



Fine furry friend

staff photo by David Fisher

Cheryl Winters of College Station plays with a chinchilla at The Pet Emporium in Post Oak Mall. Winter's furry friend resembles an overgrown, fuzzy rat; of course, his fur is much more valuable.

Plan ahead, youths told

United Press International
NEW YORK — Too many young people wait too long to get their act together when it comes to future business careers, says the president of a human resources management consulting firm.

Andrew Sherwood, of Goodrich and Sherwood Co., advises teenagers to begin planning careers as soon as possible upon entering high school.

Learn to read with speed and comprehension, he says. Take extra study courses if your reading is weak. Then, turn the television off and read, read, read.

After college you will have to read reports, industry magazines, business papers and piles of correspondence to stay on top of your job and get ahead.

Learn to communicate orally and in writing, he says. You'll need to persuade others to see things your way and keep your superiors posted.

You will have to make oral or written reports and presentations or write intercompany memos. Take courses to help develop such skills, Sherwood says. Make a special effort when doing book reports, history outlines, English compositions.

His other tips:

- Look for chances to speak before school groups and others.

- Learn to work with people in a common cause. If you're athletic, try team sports. Join in group activities at church, in your neighborhood, at Scouts, at the YMCA.

- Learn how to get along with both superiors and peers.
- Watch natural leaders and work to develop their traits.

- Engage in extracurricular activities that later will be as helpful to your career as scholastic credits. Become active in student government organizations.
- Talk to and ask advice of re-

latives or friends who are in careers that interest you.

- If you're headed for college, zero in on your major now so you can design high school courses to better prepare for that major.

- Concentrate on studies. Learn self discipline so you get grades needed for college or grades that will look good to a prospective employer.

- Learn all you can to help in a

career. Get practical experience during school holidays and summer vacations.

- If you want a job in journalism or public relations, work for your newspaper — without pay if necessary.

- If you want to be a teacher, look for a summer camp counselor's job.

- Take any job you can get as it gives you a leg up on the career you want.

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Plastic lens makes solar power cheap

United Press International
DALLAS — The success of the world's first energy system using a plastic lens to focus sunlight solar cells indicates solar energy could be an economical alternative to conventional fuels later this decade, says the engineer in charge of the project.

Mark O'Neill, the director of Fresnel solar collector programs at E-Systems, said the \$1.1 million experimental system installed at Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Airport converts solar radiation directly into electricity and produces steam as a byproduct.

"It is the highest efficiency photovoltaic system that has been installed anywhere on a large scale," he said. "Its overall efficiency is 60 percent."

When sunlight is converted to energy, about 10 percent of available sunlight is converted to electricity and about 50 percent is converted to heat, he said.

Built under a Department of Energy contract, the system generates 27 kilowatts of electricity for the emergency lights in the

airport's central utilities plant. It also generates about 140 kilowatts of hot water for the boiler used in the airport's air conditioning system.

Rather than the many rows of solar panels used in conventional systems, this project uses an arched, 3-by-8-foot Fresnel lens which contains thousands of little prisms. This plastic lens collects all the light which hits it and focuses it on solar cells — lined up in a row 1 inch wide and 8 feet long.

"Silicon cells are very expensive (about \$25) now," O'Neill said. "So the trick is to use a cheap plastic lens to magnify the sunlight onto a small number of these solar cells."

Because the concentrated light is much hotter than that hitting a solar cell in a conventional system, engineers had to find a way to cool the cells.

"We mounted the cells on a copper pipe with a flat top and we pass water through there to keep the cells cool," he said. "That heat exchanger also heats

up the water so we can use that energy (as steam).

The new system saves silicon and money and is more efficient. That's why we think it has a whole lot of promise for the future, O'Neill said.

The experimental system is not cost effective, however, because workers had to design each part of the system and practically build the project by hand.

O'Neill estimates electricity from this system costs \$15 to \$20 a kilowatt. However, an upcoming project using a new generation of equipment at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, N.M., is expected to cut the cost to about \$10 a kilowatt.

Within a decade, mass production techniques could make a system similar to that at the airport competitive with fossil fuels, he said.

"The guys at Sandia Laboratories have evaluated what our system would cost if it were mass produced, and they came up with \$2 per kilowatt," he said. "That price would be completely competitive with fossil fuels."

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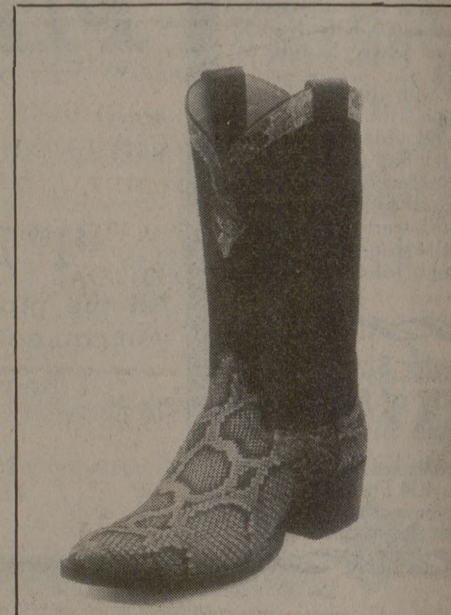
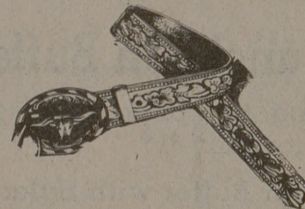
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