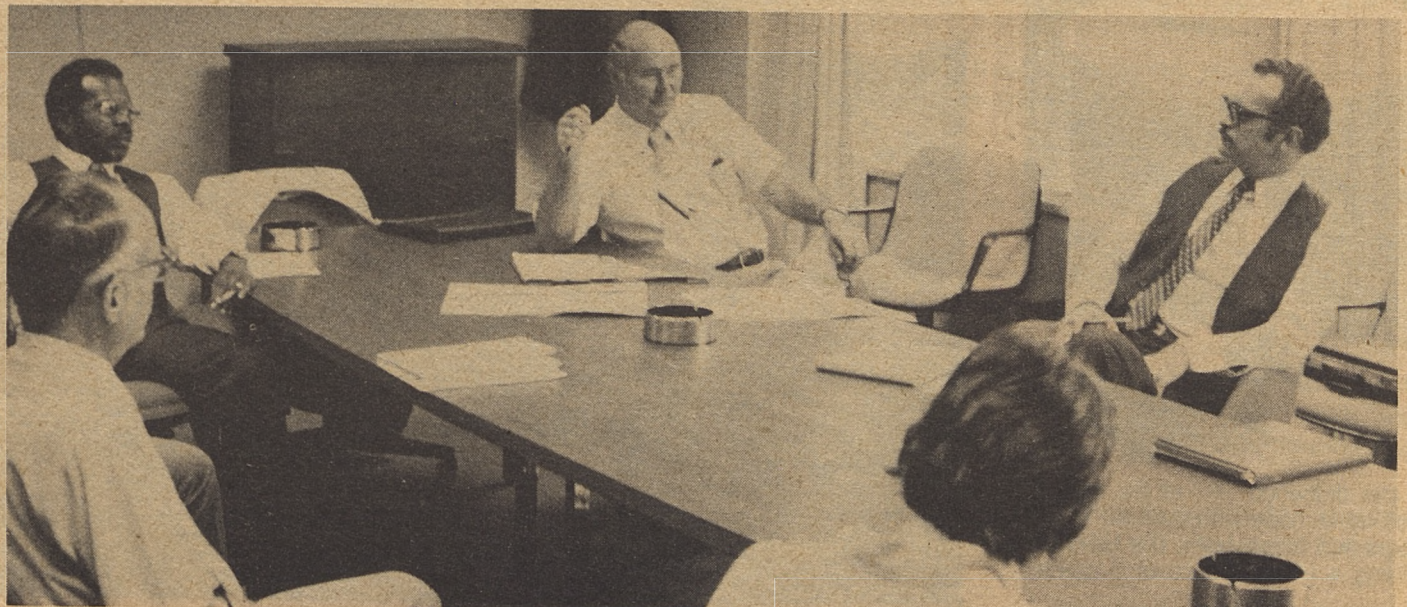


Subcommittee workshops for members of the transit industry, and the taxicab owners as well as the intercity bus operators hashed out the problems they have experienced statewide to see how the Department can help them.

inside

Time is drawing near for that annual madness called deer hunting. After years of watching some of the seasonal antics, some folks in the Valley may have found a list that explains it all pg. 3

One trip to the Paris shop found shop hands busily finding new ways to help make their operations more productive and more professional ... pp. 6-8



NON-CIRCULATING
NTSU LIBRARY



by Johnny Duncan
and Jean Sparks

Their Home Is Where Their

□ The rustic "H" that swings over the gate to James Hair's place could stand for "Home Is Where His Heart Is," as well as the family name. Cut from the natural shape of driftwood, the unusual emblem has been there only about a year — and therein lies our tale.

Seeking a quieter life for his family away from the hectic pace of the big city, the maintenance foreman transferred from the Fort Worth District to Brownwood a little more than a year ago.

He found some acreage near the small town of Blanket where, encouraged and assisted by his wife Emma and teenage daughters Melesa and Cleresa, he built a rock-veneered, A-frame house with swimming pool, recreation area and guest cottage.

"We wanted a better place away from the city to raise our children," Hair said. "Away from the hustle and bustle."

The Hairs decided they wanted the quiet, rustic life. To get exactly what they wanted, they decided they would have to build it themselves.

Nowadays about all that disturbs the serenity of his homestead is the faint sound of a distant train whistle as it passes through Blanket.

However, there is too much work still going on for things to get downright peaceful, at least for awhile. His daughters' many friends gather at their home, and he and Emma still have a few things they want to add, such as a rock fence, a concrete porch and a patio area beside the swimming pool.

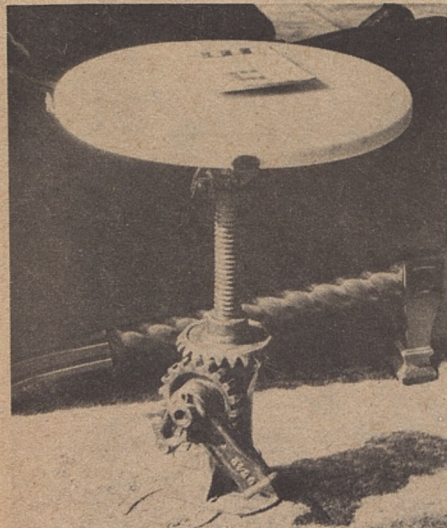
They hope that the guest cottage will frequently have some very special visitors — their married daughter Teresa, son-in-law Ronnie Land and four-year-old granddaughter Keri, who live in Fort Worth.

James and his family hauled all the rock and did all the construction work on their house, and his brother-in-law did the wiring. Many people build their own homes, and James himself has built 11 houses, but a rock-veneered, A-frame with a 30-foot ceiling has to be rare at least.

James and family haven't let much deter their construction



Emma and James worked as a team.



From the driftwood "H" at the gate to the end table made with a Model T jack, tire tools and horseshoes, the Hairs are rebuilding a life reflective of a quieter era.



Hearts Are

schedule. They lifted the huge ceiling beams in place one weekend last winter when icicles were competing for a handhold.

They first built a temporary cottage where they lived until they transformed it into a guest room and garage, complete with a fireplace in the room above and a built-in barbecue pit in the garage below. The guest room is now connected to the A-frame house by a second-story walkway.

On one of her first explorations around their land, about a quarter of a mile from the house Emma discovered a great, flat rock about seven feet long that she wanted for the fireplace they planned. Since James was busy with other matters, she chained the rock to the back of their pickup and hauled it to the fireplace site. Later, all they had to do was lift the 1,500-lb. rock into place.

They found another old stone serving as the back step of Emma's family home. When they discovered unusual crisscrossed markings on the underside, they knew it was originally the mantelpiece from a log

cabin. It now occupies a prominent place on their own hearth.

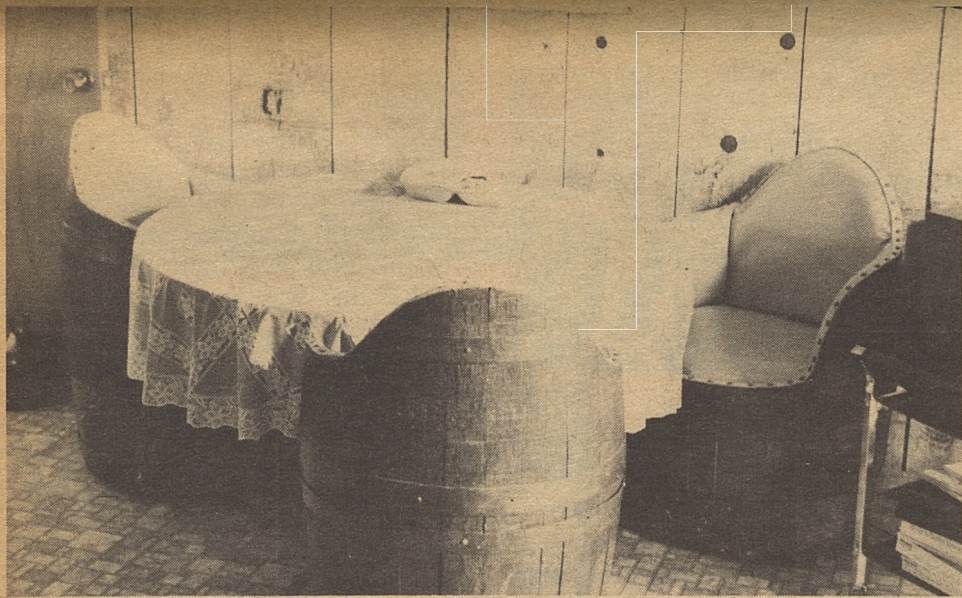
The fireplace is decorated with wooden hay forks, an old scythe, and a kerosene lamp from a horse-drawn hearse.

The A-frame structure gets the southeast breeze in the summertime and has attic fans plus an old ceiling fan from a demolished bank building to circulate the air. The fireplaces have blowers to keep the air circulating during the winter. There are vents in front and inlets on either side of the fireplace.

Their home is filled with antiques that Emma delights in collecting and using. She and James restored a rolltop desk that is as functional now as it was when used in a 1920 office. Their antique couch is one of those stuffed with cornshucks and horsehair, and the bed Emma calls her "Martha Washington bed" has wooden knobs with ropes strung on them in lieu of slats and bedsprings.

James and Emma made the handsome chairs that go with their round oak dining table from pickle barrels. Other innovations include a coat rack from a burly log that they hauled home from Alaska in 1966 and an end table created from a model-T jack, tire tools and horseshoes.

Like many others, the Hairs have found that there's a lot of work to be done for a quieter lifestyle. ■



Pickle barrels and imagination helped the Hairs create some comfortable chairs.



Emma's special seven-foot stone adds a personal touch to the home while ancient farm tools add that special flavor to the decor.

QuesTrans

by Rosemary Williams

Does the Department have any offices or safety rest area comfort stations which use solar energy for heating purposes, or any plans to construct any?

None in use at present, but the Department is researching the possibility of utilizing solar energy at a maintenance facility which will be constructed on a new location at Pine Springs. Comfort stations, with the exception of some in the far northern part of the state, are not designed to incorporate any type of heating capability. This is done to discourage transients from spending winter nights in the buildings.

Though there are no offices or comfort stations currently using solar energy, the Department does have an installation in the Lubbock District which uses solar energy to heat asphalt. The June 1979 issue of *Transportation News* featured an article concerning this interesting pilot project. ■

Where is the heaviest concentration of traffic at one highway point in the state? About how many vehicles pass over that point?

