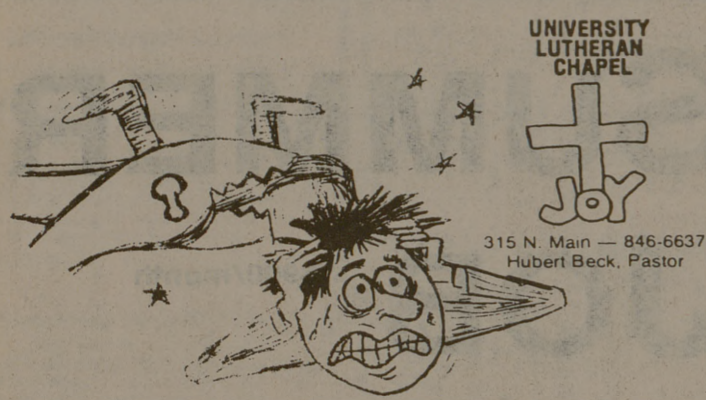


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Archeologists study baking pits

The proximity of several baking pits to stands of native pecan trees are causing some concern among Texas A&M University archeologists studying a site near Taylor along the San Gabriel River. Dr. Harry Shafer, associate professor of anthropology and principal investigator on the \$39,811 National

Parks Service (NPS) project, says the pits, apparently used for baking, are the first of their kind seen in Central Texas.

Native Americans apparently visited this spot repeatedly, and nearby pecan trees have led the Texas A&M researchers to speculate that pecans may have been one drawing card.

"What attracted later white settlers are probably the same things that attracted these early inhabitants," Shafer said.

The NPS awarded the grant in February so the archeologists could survey, record and recover material from the site. The area will be inundated by the 65,000-acre-foot Lake Granger, now under construction. Further studies at the project will be conducted when the Texas A&M archeological summer field school convenes there in July. Field supervision is under staff archeologist Clell Bond.

In order to efficiently use the pits, explained Shafer, the prehis-

toric inhabitants of the site apparently dug a two-foot by two-foot bowl and constructed an intensely hot fire inside. The heat of the fire served to make the pits almost ceramic in rigidity which greatly aided their preservation. So far, Shafer said, the examination is not far enough along to determine how they used the pits as cooking or baking aids.

"We have to know what they ate before we can fully realize how they prepared it," he said. An assortment of fossilized animal bones and mus-

sel shells have turned up, along with some stone tools and a few fragments of pottery. Shafer said that most of the prehistoric activity at the site occurred in the past 500 years, and evidence suggests little activity prior to 1,500 years ago.

The researchers seek to determine if the area's prehistoric ancient dwellers used specific camp sites for particular duties and if any types of stone tools can be traced back to individual quarries.

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A&M scientists study oil storage

Two Texas A&M University scientists may be kingpins in the U.S. Government's recently announced effort to store a national 90-day supply of crude oil underground. The supply would amount to a billion barrels.

Dr. Robert Unterberger, who has gained recognition by pioneering the exploration of mines by radar and sonar, thinks an opportunity has developed to help the Federal Energy Administration (FEA) by plumbing the storage areas to prevent problems. Unterberger is assisted by Ken Butler, a graduate student.

The FEA's plan is to use caverns

in iron, sulfur, limestone and salt mines to store the crude oil. The problem is that neither the government nor the mine owners know exactly the physical limits of the seams they are working.

To prevent possible leaking and pollution they need to know what the limits are.

"We found, in the past, that we could use radar in salt mines to find the edges of the domes of salt mines located below the surface of the Gulf of Mexico where hitting a pocket of water or the edge of the dome would be disastrous," Unterberger said. He added that a small amount of moisture in the salt makes the radar completely useless.

"The water absorbs all the energy," he said. "It's just like a microwave oven. The hamburger you put into it is cooked only because it contains water which is heated by

the radar waves. So, by the same token, that's where our energy goes, into heating the water."

We were frustrated until we remembered that sound waves will travel through salt or water so why not 'wet salt'? Now we've just returned from the Weeks Island Salt Mine (which could hold 89 million barrels of oil) and found we could

penetrate 750 feet of this 'wet salt'. Unterberger said they fired a sonar through pillars of salt and roofs of caverns. The distances were known and the scientists could calibrate it to the time the wave took to penetrate that distance. "Then we pointed the machine straight down and found we could 'see' a round-trip distance of 1,500 feet," he said.

FDA demands recall of 14,000 GE sunlamps

United Press International
WASHINGTON — About 14,000 General Electric sunlamps are being recalled by the Food and Drug Administration because of al-

legedly defective timers that could burn users.

Some 5,000 of the "Time-A-Tune" Suntanner kits already have been recovered from GE's distribution system, the agency yesterday said, but another 9,000 are still in retail channels or have been sold to consumers.

The timing units are the problem, FDA said. Some fail to sound a buzzer and switch the lamp off at the time.

Consumers are asked to return the bulb and return the holder timer unit to G.E., 1705 N. Cleveland, Ohio, 44112 or call G.E.'s toll-free number 800-327-1710 in Ohio, 800-362-2750 for instructions about returning the timer for a replacement.

The FDA said the units involved would have been purchased at December 1976.

'Gig 'Em' sign has scientific use by planetarium

New use has been found for hand signs that distinguish Texas Aggies from UT Longhorns.

Application of the Aggie thumb-up "Gig 'Em" and UT index-and-pinkie-extended "Hook 'Em, Horns" is described by Carolyn Summers of Houston's Baker Planetarium.

Summers said that the planetarium staff uses the symbol gestures to help program viewers measure angular distances among the stars. An angle of about 15 degrees, depending on spread of fingers, is covered by "Hook 'Em." A three-degree measurement represented by "Gig 'Em" holds arms' length, Summers wrote in the May issue of "Sky and Telescope."

The article describes program activities at Burke Baker and the radio shows on astronomy — KTRH and KLOL-FM — conducted by the planetarium. The story also includes photographs demonstrating use of "Gig 'Em" and "Hook 'Em."

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