

Bottles To Determine Gulf Currents

Beachcombers on Texas' Gulf shores may not find a treasure map in the bottles they will be picking up in the near future, but the yellow information card inside will be mighty important to researchers at A&M.

A multidisciplinary research team, assembled by the Texas Engineering Experiment Station, will use the postage-free reply cards to chart Gulf of Mexico currents which run close to shore.

Dr. Wesley P. James, assistant professor of civil engineering, is heading up the research team. He said little information is available on currents that run near the coastline, and he feels the results of the study will make a valuable contribution to information on the Gulf.

"Most studies," he noted, "have been done out in deep water. We know quite a lot about currents and temperatures past the 30-mile mark or so, but we know very little about the currents that are close to shore. By using the information furnished by those who find the bottles, we can map the shoreline currents with rea-

sonable accuracy."

The research team releases 60 float bottles each week from a boat located as far as 20 miles offshore. The bottles, about eight inches high and two inches in diameter, float on the water's surface. Each bottle contains a business reply card with spaces for the finder's name, location, and the time and date the bottle was found.

What's in it for the finder? Dr. James said a letter of appreciation and a brochure on oceanography studies and programs at A&M is sent by return mail to those who complete the cards and send them in.

The researchers expect replies from as far away as Mexico, and have already received one card from Louisiana. Dr. James said he had no idea where the bottles will come to rest. The finders who send the cards in, he said, will be helping the team define the coastal currents.

More than 300 bottles will be released during the project. The researchers are utilizing the R/V

Mariner, an A&M-operated oceanographic research vessel, for releasing the bottles. Other craft are used when the Mariner is down for maintenance, according to Dr. James.

"We are hoping for a 40 per cent return of the cards," Dr. James said. "All we want back is the card, the finder can keep the bottle as a souvenir. We feel the program will be successful, due to the small amount of effort required of the finder to participate in this scientific experiment."

Members of the research team were assembled from A&M's Departments of Biology, Oceanography and Civil Engineering, according to Dr. James. Five of the 20 team members are on the Gulf at all times, releasing the bottles and charting release points.

The bottles do not contain treasure maps, but the finder will be given a chance to participate in a scientific experiment that will tell the research team more about the world we live in, according to Dr. James.



NO TREASURE MAP, BUT . . . — Dr. Wesley James, TAMU civil engineering professor, places a reply card in a float bottle which will be released in Gulf Coast waters near shore.

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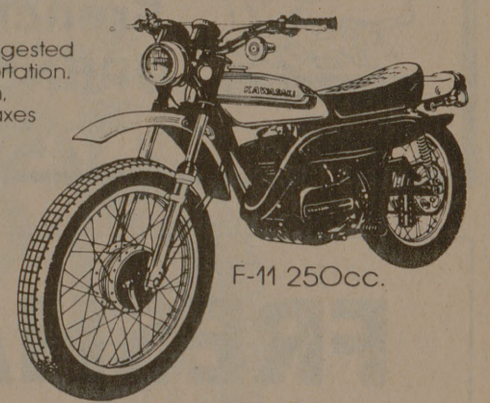
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Commerce Honors Miloy

Mrs. Leatha Miloy, director of information and special services for A&M's Center for Marine Resources, has been cited by the U. S. Department of Commerce for service to the National Sea Grant Program.

A&M President Jack K. Williams presented the Commerce

Department's certificate of appreciation to Mrs. Miloy on behalf of Robert A. Abel, National Sea Grant Program director.

Abel said the certificate was awarded in recognition of Mrs. Miloy's work in designing a scenario for a Sea Grant Program slide presentation for a Congress-

sional committee meeting and other subsequent uses.

He noted the award is the first of its type to be presented by the Sea Grant Program, part of the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.



SEA GRANT HONORS MILOY — Mrs. Leatha Miloy of Texas A&M University's Center for Marine Resources receives a U. S. Department of Commerce certificate of appreciation presented by TAMU President Jack K. Williams on behalf of the National Sea Grant Program. Looking on is Dr. John C. Calhoun, Jr., TAMU's vice president for academic affairs.

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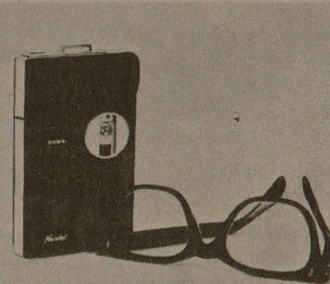
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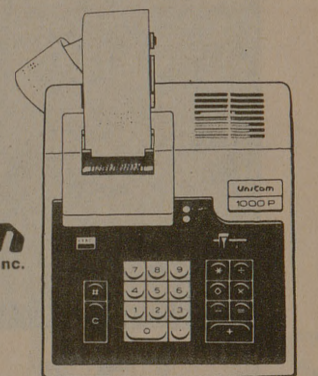
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