

# Man fights for 'old' chips

**United Press International**  
LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — There are many citizens laboring in the flow of commerce whose pasty concern is the restoration of potato chip.  
Phil Nelson is such a man. His fervor may reshape the industry to make the very best potato chip in the world, he says. "My goal is to get them into all the stores. You just say I am a one-man crusade." The product is "Nelson's Old Fashion Potato Chips." Not many, but they live within 50 miles of Little Rock, will have heard of it. Chances are one day you will hear the tale, wherein the enterprise system is not dead. No sir, you'll find them all right in Phil Nelson and his love affair with the heretofore unromanced potato chip.  
"Old fashion potato chip," Nelson says. "Because I'm an old fashioned guy."  
What's so different about Nelson's Old Fashion Potato Chips? Why has this cult grown up around them? Nelson puts back in a step used in small, local plants 40 and 50 years ago: kettle cooking. Kettle

cooking disappeared when potato chips began to be mass produced because to kettle cook potato chips it was necessary to have a man standing there stirring the potato chips in the kettle. Otherwise the chips would stick together.  
The man stirring with the rake — because that's what he uses, an actual garden rake or something similar — is also the cook. Just like anyone in a kitchen does when cooking French fried potatoes, he decides when they are done and empties them from the kettle.  
To eliminate this chancy and time-consuming step, large manufacturers of potato chips wash and rewash the sliced potatoes before cooking. This washes out large amounts of starch, and by doing that keeps the potatoes from sticking together while being cooked.  
Thus, they could standardize a quicker and smoother means of making potato chips and also eliminate one of the more uncomfortable jobs around: hand cooking chips in a sweaty room where temperatures linger around 100.  
"However," Nelson said, "they also eliminated most of the potato taste and much of the nutrient value."



Drilling for the team

Freshmen working to stay in the Fish Drill Team do push-ups for sophomores who direct training of the team. The freshmen are on the team unless they quit, and workouts like this one near Kyle Field are common. The fish must keep their rifles

with them at all times, even during push-ups. Fish Drill Teams of the past have won several national awards for their performances.

Battalion photo by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.

# Texas 'black gold'

## Brine from oil wells threatens wild birds

**United Press International**  
AUSTIN — Texas oil wells produce one third of the nation's oil, but also spew out increasingly more volumes of noxious brine that is turning some West Texas lakes into death traps for migratory birds and contaminating underground water supplies in many areas.  
The problem is graphically illustrated at a desolate salt lake three miles southwest of Frankel City in Andrews County where the U.S. Interior Department contends oil companies are violating the Migratory Bird Treaty Act by failing to eliminate hazardous substances from oilfield wastes.  
The Texas Railroad Commission, the state agency with regulatory

authority over petroleum producing operations — will hold a hearing Oct. 26 on the condition of Whalen Lake.  
The 300-acre body of water is lined with an ugly black ring of oil sludge two to four inches thick, according to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department officials. Brine laced with oil and grease from 900 producing wells is dumped into the lake at the rate of 200,000 barrels a month.  
Environmentalists, skeptical state officials will do anything, are considering filing suit to force a clean-up before peak migratory season brings 500,000 to 1 million birds through West Texas.  
Railroad Commission officials express doubts the "monstrous" clean-up job needed at the lake is

worth preventing the deaths of a few hundred birds.  
"The commission doesn't have any jurisdiction over birds," said Phillip R. Russell, director of RRC field operations. "The commission never had any idea that they were supposed to protect birds or wild oxen or billy goats."  
Richard C. Endress of San Angelo, a special agent with the Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service, took evidence of repeated bird kills at the lake to a federal grand jury last year.  
"It's a classic problem," Endress said. "What is the value of a few migratory birds? Are they valuable enough to cause all these problems for the oil industry or energy production? I fall back on the law. The law says that it is."  
The grand jury and federal prosecutors deferred action for the Railroad Commission to consider the situation.  
The state agency held a hearing in April 1977 and gave Whalen Corp. of Dallas, a subsidiary of Triton Oil and Gas, and other oil companies dumping brine in the lake one year to clean up the problem.  
Railroad Commission officials say conditions have improved in the past 18 months, but current tests indicate discharges into the lake still

