



Sewing in Sbisa?

staff photo by Brenda Davidson

Cherie Pack, a full-time employee of the food services department, catches up on a little sewing while Sbisa is closed during the summer months. She is making smocks for employees to wear.

## Designing of prototype robot begins at A&M

COLLEGE STATION — The first prototype robot to be designed by engineers in Texas A&M University's new robotics laboratory is on the drawing boards, but its designers can't give many clues to how it will look or what it will do.

Under a confidential agreement with Surgikos, a division of Johnson & Johnson, the engineers are designing and will construct a robot to perform specific manufacturing tasks at Surgikos' Dallas plant which manufactures medical equipment.

"It will be reprogrammable, use a laser and meet a variety of tasks," says Dr. Gordon Hopkins, head of the laboratory and the school's mechanical engineering department. The

laboratory is operated by the Texas Engineering Experiment Station, a research arm of the Texas A&M System.

A second major project for the robotics laboratory, funded by Texas Instruments, involves the improvement of the vision system of TI's 990 minicomputer and a study of the effects of machining tolerances on robot accuracy.

The work is being performed by professors Hopkins, Ben Mooring and Norman Griswold. The first project includes Dr. Dennis Bingham.

"Industry wants students trained in optics, pattern recognition, image processing and other areas of robotics," Griswold said. "Through these grants for research, we can bring students into the labora-

tory to see actual state-of-the-art work in robotics. At the graduate level, students can actually work on projects."

In the future, the researchers hope to design robots with better vision and control. They also intend to explore robotic memory requirements so that the machines might "learn" more similarly to the way humans do.

"Robotics are essential for our society and it is absolutely necessary that we in higher education and high-technology research be involved in the study and development of intelligent machinery," Hopkins said.

The engineering experiment station has devoted 5,000 square feet in the soon-to-be completed Engineering Laboratories Building for robotics research at Texas A&M.

## Delayed loading of fuel may cost plant thousands

United Press International GLEN ROSE — Officials at the controversial Comanche Peak nuclear plant said they would again delay plans to load fuel into the plant's reactor, which could cost \$500,000 a day. "To put it simply," plant spokesman Dick Ramsey said, "we've just got more work to be done than there's time to do it between now and the end of September."

The plant, located southwest of Dallas, has been plagued by massive cost overruns and numerous questions about its safety. Utility officials said Monday

they were moving the date for fueling the reactor from September to December.

Ramsey said any postponement after that date could mean an additional \$500,000 a day for replacement power and other costs.

Officials said routine construction and inspection matters forced the delay. They said the

first reactor was nearly complete, and the second about two-thirds finished.

Ramsey said plant officials still were awaiting a decision from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on whether current inspection procedures were acceptable.

The fueling operation was delayed earlier this year.

## Area land owners qualify

### Program honors titleholders

by Gwendolyn Hattaway

Battalion Reporter At least seven farm and ranch owners in Brazos County qualify for a program that recognizes families who have had land in continuous agricultural production for 100 years or more.

Qualifying families will be recognized by the Texas Department of Agriculture's 1983 Family Land Heritage Program in November. Recipients are presented a certificate and honored at a state ceremony at the state capitol.

They also will receive a copy of the Family Land Heritage Registry, which gives a brief history of each qualifying farm and ranch and includes old photographs of the families and their homes. The registry is printed in the spring.

"It's quite an accomplishment to keep land in the family for 100 years," Carolyn Baethge, of the Department of Agriculture, said Tuesday. "We have had to turn a few applicants down this year because we found out they had leased their land to some-

one else at one time or another."

The Department of Agriculture believes that if the land was leased, the family didn't play a significant role in the agricultural production, Baethge said.

"The same rule applies if the owner isn't a Texas resident," she said. "It would be very difficult for a family to play a major role in agricultural production while living elsewhere."

Registration for the program, which began in 1974, is open until August 16.

Applications may be obtained

from the county judge, County Historical Commission Chairman or by writing to Family Land Heritage Program, Texas Department of Agriculture, Post Office Box 12847, Austin, Texas 78711.

The application asks for a brief history of the land — the original owner, subsequent owners and their relationship to the original owner. After completion, the application must be taken to the county judge to be signed.



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