

Research projects destroyed in fire



staff photo by Octavio Garcia

Smoke pours from the Agricultural Engineering Research Lab

by Beverly Hamilton
 Battalion Staff
 More than \$1 million worth of research projects on the Texas A&M west campus were destroyed Monday night when the building in which they were housed was gutted by fire.

The experimental engine equipment which was destroyed was being used to test alternative fuel sources, said Dr. Edward Hiler, head of Texas A&M's Agricultural Engineering Department. Several other alternative fuel projects and a water project being conducted by graduate students also were destroyed.

Hiler said the fire quickly spread throughout half the building after it apparently started in the south end. He said the fire could have been fueled by the foam insulation in the walls.

He said the other half of the building was badly damaged by smoke.

The cause of the fire, which started about 6 p.m. in the Agricultural Engineering Research Lab on Agronomy Road has not been determined, said Charles Yeager, College Station assistant fire chief.

"The fire destroyed everything on

the south end of the building including projects and equipment," Yeager said.

Yeager said the building contained several drums of oil, cylinders containing experiments and alcohol propane. All of the eurothane foam insulation on the building burned, he said, as well as wood and storage containers.

"They had quite a bit of combustibles in the area," he said.

College Station firefighter Jon Mies was taken to St. Joseph Hospital for heat exhaustion and smoke inhalation. He was treated and released.

Several other firemen were treated at the scene of the fire for smoke inhalation and heat exhaustion.

No one was in the building when the fire erupted, Yeager said.

"The major loss was to some of the graduate students," Yeager said. "They had a year or two tied up in those projects."

College Station firemen were investigating the scene of the fire today and expect to determine the fire's cause by later in the week.



staff photo by David Fisher

A College Station fireman takes an oxygen break

Hearing set on proposed tax increase

by Hope E. Paasch
 Battalion Staff
 The 1983 Brazos County Appraisal District budget was disapproved Monday night by College Station school board trustees. Earlier this month the board approved the budget.

Board members said they voted for the disapproval at least partially because they were concerned about the rationale behind the 47 percent increase over the 1982 budget. Since property reappraisal was supposed to

have been completed in 1982, trustees said they did not understand the increase requested in the 1983 budget. The proposed budget calls for six additional employees, including four appraisers.

Trustee John Reagor said the appraisal district has not provided the board with enough information to justify the budget request. "We have asked (the appraisal district) for the information and we haven't received it," he said. The information sought by the board includes

estimated expenditures for 1982, reasons for the wide range in salaries of field appraisers, basis for car allowances and documentation of other appropriations. Several board members said they wanted to disapprove the budget because the appraisal district has not been cooperative in completing a certified tax roll.

Trustee Bill Wasson said: "This is a vindictive vote on my part. I don't care if they get a budget at all. As far as I'm concerned, they can go to the district judge for their budget — and I understand that is one of their options."

Reagan cutbacks force PBS to look elsewhere for funds

by Rebeca Zimmermann
 Battalion Staff
 Cutbacks in federal funding for public broadcasting have forced many stations to find additional sources of revenue. KAMU-TV and KAMU-FM, Texas A&M's educational television and radio stations, are no exception.

Nationwide, the budget for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting will fall from \$172 million to \$137 million in October, the start of the new federal fiscal year. It will fall to \$130 million in 1984. And the Reagan administration has proposed elimination of all public broadcasting funding by 1986.

The radio station receives \$25,000 a year from the University to operate. The current community grant — federal funds — for KAMU-FM is \$30,000. This leaves about \$70,000 to be raised to pay for staff members' salaries. Chastain said the radio station has four on-the-air appeals during the year. Underwriting and contract production also provides funds.

Quick clinics give fast relief to citizens

by Nancy Floeck
 Battalion Staff
 When Juanita Montgomery, her husband and their four children moved to Bryan from Tennessee, they left behind a doctor familiar with the children, their asthma attacks and their chronic ear infections.

With little money in a strange town, Montgomery said she panicked the first time her children needed to see a doctor. "I didn't know where to go," she said. "Every doctor I called had to have the money right away. I couldn't afford that."

"They're walk-in clinics. You don't have to have an appointment. You usually get seen within 15, 20 minutes or less, whereas if you go to a doctor's office, you have to sit all day." Broken bones that don't require surgery, minor cuts requiring stitches, burns, rashes, routine shots and physicals, electrocardiograms and removal of small cysts are a few of the medical problems convenience clinics are equipped to handle.

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forecast

Today's Forecast: High of 81, low in the high 60s tonight. Partly cloudy skies, drier, cooler day with less humidity.

Succeeds brother at post

Gemayel elected Lebanon's president

United Press International
 BEIRUT, Lebanon — Amin Gemayel was elected Lebanon's new president by an overwhelming majority today, succeeding his brother Beshir exactly one week after his brother was assassinated by a bomb.

The session opened with five minutes of silence for Amin's slain brother and the chamber burst into applause when Amin's total passed the 62 mark. Amin was made the overwhelming favorite to take the election when his only serious opponent, former president Camille Chamoun, withdrew from the race Monday.

Chamoun, 82, the right-wing leader of the National Liberal Party, had backed President-elect Gemayel but originally said he would contest the new vote. Intensive efforts began immediately to prevent a split in the rightist Christian ranks. The pressure mounted on Chamoun to drop out of the contest when Amin won the endorsement of influential Moslems on Sunday.

Chamoun told reporters Monday he was withdrawing because of "my keenness on preserving the unity of Lebanon and the unity of the Lebanese people." The Moslem community had initially opposed the parliamentary meeting that elected the slain president-elect, but the 34-year-old leader quickly won its confidence.

Amin was always considered more acceptable to Moslems and in the outpouring of rage over his brother's assassination, there also was automatic sympathy for another member of the family. The Moslems distrusted Beshir because of his ruthless conduct as a Christian militia leader in the 1975-76 civil war, both toward his enemies and his rivals.