contain more than double the amount of oil and grease mixed in the brine that the state agency considers acceptable.  
"We just told them the other day they were going to have to do better," Russell said.  
The Railroad Commission, unlike other state agencies charged with pollution control, does not set specific standards for operators to meet in eliminating contaminants from waste discharges.  
"It's against Texas Railroad Commission regulations to place hydrocarbons in open pits; it's a waste of natural resources. But it's being done," Endress said.  
Russell, however, said "There's no real law on it (amount of hydrocarbons allowed in brine discharges). We have a sort of unwritten rule of 20 parts per million. It's acceptable to have 20 ppm oil and grease and that's just about as good as you can do."  
"That much you can't even see. You've probably got that much (oil) in some of the water that you drink. To skim it any more than that would take forever. We really say no oil and grease but 20 ppm is acceptable."  
Russell said samples taken during a recent visit indicated the brine at two Whalen discharge points into

the lake had 46.9 and 51.8 ppm oil and grease. Discharge from a Phillips Petroleum Co. pipeline was analyzed at 57.9 ppm oil and grease.  
At last year's hearing, oil company experts' reports on oil and grease content of brine discharged into Whalen ran as high as 115 ppm.  
Discharge samples, however, do not indicate the oil and grease content in the lake where evaporation concentrates waste residues.  
"After you put water in a playa lake for 10 years, even if it's only 1 ppm (oil and grease), it will probably accumulate somewhere. It won't go away. It won't disperse. That's what happened at Whalen Lake," Russell said.  
Playa lakes, natural depressions in the ground that are drainage collection points for the surrounding countryside, have a high salt content ordinarily.  
Industry experts reported the lake was six times as salty as sea water before the brine-dumping began in 1967.

# Swedish poll finds low reading skills

**United Press International**  
STOCKHOLM, Sweden — One million Swedes cannot read or write well enough to cope with Sweden's red tape bureaucracy, according to a university study of literacy among adults and students.  
"Every year 20 percent of ninth-grade school students leave with less than the reading ability required at the sixth grade. They don't have the minimum reading ability required to function in society," said Eve Malmquist, who headed the investigation.  
In a literacy test using three standard forms from the health insurance department and the post office, 83 percent of Swedes of all ages could not understand the words used.  
"It's not a question of illiteracy in the usual sense of the word — people can read the spelling of the words but they don't understand what they mean," Ulla-Britt Persson, another member of the literacy project, said Monday.  
The study blamed the Swedish school system for failing to help students who are bad readers.  
"Students are uneasy, they go from one classroom to the next and never have the same teacher for very long, and Swedish language teaching is too theoretical," Persson said.

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# Brain scanner refined

**United Press International**  
PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. — Doctors at Mount Zion Hospital and Medical Center reported Tuesday improvements in a brain-scanner technique that will mean significantly less risk to patients undergoing certain kinds of brain surgery.

Dr. Burton L. Wise, chief of neurosciences at Mount Zion, said refined use of a CT scanner to precisely locate lesions deep within the brain will eliminate dangerous tests previously necessary before surgery.

A CT scanner takes hundreds of cross-sectional X-ray pictures of the inside of the brain, as if it were sliced in layers. When put together, they provide a three-dimensional look inside the brain.

Wise and his associate, Curtis Gleason, Ph.D., developed a complicated geometrical method of interpreting the routine CT scan results. The method allows doctors to determine the precise, rather than approximate, location of a lesion.

Wise, in a report to a Western Neurological Society meeting in Pebble Beach, said the new procedure would aid hundreds of patients who undergo brain surgery annually at Mount Zion.

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