Naturally, it's in Houston; specifically it's on the Southwest Freeway (U.S. 59) just west of the junction with the Loop 610. On Aug. 31, 1979, a mind-boggling 225,310 vehicles traversed that point. During the month of August 1979, the average daily traffic count was 198,951. ■

Send your questions to QuesTrans, *Transportation News*, Highway Building, 11th and Brazos, Austin, TX 78701. Please sign your letter so we can contact you if necessary, but remember that neither your name nor initials will appear alongside your question.

A Hunter's List of Don'ts and Don'ts

For people who live in the areas hunters will soon be descending on with rifles, jeeps and dreams of antler trophies, the one-season outdoorsmen are a strange and sometimes dangerous phenomenon. It is often a subject of derisive speculation as to where these adventurers could possibly get some of the strange ideas they seem to have about hunting.

Some people in the Pharr District came across this list that may prove to be the source of some of these misconceptions. ■

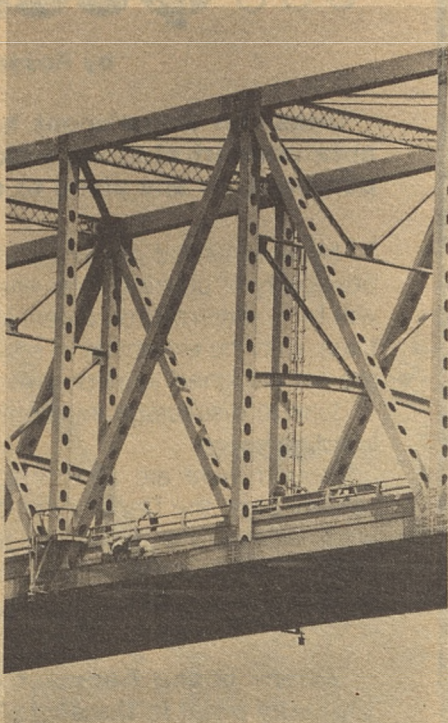
1. First you need a fast car so you can beat the other hunters to the best spots. That will give you a chance of being killed before you get out in the woods. And save some hunter some ammo and the mess of shooting you.
2. One or two cases of whiskey, four cases of beer and lots of ammo. Food, tents, and sleeping bags take up a lot of space, so get another case of whiskey, instead.
3. Be sure to shoot anything that moves. If it's not a deer, there's always a chance it might be your mother-in-law.
4. When you bag a deer, be sure and shoot all the shells you have into it. This will be sure to splinter all the bones and bust all the entrails. Don't bother to wash or wipe it out as the blood and waste will improve the flavor. Besides, the butcher will be disappointed if you bring in a clean one.
5. If you decide to skin it, be sure to roll it around in the dirt, leaves and cactus. Then wrap it in newspapers as they will stick well and printer's ink has the delicate flavor of burnt rubber.
6. Now drag it out to the car and throw it over the hood as close to the radiator as possible so it will get all the heat and dust and so people will be sure to see that you got one.
7. On the way home, stop at a tavern so you can tell the other liars how you killed it. Be sure to stretch your kill into at least a mile.
8. Be sure to stay at the tavern until you are sure the butcher you want to process your deer is home sound asleep. Then call and tell him to get right down as you must get your deer in the cooler before it spoils. He will, no doubt, have a couple hundred hanging around so make sure he cuts yours first, and makes it all into choice steaks and chops.
9. In talking over the successful hunt at the bar, never admit you shot an old toothless, tough buck. Remember, what you brought home was a fat, tender, young deer with delicious steaks!

High Bridge, Higher Load

□ Sometimes, you can't seem to win. Having high-load travelers hit low-clearance bridges is a common problem, but it seems rather strange when a bridge with a 136-foot clearance gets hit.

The Gulfgate Bridge near Port Arthur was hit by a French freighter whose jumbo midship booms rose 138 feet from the waterline. The booms struck the main support beam of the bridge, weakening the bridge by about a third of its normal strength. The bridge deck was not damaged.

The Beaumont District closed one lane of the bridge long enough to make temporary reinforcement before allowing traffic on both lanes. Resident Engineer Bill Potter says the beam will have to be straightened or replaced, but no cost estimates have been made. ■



The Gulfgate Bridge seems high enough to clear any ship, but a French freighter struck it. Crews were soon out to do reinforcement work so both lanes could be reopened.



Even though the job had to be done without blocking Interstate traffic, the contractor on the Pine Street Interchange still completed the work well ahead of schedule.

A Very Pleasant Surprise

□ To the traveling public, a highway construction project seems to last forever, often with little apparent progress being made. But for those travelers who frequently use IH 10 in Beaumont, there has been a very pleasant surprise.

The Pine Street Interchange work on IH 10 at the Neches River Bridge has been completed approximately one year and three months ahead of schedule, based on an average of 120 working days per calendar year in that area.

Florida Construction Company and Biloxi Prestress Concrete, Inc., of Chattanooga, TN, was awarded the \$12.7 million contract on Mar. 3, 1977. The project included widening the Neches River Bridge from a four-lane structure to six lanes with shoulders. Other work included modernizing the west approach interchange by replacing three main-lane structures with one structure of four lanes with shoulders. The left turn exit to downtown Beaumont was replaced by the third-level right turn exit.

All this was accomplished with nearly 50,000 vehicles per day using the highway. The traffic was slowed but never stopped or rerouted due to construction.

The prime contractor completed over 93 percent of the major construction utilizing its own forces. Only illuminations, signing, painting, fencing and seeding were handled by subcontractors.

The construction was completed in two years, five months and 14 days with the contractor using a well-trained nucleus of key personnel augmented by locally hired personnel. ■



Giving to a Full-Time Giver

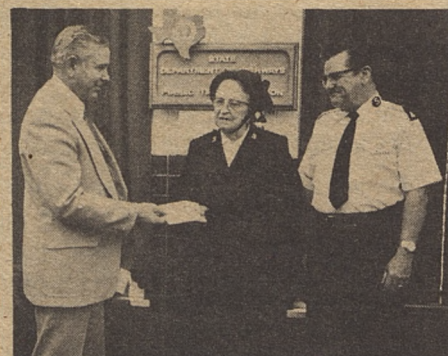
□ Dorothy Masch is a familiar, friendly sight around the office buildings of the Austin headquarters. Every week she scoots around the buildings in her Salvation Army uniform selling the *War Cry* magazine.

At 83 years of age, she has been working for the Salvation Army for over 60 years, starting with an assignment near the front lines during World War I. Her history, personality and dedication have created a special feeling of affection in people throughout the building.

When her house was broken into recently, people began digging into their purses and billfolds and looking for a fund in which to put their money to help Dorothy. It was a spontaneous drive, contributed to

by many people who normally shun such drives.

Fortunately, Dorothy was not home when the break-in occurred. She was in Lockhart visiting a



Dorothy Masch receives a check for \$626.56 from John Warren, representing the Austin headquarters employees.

brother "who may die any minute." All the goods she had just canned were taken, as were some steaks she had saved in the freezer for when her grandchildren visited. Also, her television, radio and fan.

The fan was most important to her. It had only recently been given to her by Major Hall. She hates to use air conditioning because it affects her voice, particularly her singing voice. And for a Salvation Army volunteer, a singing voice is very dear.

This may be Dorothy's last Christmas with the bell and the kettle. She plans to retire right after the Holidays, though few believe she will be able to stay away very long.

Thanks to some very good friends in the Department, the widow will have a TV and radio to help keep her entertained, and she should have some special treats for those special visitors. ■

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A newsletter published monthly by the Travel & Information Division for the employees of the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation.

Editor: Mike McClellan
Art Editor: Ernest Jordan

Manuscripts and news tips invited.

shop talk

'We Have the Tools To Do the Right Job'

by Mike McClellan

□ There is a new sense of professionalism pervading a growing number of district sign shops.

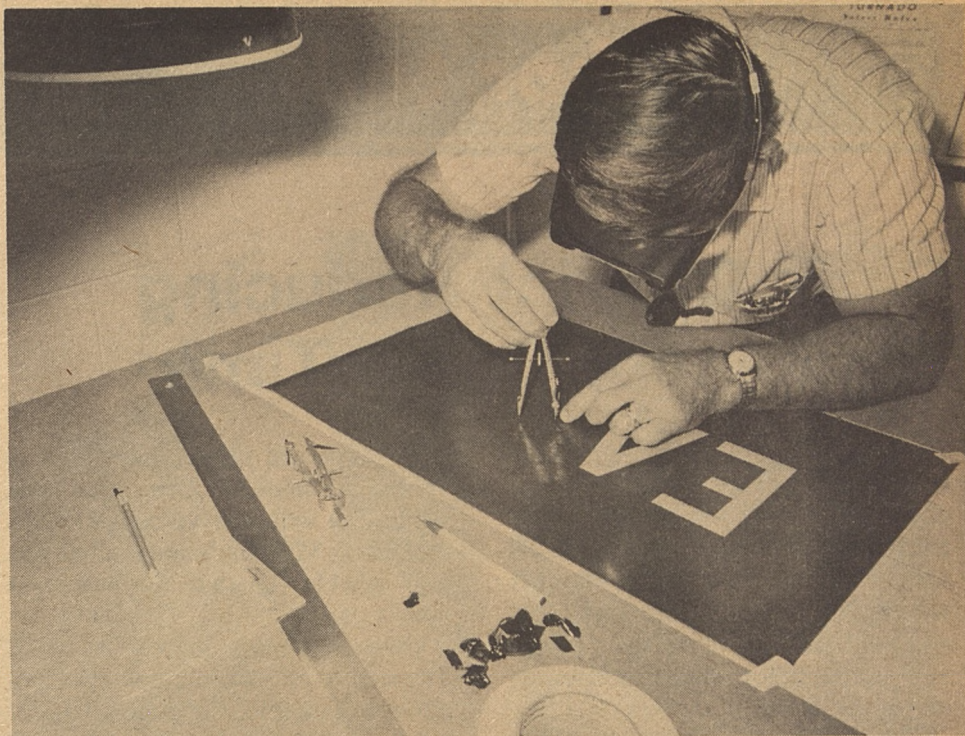
Techniques and lessons learned at the three regional sign shop schools less than a year ago already are helping at least 10 districts produce a higher-quality set of signs at less cost than ever before.

