

## Business turns gator into gift

United Press International

NEW ORLEANS —David Rubenstein knows there's nothing unusual about turning Louisiana alligators into belts, wallets, luggage tags and watch straps. What's unusual is doing it BYOA — Bring Your Own Alligator.

Rubenstein has invited hunters participating in the state's annual alligator season to bring him catches. In return for a healthy piece of cash, he'll have their personalized gator gifts ready in time for Christmas.

Rubenstein Brothers, a men's clothing store in downtown New Orleans, will take an alligator skin, make sure it is properly cured, then send it off for a string of processes from tanning to cutting to buckling.

"There's a lot of people who just like the macho thing," said Rubenstein. "Of course, I'd better avoid saying macho, in case there's some girl gator hunters out there."

Alligator season opened Saturday and runs through Oct. 7.

Louisiana is the nation's largest producer of alligator hides, with

an expected harvest of 15,000 to 17,000 this year. Florida is the next largest producer with 2,000 hides.

Gator skins usually are sold to a wholesaler, who then exports them to Spain or Italy where they are manufactured into items for import back into the United States.

Rubenstein said Louisiana hunters should skip this multi-national nonsense and come away with an item that's intensely personal. Each item will carry the name of the person who did the catching.

The one thing a self-caught gator gift will not carry is a cheap price tag. A belt will run \$135, and that's with an everyday sort of buckle. Custom buckles can run as high as \$10,000.

"There are no savings for bringing in your own skin," Rubenstein said. "There's actually a lot more expense for us to handle it on a custom basis. The uniqueness is really what you're getting out of it."

Let an amateur wish to join the fun, Rubenstein warned that catching an alligator legally is no

easy task.

Would-be hunters must either own the land they plan to hunt or secure the owner's permission, then apply for permits from the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Tags are issued according to the number of acres being hunted.

Boating around the bayous, hunters set out lines with big pieces of chicken attached to hooks. If the sportsmen find the line has been pulled from the stake on which it is hung, they know only there's something at the other end. They do not know how big that something is.

The method of skinning is changed each year to prevent poachers from passing off last year's overkill as this year's legal catch. The procedure dictates notches cut into the skin.

"Please bring your alligator in properly handled," Rubenstein said. "We don't want anyone dragging a live alligator in on a rope."

## Dallas 3,600-acre park proposed by developer

United Press International

DALLAS — Developer Trammell Crow announced Tuesday a proposal for the city to create a 12-mile-long, 3,600-acre park studded with 13 small lakes in the greenbelt area, through which the usually sluggish Trinity River flows near downtown.

The Chain of Lakes project could be completed on a step-by-step basis for a total cost of about \$46 million, said Crow, who is not proposing to build the development himself.

It's an alternative to the long-discussed Town Lake project city leaders have considered — and repeatedly rejected — for half a century. A new report on the Town Lake project is due to be submitted to the City Council next month.

"We're just proposing this as active citizens in the area (and the proposal) would seem an ideal solution," Crow, the nation's largest real estate developer, said.

The project would have to be approved and funded by the City

Council. Money could come from taxpayer revenues or private donations.

At a news conference in his Loews Anatole Hotel, Crow enthusiastically asked, "How else could we get a 3,600-acre park for only \$10,000 an acre?"

Asked what his next step would be to accomplish the project, Crow replied: "I don't know. Something."

The land — much of it donated by the family of developer John Stemmons — already is held by the city.

Crow and a group of associates interested in the concept commissioned the Fort Worth engineering firm of Carter & Burgess to draw tentative plans for the Chain of Lakes project. Carter & Burgess designed a similar project for the Trinity River in Fort Worth.

"Fort Worth did it one bite at a time," Gene Carter of the engineering firm said. "I have never been so excited about a project in my life and I have been at it for quite a

few years now."

The total project would contain between 12 and 16 softball fields and 15 to 20 soccer fields, and would be connected by 30 to 40 miles of hiking and bike trails. The trail would cross the river at low water dams.

Day camping, picnic areas and wildflower fields also would be included.

Property in the area would be enhanced by the project, Crow said. He has some holdings that now border on the greenbelt. He also visualizes residential areas springing up near the project after it is completed.

In addition to its recreational aspects, the low dams and aeration fountains planned in the Chain of Lakes project would improve the quality of water in the river. The flood control function of the present greenbelt would be maintained.

## Subcommittee approves land exchange on border

United Press International

WASHINGTON — A House subcommittee Tuesday approved a compromise proposal to allow a land exchange designed to end a nine-year dispute involving the Toledo Bend Reservoir Project on the Texas-Louisiana border.

The House Agriculture Subcommittee on Forests, Family Farms and Energy approved the bill authorizing the land exchange between the government and the Sabine River Authorities of Texas, sending it to the full panel for consideration in the near future. A similar measure is pending in the Senate.

