

Local



Birds-Eye view

A second story window ledge on Reed McDonald building was the perfect place for this squirrel to escape from the hot sun.

The squirell, who refused to give his name, found the view from the ledge a bit better than from the clutter of a tree limb.

Staff photo by Greg Gammon

Free day at park set for older kids

Kids of all ages can enjoy a day at the local skating rink — even senior citizens. Pooh's Park, 1907 Texas Ave., Wednesday will hold its monthly free recreational period for citizens who are 55 and older. Activities are scheduled to begin at 9:30 and end at 11:30 a.m. The program will feature a semi-professional roller skating demonstration. Recreational activities will include free bowling, miniature golf and skating. Refreshments will be provided by the Pooh's Park Coordinating Committee composed of representatives from local senior citizen groups. Transportation may be arranged by contacting any local senior citizen program or organization.

Poultry manure to provide low cost energy

Manure down on the farm can now mean more than just a mess. It can mean fuel and that means money — money saved and perhaps money earned — and that's good news for both farmers and food-buying urbanites.

Chicken, swine or cow manure, for example, can be used to produce biogas, which a farmer can use to meet many of his energy needs. How successfully the farmer copes with his fuel needs and costs will be a significant factor in whether the United States is able to maintain its "cheap food" policy.

That's the assessment of Edward Fulton, a professor at Tarleton State University. He is not just talking about the problem; Fulton has built two anaerobic digestion systems in which manure ferments to produce the biogas and is showing farmers and agribusiness representatives how the technique can work for them. One of the systems is the size for a family farm and other is designed for specialized poultry, swine or dairy farming.

Biogas, which is 60 percent methane and 40 percent carbon dioxide, can be used in the same manner as natural gas or it can be used as a fuel for internal combustion engines with minor carburetor modifications.

Biogas also can be used to generate electricity and, theoretically at least, the farmer's excess electricity can be sold to the local power company for use by city folks and others.

There is no shortage of manure on most farms. Fulton estimates that a 200,000-chicken farm — a small operation as chicken farms go — produces about 60,000 pounds of manure daily, which in turn can produce 66,000 cubic feet of biogas.

The biogas can then be used to heat or cool and light the chicken houses. It can also be used to heat or cool the farmer's house and provide electricity for it and various other jobs.

"It is economical right now to build a digester if you can use the

energy produced by it," Fulton said.

Fulton has conducted his biogas project with a grant provided by the Center for Energy and Mineral Resources at Texas A&M University and by the Department of Energy.

He stressed that the value is in meeting a farmer's own energy needs — not in selling the excess electricity he might generate. Any additional revenues, however, would cut down on costs, which ultimately end up being passed along to the consumer.

Some folks might question whether the United States has a "cheap food" policy.

Fulton responds by pointing out that an average of 13.5 percent of each dollar earned by a typical U.S. resident goes for food, whereas western Europeans must fork over 25 to 35 percent of their dollar equivalent.

"If the U.S. is to maintain a 'cheap food' policy, the cost-competitive energy sources must be made feasible and adopted by potential users in agriculture," said the Tarleton professor. Tarleton State is part of the Texas A&M System.

"American agriculture requires intensive energy inputs," Fulton added, "and a shortage of energy will have a direct effect on food cost."

In addition to producing biogas for use as fuel, the anaerobic digestion of manure largely eliminates the problem of waste disposal.

After undergoing the digestion process, the residue is almost odorless and can effectively be used as a fertilizer, Fulton pointed out.

"More stringent environmental controls, greater numbers of animals per farm and widespread urban sprawl have made the management and disposal of manures a problem of major proportions to many farmers," he added.

Residues from the digesters also have some value as supplemental feed for livestock. Fulton emphasized, however,

that the overwhelming reason to install a digester is to meet on-site energy requirements.

While the thought of selling excess electricity to the local utility company is appealing, Fulton said, it will not be a highly profitable endeavor — even if it proves practical.

A representative for one utility company, John Starkey of Texas Power & Light Co., said his firm would approach reimbursement on a "cost-avoidance" basis.

"Texas Power & Light is interested in buying electricity from small power-producers for two reasons: one, the government says we are going to be interested and, two, the energy comes from a renewable source," Starkey said while participating in a program featuring Fulton's project.

"What we need to pay you (the farmer) is whatever we avoid spending for fuel," he said.

The TP&L engineer indicated numerous safety and metering problems would have to be worked

ed out before electricity could be transmitted from a farm to a power company.



AGGIE CLEANERS

111 College Main
846-4116

"CLOSE ENOUGH TO WALK!"

