## raille terminal to help

## omputers for the blind

ter technology and careers A. Rodenberger. gh an idea developed by a "In all three of Texas A&M University

students plan to market a sysentered around a braille termi-at will enable the blind to enter outer job market.

concept was developed for a s engineering course. But Glover and David Tucker of ges Station and Susan Jenkins of able decided to expand the en-ering entrepreneurship aspect eir assignment and take it to the

bed the braille terminal in a ects presentation involving two ar graudate student teams. They

"In all three cases, the student

groups interacted with the com-puter," Rodenberger said. "I think it's an indication of the future. My crystal ball says this is the way we are going. I don't see us ever backing off from use of the computer.'

The project was praised by evaluators as engineering that bene-

for a patent.

Called a braille terminal, it would link with virtually all existing computer systems. It is based on an idea by Glover, who has a master's degree of the computer systems. in digital electronics. He is in Texas A&M's doctor of engineering pro-

Jenkins and Tucker are master's

put \$30 million in federal funds into research programs to develop

ready started experimental work in several parts of Texas.

Rubber from guayule is not a new idea. In 1910, half the nation's rubber production came from the plant.

So researchers know it can be used

Bragg says.
"We're looking at some very com-

can be used to replace non-

bauxite for producing aluminum and

Bragg predicts that by the turn of

successfully.

keting and handle that aspect of the business opportunity.

"The basic set-up consists of a computer interface which interprets output into braille characters, along with a typewriter keyboard for input

into the computer," Glover said.

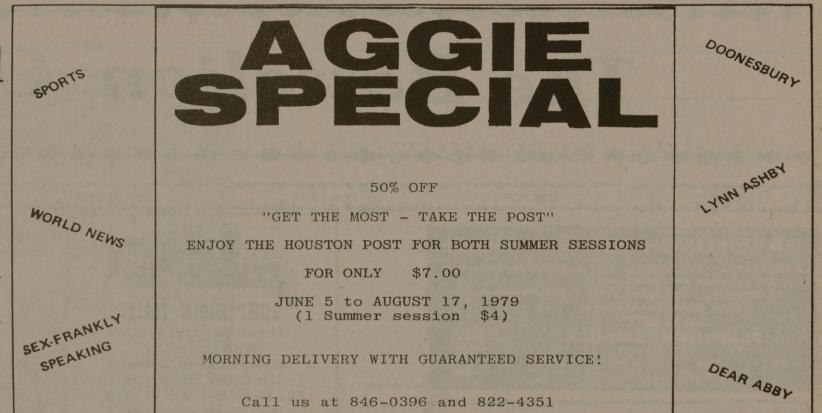
The keyboard would be no different from typewriters with braille keyboards that are on the market.

slightly through two columns of three holes, or similarly arranged heating elements, will reproduce the

"A blind user would type a line of copy into a microprocessor in the terminal, hit a key and play it back through the braille terminal," Glover described. "If correct, another key would insert the line into memory." into memory

The system has numerous applications that can open a variety of possibilities to the blind, the Texas A&M students feel.

With electronics components be-coming less costly, they think most non-sighted persons could have their own micro-computer system with floppy disk memory storage



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## Desert plants ew fuel, say &M scientists

the search for alternative Calvin, a Nobel Prize-winnning sci-sources takes on an increas-entist at the University of California, evered pitch, Texas A&M ity researchers are turning the land for answers.

of all the petroculture crops, guayule (wy-OO-lee) probably holds the greatest potential, contends Bragg. Guayule could be used as a substitute for the synthetic rubber made from petrolem. The Native Latex Commercialization Act of 1978 ultural scientists are able to narily desert plants — with mes like guayule, jojoba and ia — into everyday comes such as rubber, lubricating thanol, an alcohol fuel, thanol is one of the many fuel that can be produced from Texas A&M researchers are calguayule. Bragg and other re-searchers at Texas A&M have al-

oculture is like agriculture, pet that plants are grown to be cessed into fuels, plastics, build-materials and other replace-mts for non-renewable resources, plants, nature's most efficient ar collectors, are the key to a rem collectors, are the key to a rewable resource economy, says
Bragg, who specializes in industeconomics research.

It's now a matter of creating markets, finding the best variety strains
of the plants and making guayule
production reconomics.

is like coming down the stairto find all the presents under the mas tree," he says, alluding to plex plants," he says of petroculture, and that means a lot of research quess that scientists know very little tions remain before these resources

is much more exciting than renewable ones. ding promething mundane like atomic assed legrgy, and it has much more potenappraised. Bragg says. "So far, we've ignored most of these plants because the bill give had our minds on cotton, nerty appraisus or wheat. If we couldn't eat a prometry appraisus or wheat. If we couldn't eat a prometry appraisus or wheat. If we couldn't eat a prometry appraisus or wheat. If we couldn't eat a prometry appraisus or wheat. If we couldn't eat a prometry appraisus or wheat. If we couldn't eat a prometry appraisus or wheat. If we couldn't eat a prometry appraisus or wheat. If we couldn't eat a prometry appraisus or wheat is not only worth it, and the effort is not only worth it. e ignored it

the petroculture products, delegated in times of national tergency and strife, are used amply today, but that is changing. for example, some racing cars run ethanol, which is distilled alcohol, the century the United States could ducing bethanol, which is distilled alcohol, ent—and are lubricated with jojoba be well on its way to an industrial society based on renewable plants.

Society based on renewable plants.

FOR A

assured trily due to economics and partly

NON-FATTENING back in the to the fact that it is an excellent placement for sperm whale oil. Ethanol can be produced from say when m, for instance, after the food the has been taken out, adds

ertain species of plants belong-to the euphorbia (you-FOUR-family produce a latex that is on a molecular level to crude

obody has put it through the lab

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