

State / Local



Photo by Alison Awbrey

The Lights Out stickers are just part of a larger energy conservation program at Texas A&M University. Recommended by the Special Energy Committee headed by Dr. Charles

McCandless, the stickers recommend turning off lights not in use for 15 minutes. No figures on energy savings can be computed because of prohibitive costs.

Energy program is still in place

By TERRI ZAWACKI
Battalion Reporter

The maroon and white stickers placed on light-switch plates in buildings at Texas A&M University are a familiar sight to most. For two years these stickers have been part of the University's energy-saving program.

A Special Energy Committee formed by then-President Jarvis Miller in 1978 designed the plates to serve as reminders to people to turn off lights when they would not be used for 15 minutes or longer, Gerald Scott, manager of engineering and energy for the University Physical Plant, said.

The committee was created in 1973, but later faded out. It was reorganized by Miller five years later.

Miller appointed Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Charles McCandless chairman of the committee at that time.

Unlike a few years ago during the Arab oil embargo, people today aren't as conscious of conserving energy, McCandless said.

They have "become less committed to saving energy," he said. "This is very unfortunate."

Others might have given up on

energy conservation, but Texas A&M hasn't. In fact, it is still operating under an energy-saving program of which the light-switch plates are perhaps the most visible evidence.

Promoting the 55 mph speed limit is another action the University is taking to aid conservation efforts. This primarily involves requiring people driving University vehicles to comply with the speed limit. Stickers have also been placed on side mirrors to remind drivers, Scott said.

Lighting in classrooms and offices has also been reduced by cutting off two of the four fluorescent lamps found in most lighting fixtures, he said. However, after lighting was initially reduced, adjustments were made if further lighting appeared necessary.

In another conservation effort hot water was turned off where it was not essential to operations, such as in

lavatories. It was left on in dorms and areas such as the Physical Plant where it is needed to wash instruments.

Alligator may leave endangered list

United Press International
AUSTIN — Alligators have become a danger to other species now, specially hunting dogs and cattle, and should be taken off the endangered species list so that South Texans can hunt them, Sen. Carl Parker, D-Port Arthur said Thursday.

Parker introduced a bill that would permit hunting, sale and purchase of alligators in Texas, if federal

authorities can be persuaded to take the alligator off the endangered species list.

If the animal comes off the list for Texas, Parker said, the bill would transfer management of the species to the state Department of Parks and Wildlife.

"I have received a number of complaints from people in my area stating that they have lost hunting dogs

and cattle to alligator attacks," he said. "Several years ago I supported placing alligators on the endangered species list for ecological reasons. The population has increased in South Texas to the point that a carefully managed harvest seems justified."

A report by the Parks and Wildlife Department estimated that the alligator population increased 50 percent from 1974 to 1978. In 86 Texas

counties, the report said, there were nearly 70,000 alligators.

The report also confirmed Parker's charges that alligators may be killing hunting dogs.

"Where alligators are numerous in marshes used for waterfowl hunting," the report said, "the chances of losing a hunting dog increase."

UH teachers end sickout after 5.1% raise; talks start

United Press International
HOUSTON — Negotiators for the University of Houston and student teaching assistants demanded a 5.1 percent raise and assistants agreed to end a three-day sickout.

The negotiations began at noon between English professor John McNamara, representing teaching assistants demanding an increase in the monthly minimum pay from \$350 to \$850, and UH Provost Dr. George

Wagner. Teaching assistants who had called in sick, forcing cancellation of classes in the English, foreign language and physical education departments, returned to work after Wagner signed a negotiating agreement late Wednesday.

The agreement called for an immediate 5.1 percent raise, the return to work of assistants calling in sick, no

punitive action against them, negotiations to begin at noon Thursday and end Feb. 27, and all issues to be negotiable.

Spokeswoman Chris Domino for the student teaching assistants said the sickout began Monday because the students had been hearing promises of pay raises for three years without seeing any results.

UH spokeswoman Wendy Adair said university officials were sympathetic and want to increase pay to all faculty.

They disagreed on the impact of the sickout. Domino said nearly 100 of an estimated 1,000 affected teaching assistants participated. Adair said about 65 of her estimate of 1,400 affected assistants were involved.

Domino said at least 150 classes did not meet at the peak of the sickout. Adair conceded some classes had not met but did not believe the impact was as widespread as Domino claimed.

Wildflower day sought in April

United Press International
AUSTIN — Carroll Abbott of Waco, a former newspaper man who said he went into the wildflower business because he couldn't convince anyone else to do it, now wants the Legislature to designate the fourth Saturday in April as official wildflower day in Texas.

Abbott, wearing jeans, a denim shirt and a belt buckle with the emblem of a beer manufacturer, called a news conference Thursday to promote his plan for wildflower day and to ask Texans to send him letters they support the idea.

When he gets a stack of letters his high," Abbott said, holding his hands two feet apart, he'll be back to the Legislature to push for passage of the resolution.

"I'm really serious about an official Texas wildflower day. I think it's appropriate and I think it's important that Texas be the state that does it first. We have 5,479 native plants, more than any other state," he said.

"This is not a pun, but interest in wildflowers is really growing. Wildflowers are a feast for the eye and food for the soul."

There also is a practical reason reasons should focus more on native plants, Abbott said.

"We're going to run out of water, we're going to run out of fertilizer, and we're going to run out of people to tend to plants, and you're going to need some of these tough Texan plants to survive. They're acclimated to Texas heat and Texas droughts. They're survivors."

Abbott said he had been to the secretary of state's office to register as an official wildflower lobbyist.

"I think I'm the only wildflower lobbyist, at least one would assume," he said. "I saw a guy in a bar last night and told him what I was going to do, and he said, 'Abbott, you're going to set lobbying back 100 years, and you've blown the dress all to hell.'"

Abbott said he doesn't anticipate any opposition to his proposal procuring an official wildflower day but he is concerned it will be lost in the process of other legislation.

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