



*But does it fly?*

Carlton Schломach, in aerospace engineering, spends time working on his hobby — radio-controlled airplane flying.

Photo by Dean Saito

## Rio Grande river lost for time in small town

**CANDELARIA** — For a while there, the Rio Grande was lost in this small, antiquated ranching community in far west Texas.

When several employees of the U.S. section of the International Boundary Commission arrived in the town, they had to use a 10-year-old aerial photograph to find the legendary river.

It seems the salt cedar-infested river was so full of silt its bottom was higher than the surrounding pastures where crops had once grown. As a result, the salty water that sometimes flows along the river bottom had seeped through the soil and formed ponds beyond the river channel on surrounding ranchland.

"I've seen it pond there for six to seven months," said Alfredo V. Brijalba of the Soil Conservation Service in Marfa.

The river's poor condition also kept the land so wet that no crops have grown there since 1966.

It was high time for some improvements, and since the middle of the river is considered the international boundary under a 1970 treaty, both the U.S. and Mexico

sections of the boundary commission wanted to better define 170 miles of the Rio Grande.

The U.S. and Mexico sections agreed to divide the work in segments in a 200-mile stretch from six miles upstream of Presidio to Fort Quitman.

A Houston firm this summer cut a 6-foot-deep river channel, left a ring of salt cedar to hold the bank in place and cut a 56-foot swath through the salt cedar beyond the bank.

Although officials said the river improvements would not have an immediate effect on agriculture in the area, "a year of high rainfall" to flush some of the salt from the soil "might make some of that land suitable to use again," according to area Soil Conservation Service engineer Claude Thompson.

"Eventually they'll probably be able to get back to where they can grow vegetables and alfalfa," he said.

One of the goals of the river project was to improve, not damage, the area as a habitat for birds and wildlife.

The first job at Candelaria was what the IWBC staff called "preconstruction staking" and marking so the heavy equipment operators knew where to cut brush and where to leave the salt cedar.

## Center teaches basic economics

By USCHI MICHEL-HOWELL

**Battalion Staff**  
Some students at a specially established center at Texas A&M University believe the free enterprise system is close to extinction.

The Center for Research, Education and Free Enterprise, established in 1977, is a local organization that provides teachers with short courses in basic economics. The teachers receive two to three hours of graduate credit for the 30-hour courses, said Dr. Gene Uselton, director of CREFE.

A Texas law requires that teachers produce economics at all levels in the classroom through the 12th grade where it is appropriate. But many teachers do not have adequate knowledge of economics, Uselton said. The center's education courses help them comply with the law.

CREFE is supported by private funds. In addition to helping area teachers and students, it sponsors research at other universities.

"We evaluate the cost of government regulations, and it would not be appropriate to be funded by any government," Uselton said.

The center is similar to the American Economics Institute in Washington D.C., the Heritage Foundation and the Hoover Institute.

CREFE advocates a free society where an individual can do what he

pleases as long as he doesn't hurt anybody else, Uselton said.

"We really are not conservative, but libertarian," Uselton said. "Free enterprise means conservative to many, but we are libertarian in the

**"Our central message is that voluntary trade and private ownership coupled with the limited role of government provide the best means of continued prosperity of a democratic society," said Debbie Walker, coordinator of student advocates.**

sense that we want to maximize an individual's liberty."

Besides its research sponsorship and teacher education, the center has student advocates who promote the free enterprise system in and around the Texas A&M community. Seventeen students entered CREFE last spring.

"The advocates are only extremely capable students. It's a speaker's bureau," Uselton said.

"There are no special require-

ments for being a student advocate, but we would like to have high academic achievers and articulate people," Walker said.

Student advocates present lectures on request to businessmen.

"They work on their own topics, dealing with current economic problems and free market solutions," Walker added.

"We are not against government, but pro-individual. There is a definite role of government, but sometimes it does too much," Walker said.

The advocates don't support any one candidate, but believe that freedom is being continually eroded.

"There are too many taxes and you can't choose," Walker said. "The problem is that people are trying to decide how your life is run."

"If a businessman makes a profit, that means that he is giving a service to his community and that's like a natural check (on the business)," Walker said.

"Inflation is due to too much government spending," she added.

But Walker and Uselton said that the advocates and the center are trying to be objective on any issue when they give speeches.

"We try to be objective with our research, and some conclusions don't turn out the way we would like them to," Uselton said.

One study that was sponsored by CREFE concerned the impact of the Federal Drug Administration on the pharmaceutical industry, Uselton said.

The number of new drugs declined after government regulation started, and the companies had a strong incentive to go to Europe, where regulation standards are less stringent. But scandals with drugs like thalidomides, which caused thousands of deformities in newborns, showed that FDA protects many people, Uselton said.

CREFE's research function is being put to use in Bryan-College Station, where the center is cooperating with teachers at all levels.

"We point out to teachers in various subjects that there's an economic aspect to everything."

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