The new sign screening table is grabbing the most notice from a whole range of new equipment. The new table produces a uniform application of ink to the reflective sheeting blank material in one pass of the counter-weighted squeegee, requires less people to operate and can be used for multiple signs.

The new polyester screening material is 35 percent cheaper and lasts 50 percent longer than the old silk screening material. In addition, the polyester screens can be stretched tighter than the old material, allowing a firm, clean alignment for better screen blanks.

Equipment & Procurement Division has been cooperating by stocking the new material better suited to screening reflective sheeting. Gone are the days of the lettering cut with pen knives. Art knives, compasses and other specialized graphic art equipment are helping sign makers produce letters of uniformly good quality in any size.

"We've now got the right equip-



With his new graphic arts equipment, Jerry Pearce can cut letters he can be proud of.

ment to do the right job," says Jerry Pearce of the Paris District sign shop. "I can really take pride in the work I'm doing now."

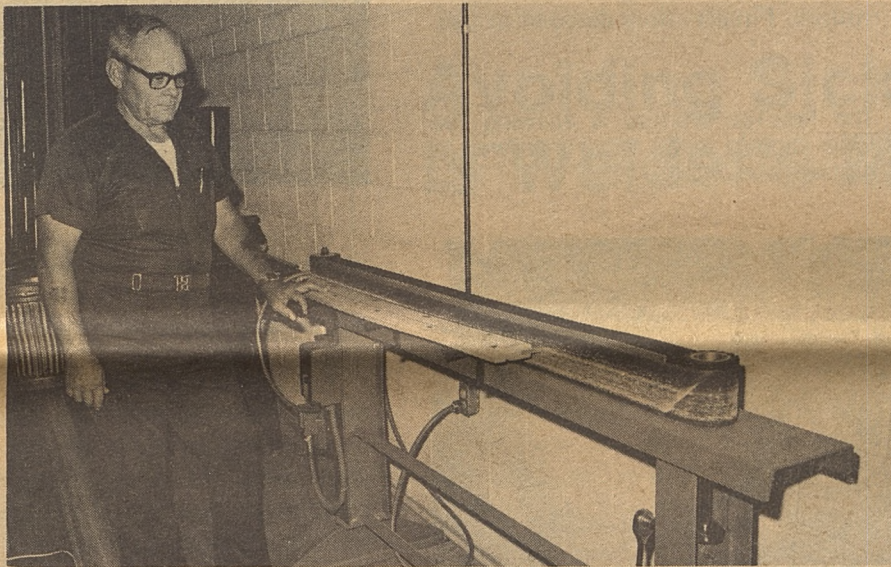
Pearce's supervisor, Boyd Griffin, echoes the sentiment about pride, but also finds another advantage to

the new procedure: "We are keeping up with sign demand now, and without having to draw additional help from the maintenance forces as we have in the past."

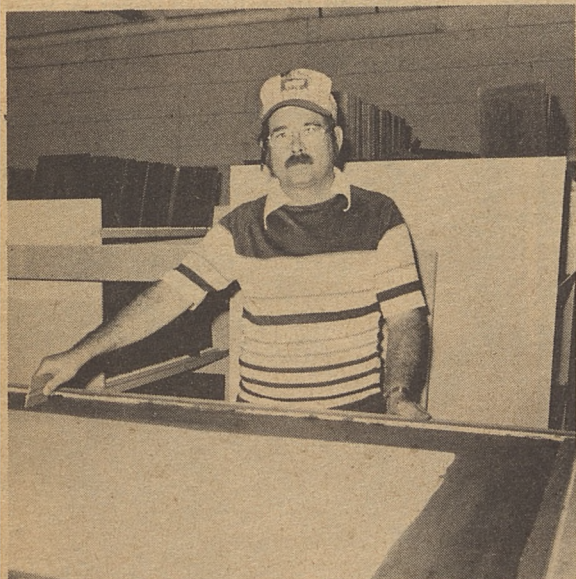
But Griffin sees another practical benefit learned at the sign shop schools.

"We have good communications with the other district sign shops now," he says. "We know who we're talking to and we aren't reluctant to call them. That Fort Worth regional sign shop is a great operation. We went back for a visit after the school and already have adapted several of their pieces of equipment to our operation."

The other two regional sign shops in Corpus Christi and Odessa are receiving such calls and visits from districts in their areas. With this new interchange of ideas and initiation of new procedures, the sign shops are exhibiting a spirit of full cooperation with the Governor's charge to the State agencies to improve their levels of productivity and professionalism. ■

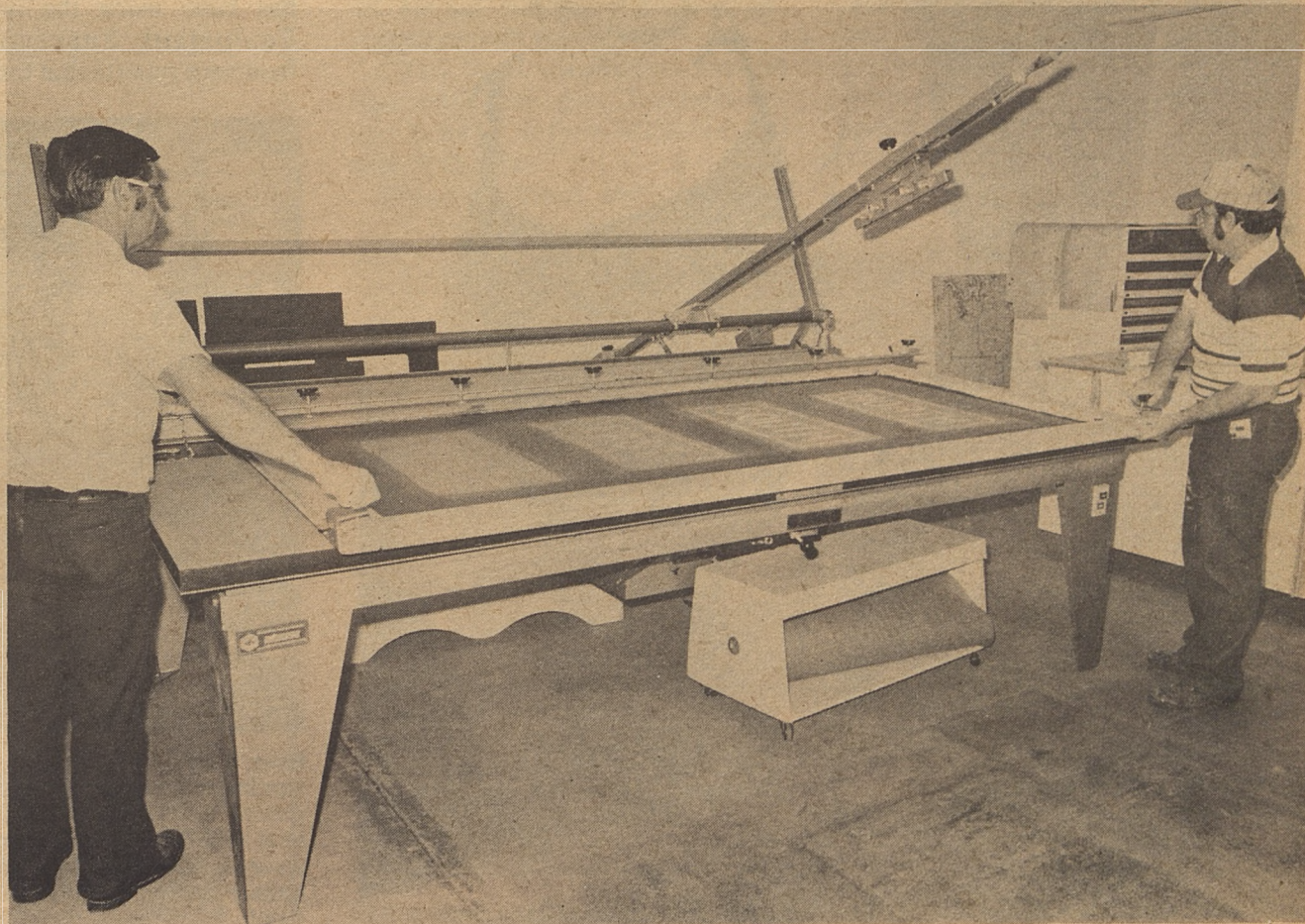


Taking some tips from the Fort Worth regional sign shop, Boyd Griffin and his men have built a sign blank washer rack and a squeegee trimmer.



Phil Bray feels that the new polyester screen is much easier to work with than the old silk screen, and produces a more professional sign.

The new sign screening table is a blessing to all the districts that have ordered one. It produces a uniform application of ink to the reflective sheeting blank material in just one pass and can be used for multiple blanks.



Paris District Reducing Equipment Down Time

□ Every shop foreman is familiar with the problem. A shaft wears down on a piece of critical equipment and the equipment has to sit, useless, for as much as six months waiting for a replacement part. And when the part finally arrives it brings with it a bill that is almost as infuriating as the delay.

Paris District Machinist Ernie Yates studied the problem and realized that he had studied it before. During his three years of night courses at Paris Junior College in machine shop technology, there had been a demonstration of a shaft rebuilding process by a company representative. It did not take the District long to locate the representative.