The bill would settle a long-running controversy involving whether the Sabine River Authorities of Texas and Louisiana must apply annually for exemptions from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission land rental charges for the hydro-power project.

The charges have been assessed every year on about 34,000 acres of

Sabine National Forest land in Texas that was inundated during creation of the 65-mile-long reservoir — the nation's fifth largest manmade body of water.

Under current FERC regulations, the authorities are exempt from fees as long as the hydro-power project is operated without profit, but they must apply for the exemptions annually.

"Our fear is that if a federal demand or ultimatum is issued to the authorities to make payment of the accumulated land rental fees which began in 1970, the authorities of Louisiana and Texas would be unable to pay," H. David Smith of the Louisiana authority said.

"A most likely alternative would be for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to revoke our license and place the Toledo Bend Reservoir's operation and maintenance in a federal role, thus making the property a federal liability."

"The escalating rental fees have

increased to the point that the rental fees for 1983 are expected to be \$440,000, which exceeds the overall cost of operation and maintenance of the Toledo Bend Reservoir," he said.

Sam Collins, Sabine River Authority of Texas general manager, said the authorities became concerned the land might be sold if the Forest Service decided that the 34,000 acres were no longer needed.

Under the exchange, the government would transfer 31,000 acres of inundated lands, 100 acres of flood-plain land and a 10.95-acre recreation area to the Sabine River Authority of Texas. In return, the authority would give the government 586 acres of valuable flood-plain lands and \$650,000 in cash.

Originally, a bill was introduced allowing the exchange that did not include monetary compensation.

## Colonel vows to keep flags flying

United Press International

SAN ANTONIO — "Keep 'em flying" is not an unusual creed for a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel, but John Tate does not have airplanes on his mind when he says it.

For the fourth time in three different cities, thieves have come in the night to steal Tate's American and Texas flags.

But Tate, 67, who discovered the flags missing from his north San Antonio home last weekend, vowed Tuesday that his flags will fly once more and that he will make it diffi-

cult for anyone to steal them again.

Tate's flags were taken once when he lived in Austin and twice in Ardmore, Okla., where he said police caught the kids who did it. He suspects teenagers are responsible for the latest theft as well.

"They're probably hanging in someone's bedroom," he said. "I don't like it, obviously."

Tate, a retired lieutenant colonel who moved to San Antonio in March, said he paid \$600 for a 30-foot aluminum pole, the flags and a rope.

"Whoever took the flags must have had to stand on their car or something, because they cut the rope above the clamp," he said. "Their knife was very dull. They really sawed through the rope instead of cutting it."

Although the stolen flags flew for only a few days, Tate said his neighbors already miss them.

"There are people I don't even know who come up to me while they walk in the neighborhood and ask what happened to them," he said.

## Abuse

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But, Hyden said, as long as it seems to be safe the child should be with the parents.

"However, when you have a situation where it's confirmed or it's absolutely certain that child abuse is occurring, you've got to stop it," Hyden said. "You can't sit back and think this is going to stop. If you and I saw someone really abusing a child it would be a grave mistake to think that it is probably a one-time occurrence. You cannot just hold your breath and hope it will go away."

Detective Kevin Roby of the Col-

lege Station Police Department said they never give out information concerning who called in a child abuse report.

"A lot of times people are not going to give their names anyway, or they will give some fictitious name because they don't want to get involved, but yet they don't want to see a child get hurt," he said.

After the perpetrator is arrested, the case is turned over to the Brazos County District Attorney's Office for further investigation and prosecution.

"In College Station we have worked on several cases of decency and sexual assault of a child," Roby

said. "The perpetrators have already been arrested and prosecution pending at this time."

Roby said that because children are more easily intimidated than adults, they are prime suspects for abuse.

"When kids are growing up, parents teach them to do what adults tell them to do," Roby said. "They are to respect their peers, so a kid is going to do what an adult tells them to do."

"However kids are finally speaking out and they are not going to be touched that way or have something done to them that is not right or doesn't feel right."

## THE UNDERGROUND

SBISA Basement

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## SKI CLUB MEETING



TIME: SEPT. 13

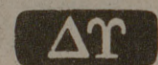
DATE: 7:00 PM

PLACE: RM. 510 RUDDER TOWER

ACTIVITIES: TRIP SIGN UP, SKI MOVIE, DOOR PRIZES

THINK SKIING

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## RISKY BUSINESS PARTY

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 8 P.M. at Whiterock Hall, across from the Main gate of TAMU.

EVERYONE WELCOME

Call Donny 260-3681 or

Richard 693-1477 for info

Aggie G.O.P.

Republican Party of Texas A&M

## Voter Registration

Tables Located at MSC - 1st Floor

Blocker Bldg. - Lobby

9 A.M.-3 P.M.

Together we can make a difference

Next meeting Sept. 18 7:00 102 Blocker

Speaker: T. Boone Pickens