

Aggie project to help handicapped girl speak

United Press International
Three Texas A&M University engineering students are developing a device that may allow 15-year-old cerebral palsy victim to speak.

Searching for a worthwhile electrical engineering design project, the students named Rachael Raatz, the daughter of an art designer on campus. Born with cerebral palsy, Rachael cannot walk, feed herself or perform many of the tasks most people take for granted.

"She's dependent on her family for everything," her father, Jim Raatz of the Texas Engineering Experiment Station, said. "That wouldn't be so

hard to bear if only she could talk.

"Sometimes when she's trying to tell me what she wants, I can't figure it out fast enough. She gets frustrated, I get frustrated and the whole situation falls apart," he said.

Students Spencer Shawhan, Scott Rich and Lee Ziegenhals have developed a voice-synthesizing machine that utilizes a hand-held keyboard and a microprocessor. A speech synthesizer chip generates appropriate sounds.

The basic machine design and programming have been completed, and the students are working on the keyboard. Similar machines are on the market, they said, but the compact size

and low price tag — about \$130 so far — make the students' design unique and well suited for the handicapped.

Computers like the one the students have developed will play a major role in helping handicapped persons overcome barriers in the everyday world, Raatz said.

"One of the first things parents of handicapped children discover is that the medical profession can do little beyond diagnosis of the problem," Raatz said.

"Parents finally end up having to go to adaptive people who can provide the appliances to help their children function in the everyday world. Those people are engineers," he said.

Warped



by Scott McCullar

Infant death investigated

United Press International
AUSTIN — Officials from Bexar and Kerr counties received \$25,000 in state funds to continue their investigations of a child and infant deaths.

The \$25,000, donated by the executive funding committee of the governor's Criminal Justice

Division, was released to the Alamo Area Council of Governments at its meeting in Austin Monday.

Half of the money will go to Kerr County, and the other half will be released to Bexar County.

A nine-month grand jury investigation resulted in a murder indictment against nurse Genevieve Jones for the death of 15-month-old Chelsea Ann McClellan of Kerrville.

Texan ending 1,650 mile run

United Press International
ELMSFORD, N.Y. — A 1,650-mile benefit marathon run from Dallas was turned down for sponsorship by the Muscular Dystrophy organization, but the family of the runner has been happy to help.

Thomas Holodak, 29, was due to complete his run Tuesday.

He was last spotted Monday on Route 46 in New Jersey. The runner was inspired by

the story of Terry Fox, a one-legged marathon runner who ran across Canada to raise money for cancer research.

Holodak left his Dallas home on June 10. His favorite charity, Muscular Dystrophy, refused to sponsor him, his mother said.

"There was nobody interested in backing him, but we're going to give money to charity anyway," Eleanor Holodak said.

"I decided to donate 5 cents

for every mile he ran in order not to have the trip be in vain," she said.

"Since I decided to do that, relatives, friends, even my daughter-in-law's parents have decided to contribute," Mrs. Holodak said.

She said Thomas, a physical education teacher and track coach at a Dallas high school, will decide which charity should get the donations when he finishes the run in Elmsford, his home

town.

"The money will probably go to Muscular Dystrophy, who he asked to sponsor him in the first place," Mrs. Holodak said.

"They said the trip was too dangerous for them to be involved. They said if he wanted to run somewhere locally (in Dallas), they would be glad to take part," she said.

Holodak has been averaging 40 miles a day and has lived on a daily meal and plenty of fluids, his mother said.

Stockyard aiming for tourist center

United Press International
FORT WORTH — Las Vegas entertainer Wayne Newton is investing \$16 million to develop the historic Fort Worth Stockyards into an entertainment center expected to draw 2.5 million tourists a year.

Newton, one of five investors in the \$45 million deal, owns half interest in the project announced Monday by Billy Bob Barrett, owner of the Billy Bob's Texas night club in Fort Worth and one of the investors.

Plans for the development include a turn-of-the-century county fair featuring carnival rides and an upgraded Cowtown Coliseum, which is owned by the city, said project spokesman David Lindsey.

"I have fallen in love with the Stockyards and with Fort Worth," Newton said. "I think we have a great opportunity to build a major tourist, entertainment and commercial center in this historic setting."

Newton and the other investors have committed \$32.3 million to the project, and they are counting on the U.S. Depart-

ment of Housing and Urban Development to provide them with a \$12.5 million grant.

HUD would make a decision on the grant by October, Lindsey said, and if it failed to approve the money, he said the project would be revised.

"We're not making this into a Disneyland or a Big D-type development," Lindsey said. "The charm of the Stockyards is that they're real."

"It's a large-scale area that should be developed very sensitively. It's going to be a real authentic western center," Lindsey said.

The other investors are all Fort Worth businessmen, including William F. Beuck II, a developer; Holt Hickman, president of Pacific Cruise Systems Inc., manufacturer of automobile cruise controls; and Steve "Cowboy" Murrin, a real estate investor.

Lindsey said the development was expected to draw 2.5 million tourists a year and projected it would generate 1,600 permanent jobs.

Murder trial fund request dropped

United Press International
AUSTIN — A Walker County Judge says the county withdrew its request for \$150,000 in state assistance for the capital murder trial of prison inmate Eroy Brown because it knew the appropriation would not be approved.

Judge Ralph Davis said Monday he withdrew the request for the funds after being informed that both Comptroller Bob Bullock and Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby planned to vote against awarding the aid.

Hobby, Bullock and Gov. Mark White comprise the advisory council that approves distribution of funds from the Criminal Justice Division of the governor's office.

Davis said the county, which contains a large part of the state's prison system, had hoped to use the state assistance for a future trial of Brown, who faces a capital murder charge in the death of Ellis Unit farm manager Billy Max Moore.

As yet, no date has been set for the trial.

Brown has been tried twice

for capital murder in the killing of Ellis Unit Warden Wallace Pack. The first trial resulted in a mistrial, and Brown was acquitted in the second trial of charges stemming from Pack's death.

Nearly \$500,000 was expended in Brown's first two trials, and Walker County authorities have said they cannot proceed with a third trial without more money.

"It's up to him (the district attorney) to decide what he (Brown) will be charged with, but it's up to the county to pay for it," Davis said.

White said if Brown eventually goes to trial for Moore's death, he would try to provide legal assistance through the attorney general's office.

State Sen. Craig Washington, D-Houston, who served as Brown's attorney in the first two cases, has opposed a third trial, saying there has been no new evidence.

Brown admitted that he shot Moore and drowned Pack, but said he did so because he feared the two planned to kill him in an area of the prison grounds known as the bottoms.

Soviet officials barred from space center

United Press International
HOUSTON — Four high-ranking Soviet officials came to Houston as guests of a sister-city association, but one place they really wanted to visit is off limits to them, State Department officials said.

The mayors of Baku, Minsk and Voronezh, plus the administrator in charge of Moscow had asked for permission to see the Johnson Space Center but were turned down by the State Department Monday.

Officials also said all military installations are off-limits to the Soviet visitors.

Since the Soviet Union officially allows Americans to see only 20 percent of its nation, the

U.S. reciprocates by limited Soviet travel to about 24 percent of this country, said Judy Jameson, with the State Department in Washington.

"Actually the Soviets only let Americans see about 2 percent of their country, since what is available to American tourists is basically inhospitable territory," Jameson said.

The organization which brought the men to Texas is called the Houston — Baku Sister City Association. Baku, like Houston, is a city whose fortunes are tied to petroleum.

The visitors also toured Tennesco, department stores and River Oaks mansions. They will leave Houston Wednesday.

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