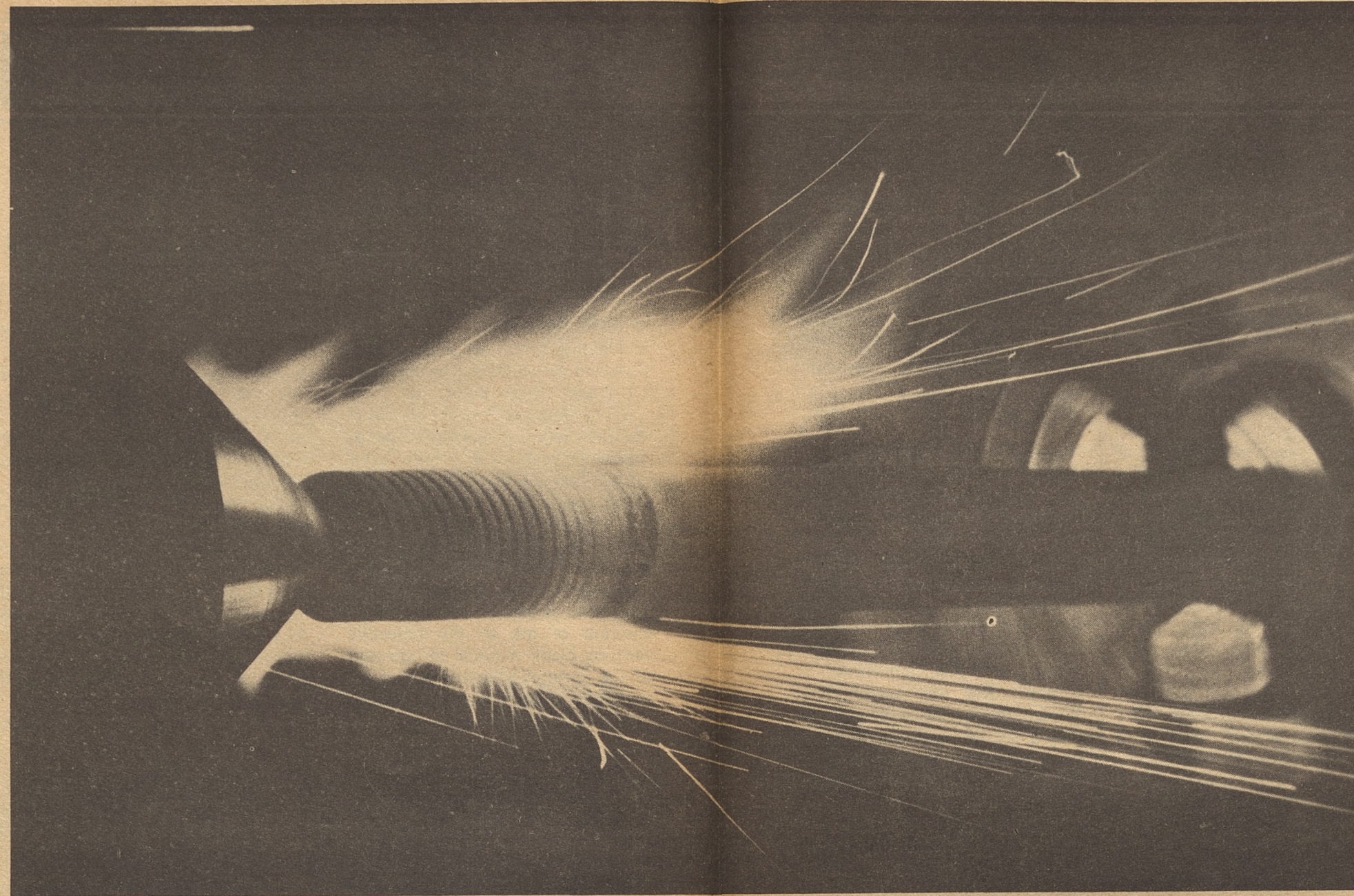
A brief demonstration was all the District needed, and a look at the cost savings was all Equipment & Procurement Division needed. RotoTec won the bid and the District bought a RotoTec shaft protector kit for \$473.

The success of the process was almost immediate. One shaft was saved that would have cost \$550 to replace. A \$250 maintainer shaft was also quickly repaired. Each in less than a day.

Other successes quickly followed. The axle from a maintainer, the king pin in a back hoe, the clutch plate in a 6-8 ton flat wheel roller, the crank shaft for a Wisconsin motor on an asphalt pot and a shaft for a blower on an asphalt super heater were all repaired with dispatch and economy.

The repair job that District office personnel are most pleased about involved the shaft for the office air conditioner. Three motors with the same horsepower of the original motor had burned out, probably due to a different wiring in the newer motors. Finally, they decided to use

The RotoTec process is allowing the Paris shop to repair rather than wait to replace worn shafts.



the new process to repair the shaft on the old motor and the air conditioner has been running smoothly since.

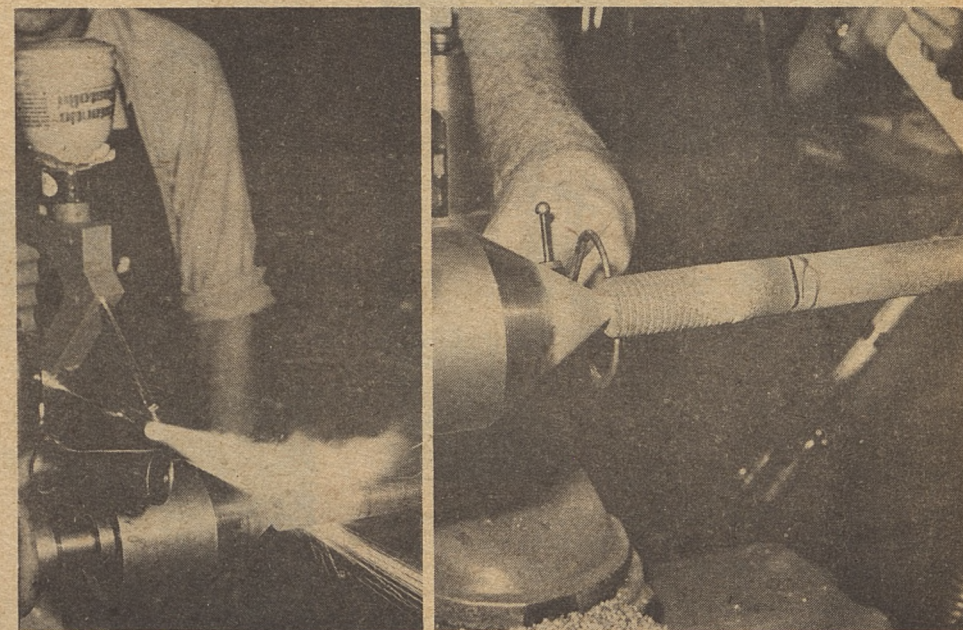
The RotoTec process involves the use of a special oxyacetylene gun to bond metal powders on the worn area until the final powder coat buildup is oversize. Using a lathe and a carbide cutting tool, the buildup is cut back to the desired size. The new area is considerably harder than the original metal.

In the six months the Paris shop has been using the new process, Equipment Supervisor Ralph Beckham reports that there has been

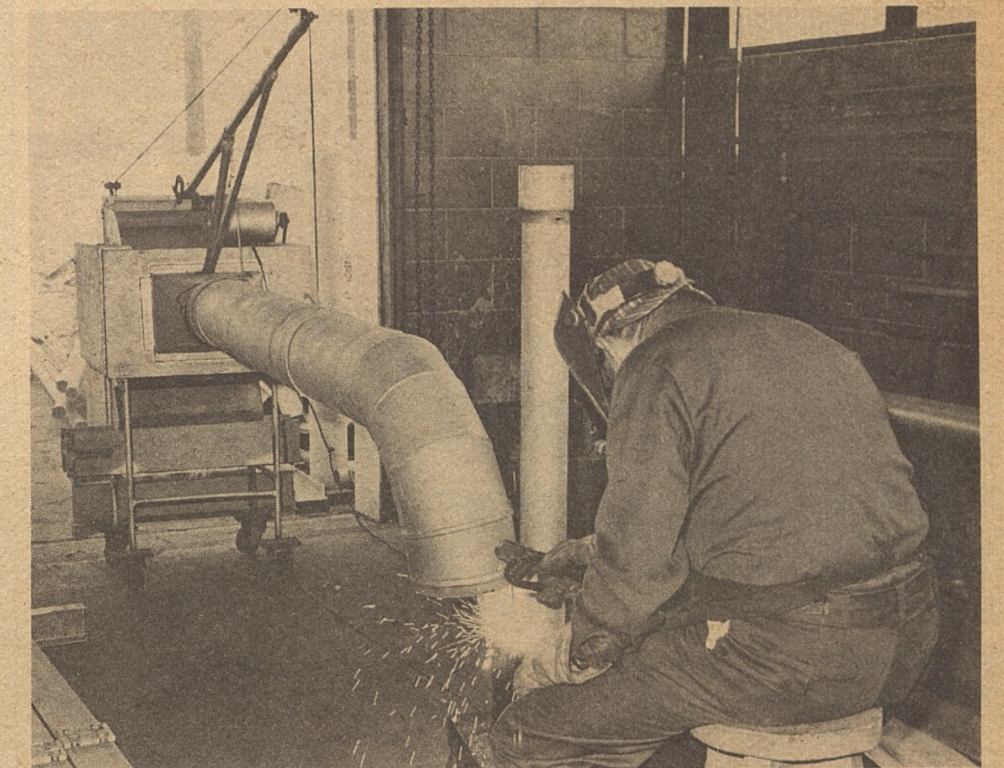
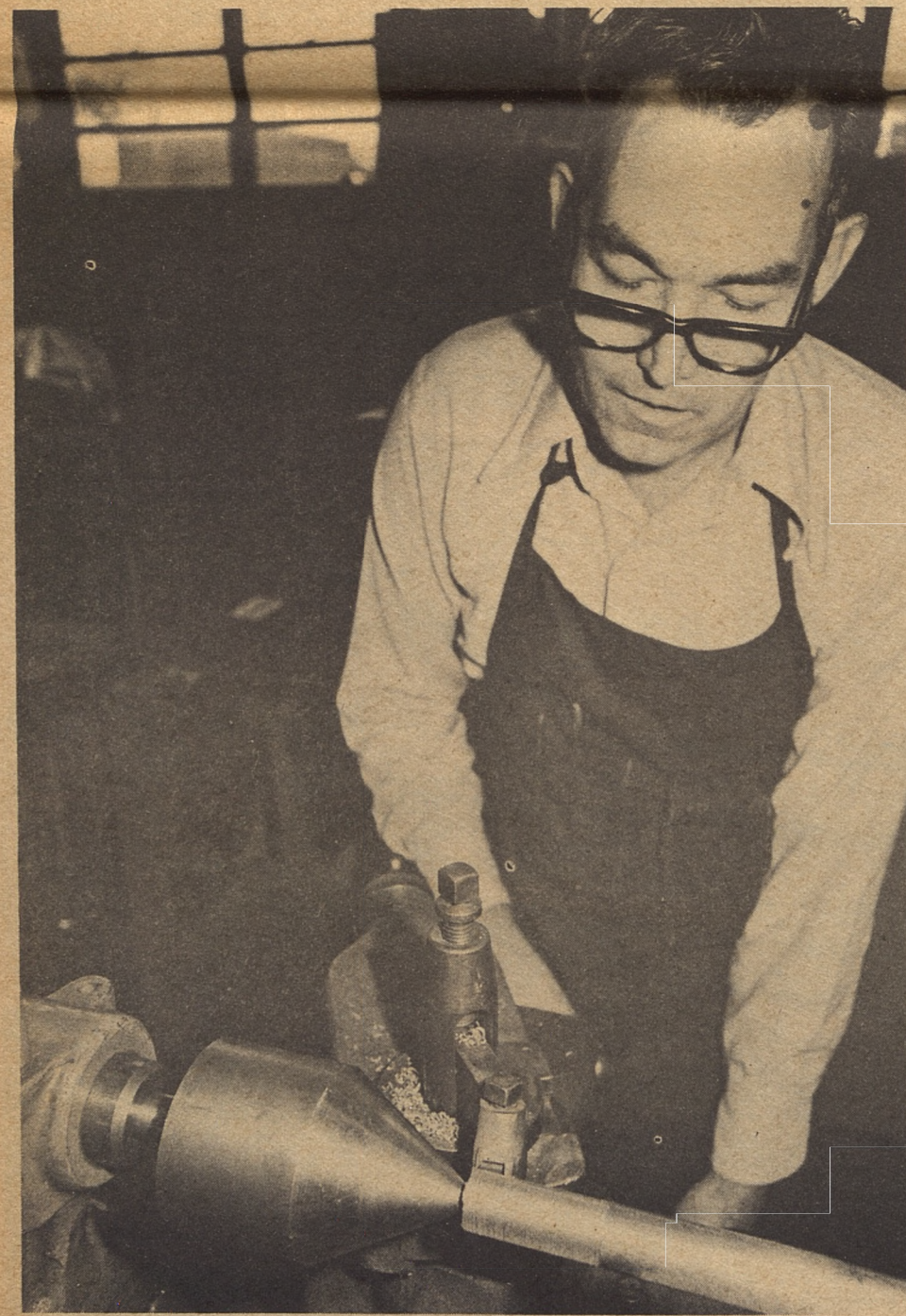
no failure to repaired parts. In fact he expects the repaired parts to last longer than the original material.