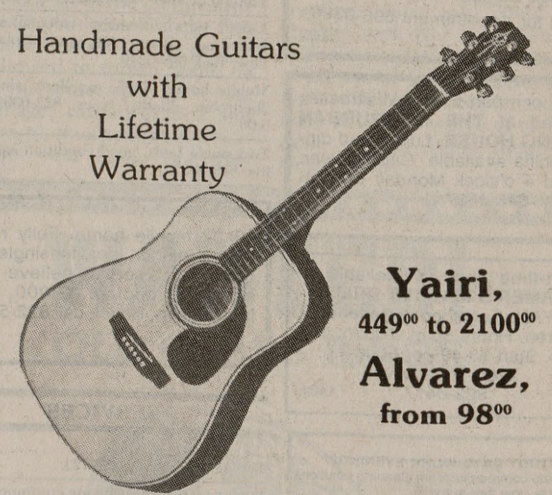
At Northgate Behind Loupot's

- Dry Cleaning • Laundry
- Alterations & Repairs

Ask about our Aggie Discount Cards

Alvarez Yairi

Handmade Guitars with Lifetime Warranty



Yairi, 449⁰⁰ to 2100⁰⁰
Alvarez, from 98⁰⁰

Reasonably priced at Keyboard Center

KEYBOARD CENTER

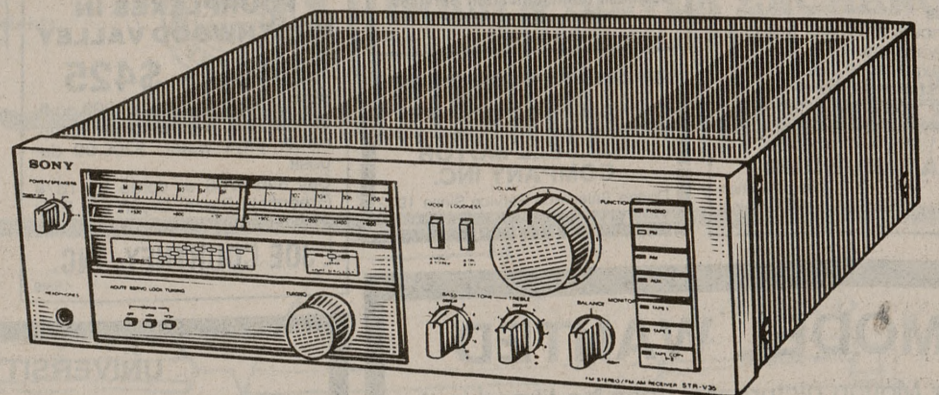
Layaway Visa Master Card
MANOR EAST MALL
713/779-7080 BRYAN, TX 77801

AUDIOVIDEO

SONY STR V-35 Receiver

35 Watts/Channel.
.03% T.H.D.
Servo Lock Tuning.

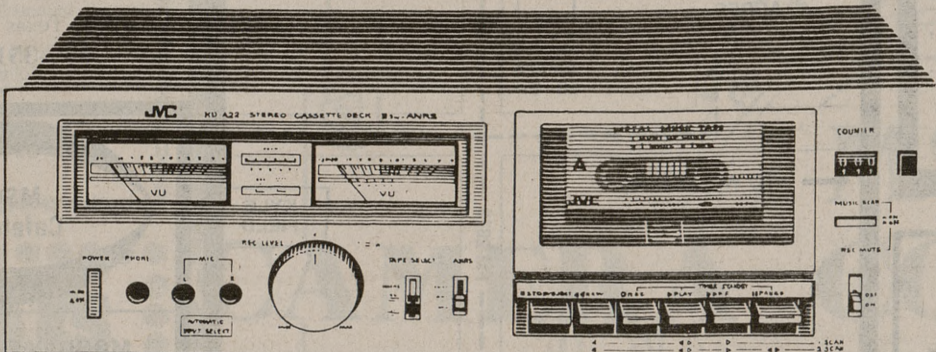
Sale Price **\$247⁰⁰**



JVC KD-A22 Cassette Deck

Music Scan.
Super ANRS.
Metal Capable.

Sale Price **\$169⁰⁰**



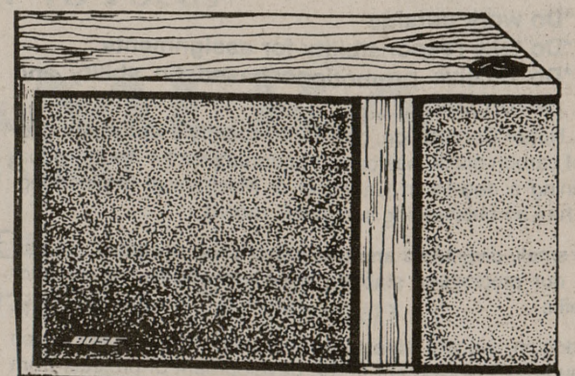
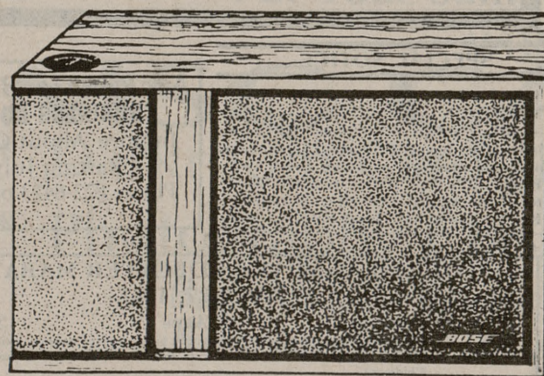
MAXELL
UD XL-II C-90

90 Minute
Cassette
Tapes

Sale Price **\$3⁶⁹**

BOSE 301 Speakers

Direct Reflecting
Sale Price **\$139⁰⁰** each



AUDIOVIDEO

LIMITED QUANTITIES

707 Texas Ave. in College Station
696-5719

We Believe in People Hours.

People Hours
Mon-Fri. . . 9-5
Saturday. . . 9-3
Drive thru - Mon-Sat
7 am - 7 pm
MPACT - 24 Hour Teller

No account activity during summer months.
No service charge.

College Station



Close to TAMU campus location

Member FDIC 693-1414

1501 Texas Ave. So. at Culpepper Plaza Shopping Center