

# Troubled Braniff searching for help

United Press International  
DALLAS — Financially beleaguered Braniff International asked Thursday to have other airlines honor its tickets if the company folds. At the same time Braniff, announced a dollar ticket sale in 10 Texas and Oklahoma cities.

Braniff President Howard Putnam met with aviation officials in Washington, D.C., to work out protection for Braniff customers.

Meanwhile, Braniff area sales manager Judy Gremm said the company planned a sale on round trip tickets in Amarillo,

Austin, Corpus Christi, Houston, Harlingen, Lubbock, Midland, San Antonio, Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

Gremm indicated the sale, in which full-fare ticket purchasers could get a second ticket for \$1, and Putnam's negotiations were not related.

"I don't know what would happen if the Putnam plan goes through," she said.

Putnam said Wednesday that speculation on the airline's future has hurt ticket sales, adding to the troubled company's financial woes.

"A woman called on the

phone (Wednesday) and asked if her ticket to Honolulu would be good in May," The Dallas Morning News quoted Putnam as saying. "I told her I didn't know."

"She probably went right out and traded the ticket in for one on another airline."

Putnam said he would ask the Air Transport Association and the Civil Aeronautics Board in Washington to approve a proposal calling for competing airlines to honor Braniff tickets in the event the airline folds.

The airline, long-plagued by huge debt service, registered a record \$160.6 million loss last year. Faced with short-term cash-flow problems, Braniff two weeks ago initiated two-for-one ticket sales.

On Wednesday, the airline reportedly began calling in furloughed employees to build up its reservation staff. The sale will begin at noon Friday and run through midnight Saturday. The Dallas-Fort Worth area was not included in the sale.

Putnam issued a statement Wednesday to employees, who this week were put on half-pay, saying Braniff management cannot guarantee continued operation.

"I can't just name a date and say we have enough cash to operate until then," he said. "It's not that easy. We certainly have no current plans to cease operations. But I can't guarantee we won't."



photo by Laura Hatch

And now for the real trick...

Long-time frisbee enthusiast Mike Barry, a junior computer science major, gets into the "spring of things" on the Academic Building lawn with short sleeves and the popular summer sport of frisbee.

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R UNDER 17 REQUIRES ACCOMPANYING PARENT OR ADULT GUARDIAN  
2:40 5:00 7:20 9:40  
**THE BORDER**  
A Universal - RKO Picture  
R 2:45 5:05 7:25 9:45  
Science transformed him into a monster...  
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2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50  
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Is giving pleasure a crime?  
  
**American Gigolo**

## Computer cards offer coupons to customers

United Press International  
ARLINGTON — An Arlington company has taken a Texas-sized step forward with its introduction of a network of computer terminals that will provide discount information and coupons to card-carrying consumers.

But even greater steps are ahead:

Cash Saver Club Inc. intends to transform its plastic cards to debit cards with which a customer can purchase an item in a store and have the cash automatically transferred from his bank account to the merchant's account.

Also, Cash Saver Club intends to expand rapidly from its Texas base to cover the nation — or at least the major metropolitan areas.

Cash Saver Club was created five years ago by Dallas businessman Chet Lemon, who sold memberships in his organization. Members were sent directories specifying discounts they could get by shopping with certain retailers. The members

saved money; the merchants used the discounts as a form of advertising. The company operated in Arlington, Dallas, Fort Worth, the Rio Grande Valley and San Antonio.

Now the company has plunged into the computer age. Cash Saver Club last week introduced a computer terminal that will give its members the infor-

*The ultimate goal is to turn the Cash Saver Card into a debit card, which a merchant may use to charge a purchase directly to the buyer's bank account.*

mation they want by simply pressing a square on the screen of the terminal. The first club terminal has been placed in the lobby of Arlington's Texas Commerce Bank.

Two more terminals will be placed in Arlington business establishments in March. Lemmon, financing the project himself, has ordered 200 more terminals at almost \$7,000 each from Syntech Inc. in Garland. Syntech also provided the central computer to Lemmon's operation. He intends to blanket the Dallas-Fort Worth area with terminals and then expand to other points in Texas. Houston will be an expansion target after the original five cities are connected.

Each member will be billed \$5 a month. Cash Saver Club has between 5,000 and 6,000 members now, but is planning heavy advertising and public relations campaign soon to increase its membership. The firm has some 6,000 retailers participating, but this list also will be expanded. The club will charge retailers a one-time fee of \$18 to be listed.

When a card-holder wants to make a purchase, he or she goes to the nearest computer terminal and runs the card through a slot. A choice of locations will flash on the terminal screen. The card-holder chooses by touching the screen. Then the terminal will show various categories of merchandise. When the selection is made, the screen will show the names of merchants and the discounts they offer. Some merchants may offer a discount coupon; if the cardholder wants such a coupon, the machine can be directed to print it out.

The value to the merchant of the coupon will go to someone who is interested in the product, Lemon said. "Research shows that only 6 percent of most coupons offered now are used," Lemon said. "The other 94 percent are wasted."

"Our system also offers some control. The merchant can limit the offer. Perhaps he wants to issue only 10,000 coupons, for example. We can tell our computer to issue only 10,000 coupons and then stop."

The next step is to program other information, coming from already existing sellers of database material, into the computer for sale to cardholders. Lemmon wants to begin this step within 18 months.

The ultimate goal is to turn the Cash Saver Card into a debit card, which a merchant may use to charge a purchase directly to the buyer's bank account. Merchants in the program would have their own computer terminals in their shops.

"It's probably a couple of years away, but that's where we think we're headed," Lemon said. "We've laid the groundwork. You have to have a merchant base to do this."

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