Beckham feels that the process more than paid for itself on just the first couple of repair jobs and points out that, with all the repair work they have done so far, they have only used about one-third of the bonding material in the kit.

The particular RotoTec gun that the Paris District purchased is good for up to a 10-inch shaft and has been sufficient for all repairs up to now. But Beckham is ready to order a larger gun as soon as the need arises. ■



Ernie Yates' lathe process involves grinding the worn shaft area down 10-15 thousandths of an inch leaving a coarse thread pattern, then using the special torch, which gravity-feeds metal powder into the flame and onto the shaft to build the shaft back up to at least 3-5 thousandths of an inch larger than the required diameter. Then he takes an emory cloth to bring the shaft to its desired size. In just a few short hours, the shaft is repaired with a material harder than the original and ready to be put back in the equipment.



Hubert Redus can now weld galvanized material without worrying about toxic fumes.

Avoiding Sickening Fumes Is Welder's Main Concern

□ One thing a new shop hand learns early is to avoid the welding area whenever someone is working on galvanized steel. The fumes are enough to make you sick. Literally.

Welders usually are careful to try to work near an open bay door and turn on a large fan to blow the fumes outside. The fan also gives some protection to the welder, but most welders still need to take breaks frequently to get away from the fumes.

Paris District Welder Hubert Redus knows what those fumes can do. He has had many personal experiences with them.

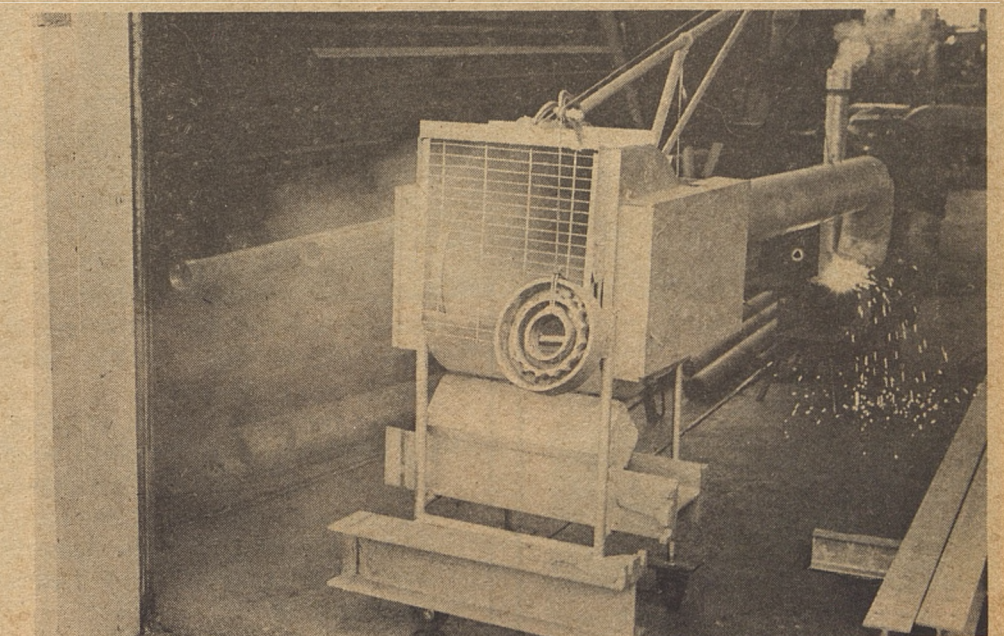
"You don't usually feel too bad right away," he says. "It usually hits you at night. It feels like a real bad case of the flu."

When his friend and co-worker,

Ray Border, had to miss two days of work once as a result of fume poisoning, Redus decided it was time to start working on an idea that had been forming.

He brought an old fan and motor from home and then used whatever materials he could find around the shop. In short order he had a suction fan with an intake vent that could be placed right over the welding area without disturbing his work.

Now he has eliminated another job hazard, and his fellow shopworkers will appreciate his inventiveness even more in the winter when he can use a small window instead of a large bay door to help vent the acrid fumes. ■



Redus brought a fan and motor from his evaporative cooler to equip his brain child.

TransAction



McClellan's model Focke-Wulf FW 190-D-9 looks so real it fools many WW II pilots.

District 9 by Randy Spear

□ David McClellan is an expert stunt flier. But he's not crazy. He keeps both feet planted firmly on the ground when he performs his aerobatics.

David is a control line precision aerobatics flier whose model airplanes have performed well enough to have won the Texas State Model Airplane Championship four times and to have won the Southwest Regional Model Airplane Championship this year.

In addition to having a deft hand on the control lines, David has a discerning eye for design. Stunt model planes are not precise scale models. A stunt model builder has to make certain adjustments in design to handle the stresses of stunt maneuvers and the restrictions of a control line.

With 20 years of experience in his hobby, David has become adept at working with balsa wood and picking airplane designs that are adaptable to his requirements. He has built and flown models of the British Spitfire and the American P-51-D Mustang. His latest achievement is a German Focke-Wulf FW190-D-9 model.

David prefers World War II aircraft because he feels he gets the best performance from planes with low-drag single wings that have sizable enough wings to provide lift and large flaps. He also looks for good balance of the nose and tail and a nose that will attractively encase the model engine.



This year, McClellan won the Southwest Regional Model Airplane Championship in control line precision aerobatics.

In competition, the flier's plane must perform 15 maneuvers including takeoff, landing, inverted flight, a variety of loops and a series of figure eights. Each category is worth from 10 to 40 points, while the plane can receive only up to 25 points for its appearance.

But the scant number of points available for appearance does not keep the model builders from putting extra effort into clean lines. They want something they can be proud of. And David has every right to be proud. ■

Bridge Division by R. L. Wilkison

□ "Around the world I've searched for you...." These words from the popular movie "Around the World in 80 Days" have a special meaning to Raj Natarajan of Bridge Division. For Raj is like the Jules Verne character Phileas Fogg who traveled to India to meet and later marry his Aouda. Raj has done the same for his wife Vanaj.

Raj, who kiddingly calls himself "a naturalized American Indian," was born and raised in southern India. He received his BE in Civil Engineering from P.S.G. College of Technology in Coimbatore. He

came to the U.S. and earned his MS in Civil Engineering from Oklahoma State University and his PhD from the University of Texas at Austin. He joined the Bridge Division in 1970 and became a U. S. citizen in 1974.

Vanaj also was born in southern India and earned a BA and MA in English from the P.S.G.R. Krishnammal College for Women in Coimbatore. Besides her academic studies Vanaj excelled in sports and competed in India, on the national level, in the 100-meter dash, the hurdles and the 800-meter relay. After obtaining her degrees, Vanaj stayed at the college as an assistant professor.

In a strange twist of fate, though the two went to schools less than a mile apart, it took mutual friends in Houston to provide introductions and get Raj to return to India and meet Vanaj. On July 30 they were married in Coimbatore at what Vanaj calls a medium-sized wedding. There were 2,500 friends and relatives at the dinner the night before the wedding and at the breakfast the day of the wedding. Local politicians, dignitaries and business leaders gave speeches praising Raj, Vanaj and their families. After the wedding there were 1,500 guests for lunch.

Due to the shortage of time, Raj and Vanaj had a civil ceremony lasting one day rather than the formal religious Hindu wedding that would normally take three days. Even so there was a great deal of religious custom and tradition.

At dinner the night before the wedding Vanaj was accepted into Raj's family. Part of this acceptance is the placing of the *bendi*, a small dot on the forehead of the bride by various members of the groom's family. There is also the tying of the golden chaplet around the bride's forehead. Vanaj wore the traditional *sari* with numerous gold bracelets and necklaces. Her hair was braided down the back and bedecked with flowers. The braiding and adorning with flowers takes about an hour and was done before the prewedding dinner and redone early the next morning so that the flowers would be fresh for the ceremony.

The next morning Raj was escorted to the wedding breakfast by



Raj and Vanaj Natarajan were wed in a traditional Hindu ceremony in India.

Vanaj's brother. By tradition, the bride's brother holds an umbrella over the groom's head and the two then lead a procession to the breakfast.

During the ceremony, Raj tied a golden *tali* about Vanaj's neck. Once in place the *tali* is never removed. Raj and Vanaj then exchanged flowered garlands and the guests threw rice to wish them luck.

Next, Raj was accepted into Vanaj's family by having a *bendi* placed on his forehead by several members of the bride's family. The last event was the wedding luncheon.

Vanaj and Raj honeymooned in Madras, India. That is if you can call it a honeymoon to stand in lines 12 hours a day trying to see people at the American Embassy to obtain a visa. They spent the entire week three blocks from one of the world's most beautiful beaches and surrounded by theaters to which they had complimentary tickets for various movies and plays. And they missed it all due to bureaucratic red tape. Raj was forced to return to the U.S. without Vanaj. Finally, all the papers and forms were approved after a month's delay.

Vanaj was stranded in Paris for a day when she missed her connecting flights but she took this in stride, rebooked her flight for the next day and arrived safely in Houston. For the second day in a row, Raj and his friend Bill Worrell missed arriving in time to meet her plane. After having her paged (she was waiting outside the terminal), and while conducting

District 23 by Johnny Duncan

□ The trees near the southeast corner of the District office building seemed to burst with color Oct. 8 and 9. The annual migration of monarch butterflies brought thousands of the beautiful creatures to Brownwood for two days rest on their annual flight to the Sierra Madre area of Mexico.

The monarchs seemed to be taking refuge from a stiff north wind. They covered the lower branches of the post oak trees while many others circled the area, a truly beautiful sight that delighted the District office staff. ■



Brownwood Bulletin photo by Evan Gale

a frantic search asking people if they had seen a lady in a sari, she was found.

They returned to Austin where Vanaj has busily set out exploring her new home in Texas. ■

District 4 by Dan Slak

□ "Have Umpire Will Travel" declares their business card. And they do, from the Panhandle to the Rio Grande and points in between.

"Softball, Slow Pitch or Fast Pitch," "ASA Approved," (Amateur Softball Association) and even "Reasonable Rates" on the tri-colored card tell the story of two of the most respected softball umpires in the Amarillo area, Ken McDonald of Canyon and Jim Kennedy of Amarillo.

The two Amarillo District employees are on the road from April to October every weekend officiating at softball games at various levels.

They occasionally venture out of Texas, such as to Oklahoma and other adjacent states when they umpire West Texas State University women's fast-pitch softball games.

McDonald, a nine-year veteran umpire, has called some 5,000 ballgames by his account, accumulating the experience behind the plate and in the infield sometimes as quickly as 16 games per week. He is now Umpire in Chief of the Canyon Umpires Association that he formed, and in 1976 was chosen from among 73 umpires by some 6,000 ballplayers as Umpire of the Year.

"You must believe in yourself," declares McDonald, who began umpiring Little League games when he was an elementary school student. When he was in high school, he "umped" both baseball and basketball games.

He then attended Amarillo College on a basketball scholarship after displaying all-around athletic ability at Parkland High School in El Paso.

The need for a sports official to be



Jim Kennedy helps his partner, plate umpire Ken McDonald, keep track of the count from his infield umpire position.

reliable, authoritative, authentic and trustworthy is great, and effective officiating of any sport takes teamwork on behalf of the umpires. In softball, two umpires must work together.

Kennedy, who has been an umpire for five years, works well with McDonald. When calling doubleheaders or more than one game in a row, the two umps alternate field positions; the one behind the plate bellowing out "steerrikke" takes the field and the one "calling it as he see it" at first, second or third comes in behind the batter's box.

The two officials have worked the NCAA women's fast-pitch state finals, and a tournament as far from Amarillo as Del Rio, where they also conducted a clinic. Last summer, they attended the State Umpire's Clinic in Waco in order to keep up with trends of umpiring.

What about future umpiring desired? "All college ball," was the echoed response. ■

Highway Design Division by Pat H. Gammel

□ Drop the word "eating" within earshot of D-8 employees and happy grins of anticipation spread from ear to ear. Include "barbecue" and immediately there's a mad scramble to tie on bibs, grab forks and wait hungrily for juicy, delectable, barbecued beef and sausage as only Howard W. Mittel, Barbecue Chef of D-8, can prepare it. It's a drooling situation, to say the least.

Howard has practiced his art of barbecuing since 1968, mainly for his Shriners—he's a 32nd Degree Mason—and for the Division the past five or six years. He started down the charcoal path in 1960 when he received a new barbecue grill on his birthday. For several years he experimented with various recipes until he finally came up with his own recipe.

His method of barbecuing, he says, is unlike that of anyone else he knows. He chooses heavy beef properly aged and not too fat. On the day before, he coats the meat well with a dry mix called "Old-Fashioned Barbecue Mix #8" (put out by Handy Andy stores) and lets it sit overnight. The next day, after a fire of dry mesquite and charcoal has burned for 20 to 30 minutes, he lays the meat over the red-hot embers, juices dripping and blazing, searing it on both sides to the point of burning a crust all over it.

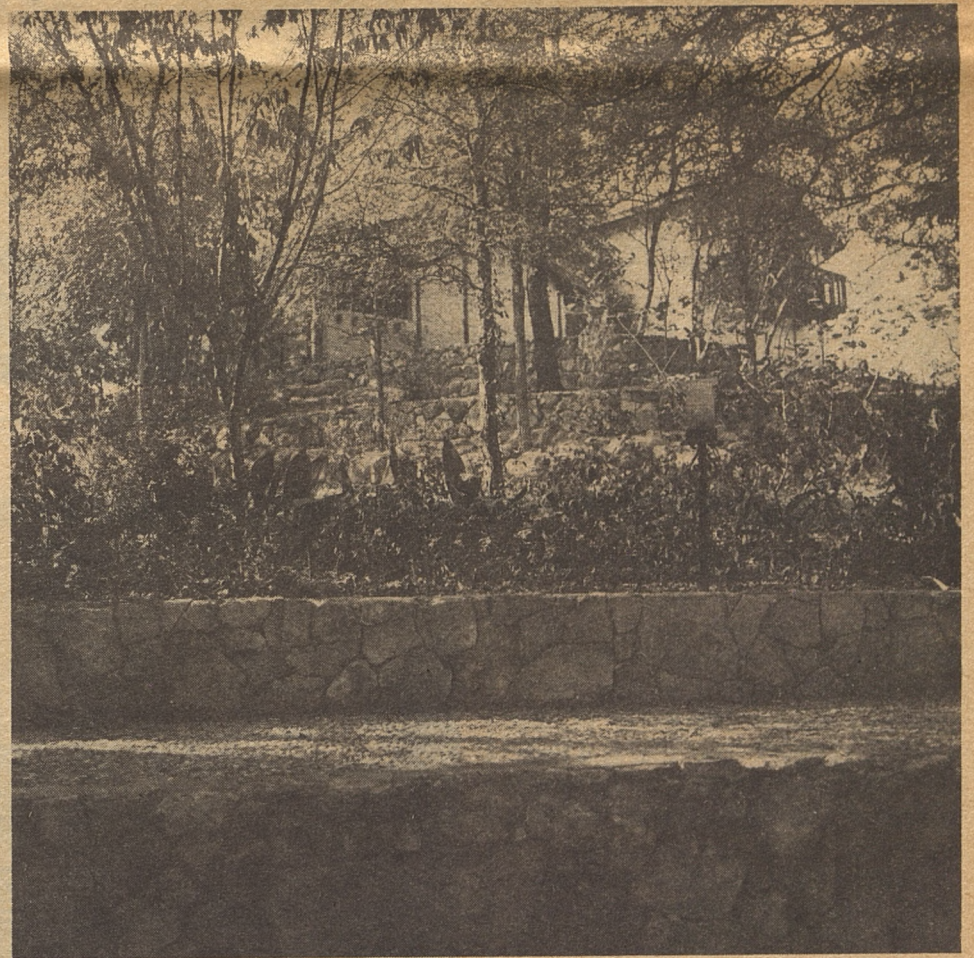
He uses an old-timey, long-handled pitchfork to lift and turn the meat. Then he wraps it in two layers

of heavy foil and places it on flat rocks, eight to 10 inches square, that have been laid on the grill. The lid is closed and the brisket left to cook for four to six hours or until the fire dies and the meat is cool. Only then is it ready to be sliced and its flavorful succulence fittingly savored.

One of his earlier experiments showed unmistakably that all rocks are not as innocuous as they appear. For his purpose of insulating the meat from the fire, the rocks must be flat and very dry. One such rock on the grill had a bit too much moisture in it. When the coals became red-hot, the rock exploded, blowing up the grill, meat and all, leaving a smoking, greasy and deplorable mess. Fortunately, Howard was doing chores some distance away and escaped injury.

Howard's wife Ruth puts the finishing touches to Howard's barbecued dinners with her specialties of potato salad and old-fashioned pinto beans.

Howard is an enthusiastic hunter and fisherman and, in appreciation for his extracurricular efforts, D-8 presented him with a beautiful, new gun case at a recent picnic. After opening the gift, he admitted to having only a BB gun to put in the case! It seems that a few months before, all of his guns—12-gauge shotgun, 30-30 rifle, 38-55 rifle, 44-40 rifle and a 16-gauge shotgun—were stolen from his home. The only gun totally ignored by the thieves was the BB gun, a "gag" birthday gift to Howard. ■



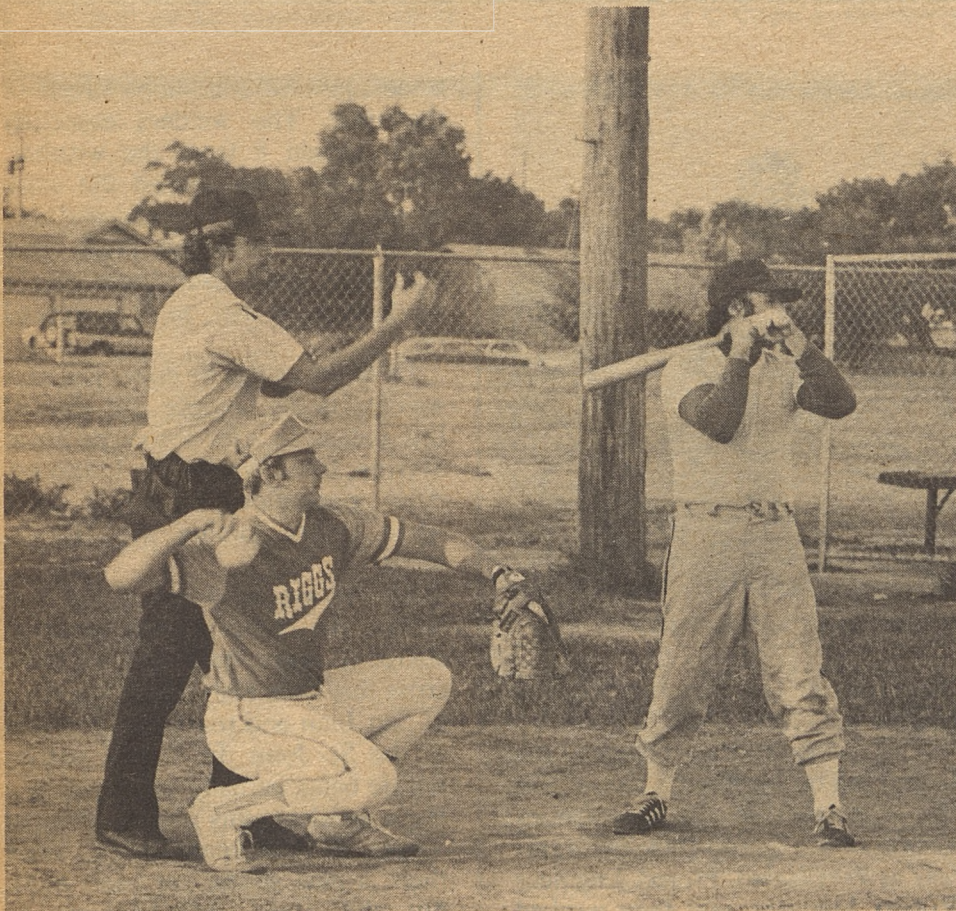
Seven hundred feet of rock walls, varying from one to six feet in height, produced a beautifully terraced yard for Pete Peterson's home.

Transportation Planning Division by Joann Gilpin

□ When first hearing of Pete Peterson's intricate work with rocks, one is apt to think of a collection of polished stones he may have picked up from different places in his travels. Although he does have some

pretty rocks to display, his "intricate work with rocks" is mostly found in the form of over 700 feet of rock walls varying from one to six feet in height.

Around his attractive home on the western outskirts of Austin, Pete has dug, hauled and fitted various sizes and kinds of limestone rocks



A respected pro, McDonald gets few arguments when he bellows out "streerrikke".

using only a pick and shovel. And that includes digging a swimming pool and a winding creek that makes its way through his half-acre lot, giving the effect of a rock garden hideaway in the middle of the Hill Country.

Pete and his wife Faye have lived in this home only 10 years. It is ob-

vious that much labor has been put into the unique landscaping. No mortar shows through the wall crevices, a demand made by the lady of the house. He made wall forms from cardboard, wire, tar paper and concrete. The rocks were then carefully fitted together like puzzle pieces, so the effect is both beautiful and

natural. Pete says it just "takes time" to make all those rocks fit together. Most of the rocks were found on his place and on nearby properties.

The honeycombed limestone walls around the swimming pool in the backyard are most impressive. They form the back wall of his rock

wonderland. A drain has been dug to divert rainwater behind and underneath the honeycomb wall so it will empty beyond the swimming pool into the adjoining creek. The swimming pool area is complete with an intercom, radio, ceiling fan and a rock-housed filtering system, all installed by Pete. Alongside the creek is an attractive gazebo decorated with wrought iron and a floor that has inlaid tile forming an outline of Texas. Decorative outdoor lamps of iron and Mexican glass are placed around the creek and the patio area.

A beautiful indoor Japanese garden is surrounded by small honeycomb-rock walls and roofed with green fiberglass. Inside are many different kinds of cacti. A hidden water pump behind a honeycomb-rock waterfall recycles water from an attractive pond in which several goldfish make their home.

Pete also has constructed a large, rock barbecue pit complete with a temperature gauge, drip pan, rotisserie and oven. It can grill, smoke or slow cook those meats just the way he likes them.

It is a beautiful rock wonderland Pete calls home. ■



Peterson's walls are not the only beautification work at his house. His gazebo and garden are added touches that make his home a retreat.

District 21
by Pat Reynolds

□ Ted Falls is a busy man of many talents.

He very cheerfully admits, with a shrug of the shoulders, that he works wherever he is needed. He is primarily Senior Mechanic in the District 21 shop. This title is a little misleading, according to some of his supervisors and co-workers. He is a "natural" equipment operator.

District Maintenance Engineer Sam Cox says: "He wears the machine."

Some of the machines that Ted "wears" are motor graders, blades, front-end loaders, dozers, trucks and excavators. Although he is permanently assigned to the shop, he still goes out on the machines in an emergency. This is over the loud protests of his immediate supervisor. He is always busy with mechanic duty, welding, diesel repair or electrical repair on the equipment.



Ted Falls' wrought iron decorations for pickups are very popular in the Valley.

In his "spare" time, he designs and builds whatever is needed. From a picture, he built the folding sign stands to be carried on the trucks. The lift system for the rope herbicide applicator was designed and built by Ted. One co-worker said, "He builds from plans or

blueprints or just give him an idea and he goes from there."

This modest man believes the largest job he has been a part of was the construction of the fender system of the Queen Isabella Causeway at Port Isabel. Project Engineer Robert Martinez said they worked

under adverse conditions much of the time. The welders especially really caught it from the weather. The rough water caused the work barges to roll and toss and the high wave action drenched them time and time again. But there was a deadline to be met, so they worked on.

Of all the things he does, Ted says welding is his favorite. He learned this skill as an after-school helper at Shirrey Iron Works in Edinburg. After graduation, he stayed on a while before joining the Department.

While he was employed at the iron works, the company was commissioned to make the huge solid brass cross that rises high above the town of San Juan and marks the location of the St. John the Baptist parish. Before being partially destroyed by a tragic accident, this was the original Virgen de San Juan shrine. Since then, a new shrine has been built, but the cross still beckons to

awards & retirements

SERVICE AWARDS

(As of Nov. 30, 1979)

35 YEARS

District 16

Santos Nerios, Maintenance Tech. III

30 YEARS

Safety & Maintenance Operations Division

Irl E. Larrimore Jr., Supervising Field Engineer

Transportation Planning Division

John F. Nixon, Engineer of Research

District 2

Bobby D. Holmes, Senior Resident Engineer

District 5

Joe W. Sanders, Engineering Tech. IV

District 12

Allen E. Ranft, Supervising Resident Engineer

District 14

W. C. Seale, Maintenance Tech. III

District 16

Estanislado Tello, Maintenance Tech. II

District 19

Bybee W. Weisinger, Senior Resident Engineer

District 21

Luis B. Salazar, Engineering Tech. IV

Antonio Enriquez, Maintenance Tech. III

District 22

Lauris A. Weathers, Chief Accountant I

District 24

Albert J. Kypfer, Maintenance Tech. III

25 YEARS

Highway Design Division

John R. King Jr., Administrator, Technical Programs II

District 3

Clarence F. Shaffer Jr., Maintenance Tech. III

Margie C. Johns, Engineering Tech. II

District 5

Robert W. West, Engineering Tech. V

District 6

Coloma M. Williams, Auditor II

District 7

Milton T. Adams, Engineering Tech. V

District 8

Bobby R. Lindley, Asst. District Engineer

District 9

James E. Daugherty Jr., Maintenance Construction Supt. I

District 10

Calvin Jinkins, Maintenance Tech. III

Stanley N. Little, Maintenance Tech. III

District 12

Bruce C. Johnson, Engineering Tech. IV

District 13

Hugh Hines, Maintenance Tech. III

District 15

Billy J. Braddock, Engineering Tech. IV

Pablo H. DeArkos Jr., Engineering Tech. IV

District 17

Leon M. Vierus, Maintenance Tech. III

District 22

Daniel B. Gonzalez, Maintenance Tech. II

District 25

George R. Wall, Asst. District Engineer

20 YEARS

Equipment & Procurement Division

William C. Klipple, Administrative Tech. IV

Leslie L. Rodgers, Chief Accountant II

Francis M. Davis Jr., Administrative Tech. II

Insurance Division

Samuel B. Yeager, Administrator, Technical Programs I

Materials & Tests Division

Clarence Brown, Engineering Aide IV

Right of Way Division

William R. Bach, ROW Agent III

Billy J. McAdams, Staff Services Officer II

District 1

Patsy M. Slagle, Clerical Supv. III

Eldwin D. Grimes, Engineering Tech. IV

District 4

Winfred C. Haire, Maintenance Tech. III

District 6

Quita B. Williford, Engineering Tech. II

District 7

Charles Sorrell, Maintenance Tech. III

Manuel V. Martinez, Maintenance Tech. II

District 12

Malachi Robinson, Administrative Tech. II

Aldon E. Schiller, Maintenance Tech. III

Lloyd E. Matzke, Maintenance Tech. III

District 13

Kenneth J. DeBerry, Maintenance Tech. III

District 14

Henry Druedow, Maintenance Tech. III

District 15

Raymond R. Metcalf, Engineering Tech. III

Rollie L. Jacobs, Maintenance Tech. III

Richard M. Jones, Engineering Tech. II

District 17

Guy R. Ward, Supervising Resident Engineer

District 23

James E. Jordan, Maintenance Tech. III

District 24

Ascencion Garcia, Maintenance Tech. II

Houston Urban

Billy F. Smith, Engineering Tech. V

Green C. Hudgins Jr., Engineering Tech. IV

J. C. Colgin Jr., Engineering Tech. V

RETIREMENTS

Equipment & Procurement Division

Melvin C. Warren, Maintenance Foreman III

Right of Way Division

George L. Smith, Chief Accountant II

Transportation Planning Division

William O. Hamm, Asst. Engineer of Planning Services

District 1

Byron W. Varley, Maintenance Construction Supv. II

District 2

Leonard H. Newman, Maintenance Tech. III

Wilbur G. Perry, Engineering Tech. IV

District 5

Henry L. Lamb, Maintenance Tech. III

District 8

Paul H. Logsdon, Maintenance Construction Supv. III

Henry C. Pounds, Maintenance Tech. III

District 9

Herman O. Bohn, Maintenance Tech. II

District 10

Malvin D. Gurney, Maintenance Tech. III

George L. Kale, Maintenance Tech. III

District 11

Ollie R. Johnson, Maintenance Tech. III

District 12

Charles E. Tipton, Chief Accountant II

District 13

Margaret S. Jacobs, Accountant I

District 14

Porter A. Allen, Maintenance Tech. III

Louis M. Weynandt, Engineering Tech. IV

District 16

Don S. Mabry, Engineering Tech. V

John G. Rasberry, Engineering Tech. V

Paul H. Sommer, Engineering Tech. V

District 17

Chester Hays, Maintenance Construction Foreman III

District 18

Paul C. Lawson, Engineering Tech. V

District 19

Thomas V. Vick, Engineering Tech. V

District 20

Joseph L. Daigle, Maintenance Tech. III

James H. Grissom, Engineering Tech. IV

District 21

Oleta M. Gillit, Engineering Tech. III

Benito Salinas, Maintenance Tech. III

District 23

Charles H. Thomas, Engineering Tech. V

District 24

Theodore R. Meier, Warehouse Supt.

Jesus Velasquez, Maintenance Tech. III

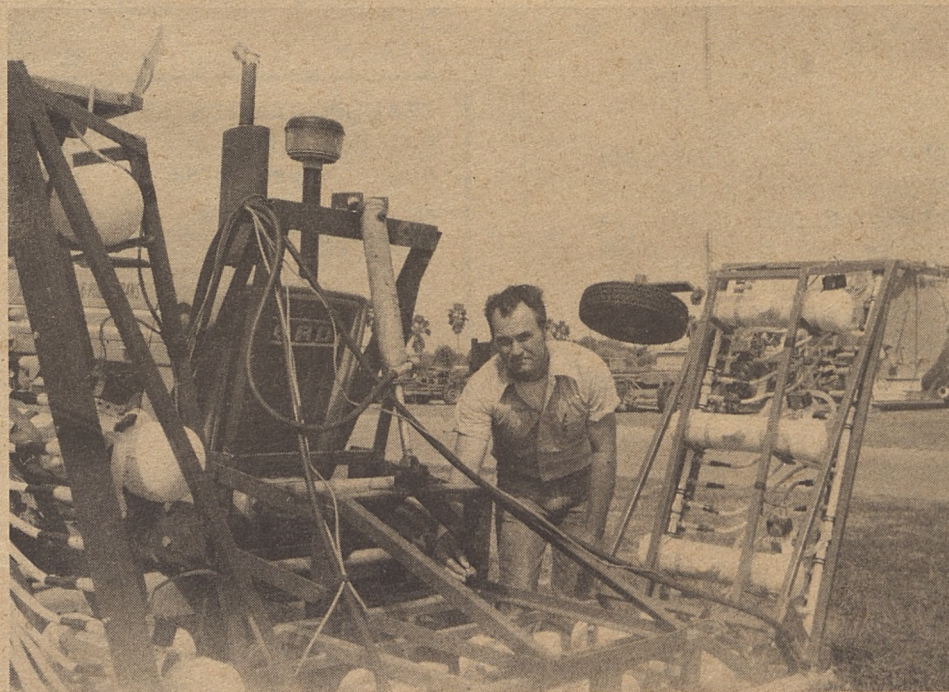
District 25

Grant D. Wooldridge, Engineering Tech. V

worshippers near and far from atop the steeple.

As an apprentice at Shirrey Iron Works, Ted was assigned the job of building a wrought iron dining set. The design was to be oak leaf with the table measuring 36 inches by 60 inches with the wrought iron frame to support a glass top. The same design was carried over into the chairs. When the entire project was finished, Shirrey himself presented it to Ted and his new wife as a wedding present.

At home, Ted has his own fully equipped welding and blacksmith shop. After hours and on weekends, he does custom welding. No job is too large or too small for him, from fender systems on the causeway for the Department to the complex repairs of musical instruments for friends.



Falls designed and built the lift system for the ropewick herbicide applicator.

His favorite type of welding is wrought iron. The majority of requests for his decorative iron work are for security items such as window grilles, doors and bars. He also makes signs for yards and gates for fences.

When asked to describe his proudest accomplishment, he simply said, "It's all the same. I take as much pain with one job as I do with another."

The only complaint voiced by Ted was that there aren't enough hours in the day. He works full time for the Department, farms 10 acres, is building a three bedroom home for his family, and is booked up for custom work until after the beginning of 1980.

He seems to resent the hours he "wastes" between midnight and 6 a.m. That's when he sleeps. ■



With Tom Appling's new device, most of the bridge cleaning work can be done with the operator safely on the ground using a remote control.

Safety was the initial factor in developing the device. Waterblasting on a scaffold is a tricky operation since the water is being forced from the nozzle at a pressure in excess of 5,000 psi. There is a strong recoil on the operator when the nozzle is turned on, and that can be hazardous on a scaffold about 100 feet off the ground or above riprap.

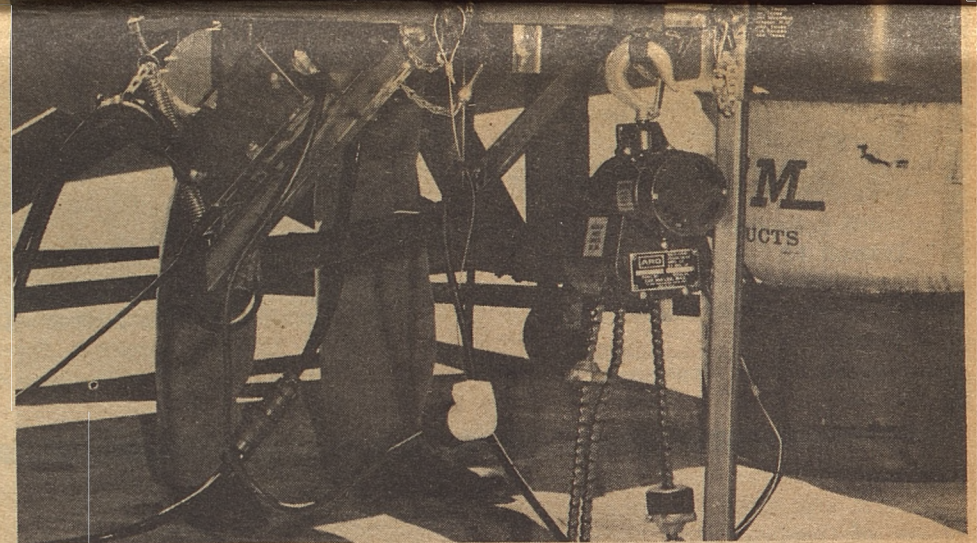
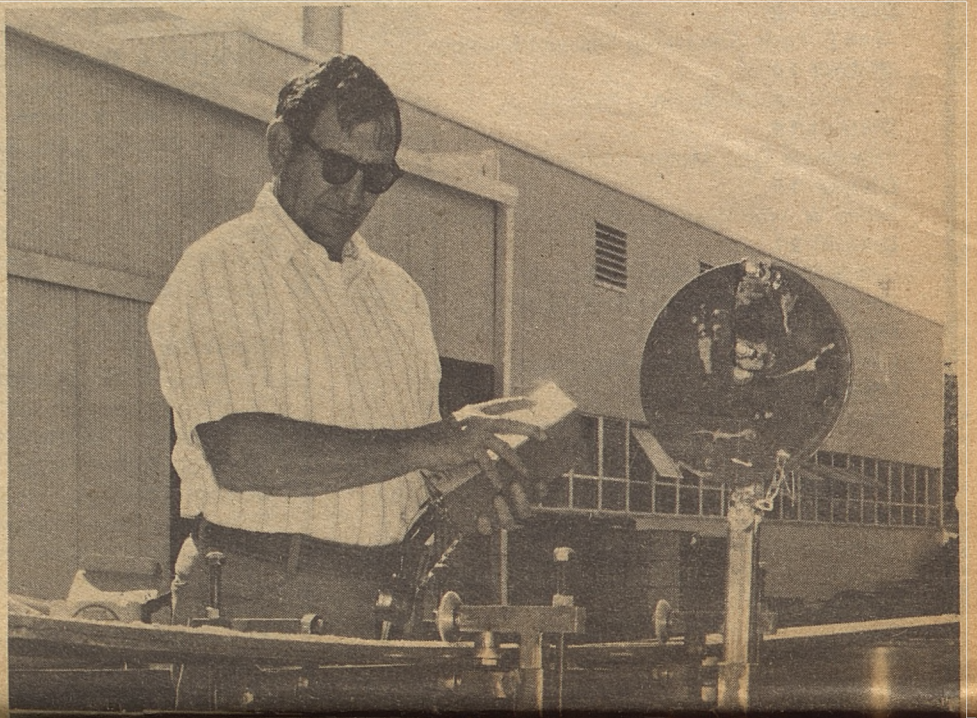
With the monkey, the operator handles the remote controls from the ground and a special disc holds the nozzle in place. There is an added benefit to having the operator

on the ground. Away from the dust and the goggles, the operator can better see how well the paint is being cleaned off and be able to make whatever corrections might be necessary.

"Proper cleaning is about 90 percent of a good paint job," Appling says.

And the monkey seems capable of doing an excellent job of cleaning. At a rate of three feet per minute, the monkey cleaned a 5-inch swath by waterblasting and an 8-inch swath sandblasting. Both swaths were cleaned right down to the white metal, meeting the highest standard.

By any standard yet applied, Appling's device is definitely not monkeying around. ■



Appling intends to add a second disc to his monkey for greater efficiency.

See Monkey Do

by Mike McClellan

□ "We don't have enough manpower now to clean bridges for painting," says Tom Appling of Safety and Maintenance Operations Division. So Appling invented a "monkey" to do the work.

Appling's "monkey" is actually a remote control mechanical device that can be used for sandblasting or waterblasting old paint from bridge surfaces.

The monkey's controls can move the device forward, backward, up and down at variable speeds. The 80-pound device can be set up by two men in less than 10 minutes.

In a test on the Nueces Bay Causeway Bridge in Corpus Christi in the second week of October, the device worked exactly as designed. However, Appling has decided to make some modifications.

A litter message for all Texans



Trash costs cash. Your cash! Last year more than \$7 million of your tax money went to pick up the litter those "other people" threw out on your highways.

Want to know who those "other people" are? Write us for a free loan 16mm color and sound motion picture and find out. Show it to your civic group—or invite the people in your neighborhood. It's important. So do it today.

Write: A Litter MESSage
Travel & Information
P.O. Box 5064
Austin, Texas 78763

(Or contact your highway department district office)

TRANSPORTATION NEWS

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