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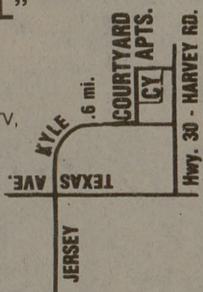
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Engineers refine 'atom-smasher'

University News Service

Texas A&M University engineers are developing a plan using robots to build 420 miles of magnets needed for what would be the world's largest atom-smasher. Such a machine is now being designed by teams of scientists associated with the Houston Area Research Center.

Robots would build the magnet composed of 448 million pieces of 0.060-inch steel welded together into the core of a 140-mile tunnel, said George "Bud" Peterson, principal investigator on the project for the Texas Engineering Experiment Station at Texas A&M.

As HARC scientists refine their magnet design, the engineers are working to incorporate the changes in their manufacturing process for the superconducting super-collider or SSC, said Peterson.

"That's one big reason for using robots," explains Mark Anderson, a researcher on the project. "They are flexible because they are reprogram-

mable. We are designing all the tooling and fixtures so that they can incorporate change. We've got to be able to switch our design quickly."

HARC — a consortium composed of Texas A&M and the University of Houston — is competing with other leading high-energy physics centers to design the particle accelerator for the Department of Energy. The consortium proposes that the facility be located in Texas.

The accelerator would break apart atoms with four times the power possible today, allowing physicists to see the smallest particles of matter thought to exist.

Changes have come swiftly and often as the design process has unfolded at HARC, Anderson said. He and six students, aided by Peterson, a faculty member in the Engineering Technology Department and industrial engineering faculty member Dr. Tep Sastri, make modifications to their system as changes are announced by the accelerator design-

"HARC has been great to work with," Anderson said, "because they have been willing to accept certain changes that aid in automation."

Beginning with a system that utilized 55 robots working round the clock to produce the magnet in the specified time, the engineers have refined their system so that only four robots would be needed to perform the work.

Dr. Peter McIntyre, a physics professor at Texas A&M who leads the effort to bring the accelerator to Texas, said the HARC proposal is dramatically different from the concepts being proposed by the other groups.

"Ours is a more industrialized approach to the high tech requirements of the project," he said. "Our magnets would be built by industry rather than in a national laboratory. This cuts the cost by a large factor."

"While ours would be twice as big

in circumference, our cost would cost half as much as Texas A&M engineers hope to realize their automation plan in the coming months — say drawings, specifications and bids instructions that will allow them to see what would be in the manufacturing of the magnets. This information will allow firms to bid on the project."

"We are now in the process of stage for a lot of equipment need to construct an actual system which will build a 234-ton magnet," Anderson said.

They expect the robot to be ordered by January and they have much of the tooling designed and ordered.

"This is a very exciting project," Anderson said. "We hope our proposal will be so outstanding that it will be used by the bidder that gets to build the accelerator."

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Legislature convenes for 69th session

Unanimous vote puts Lewis in as speaker

United Press International

AUSTIN — The Texas Legislature, greeted by a sea of yellow roses and galleries overflowing with spectators, opened its 69th session Tuesday with warnings of tight financial constraints and promises of still more battles against court-ordered prison reforms.

The first day of the 140-day session was marked by ceremony, speeches, oaths of office and the unanimous, unchallenged re-election of 14-year legislative veteran Gib Lewis, D-Fort Worth, to a second term as speaker of the House.

Hundreds of people packed the upstairs galleries of both houses while legislators' families crowded onto the House and Senate floors beside newly-polished desks adorned with yellow roses.

New and re-elected members of the House were sworn into office by Secretary of State Myra McDaniel while their Senate counterparts recited oaths administered by Supreme Court Chief Justice John Hill. Sen. Ray Farabee, D-Wichita Falls,

was chosen to the ceremonial position of president pro-tem of the Senate.

Following a half dozen House members' speeches that praised him for his hard work and fairness and for pushing through last summer's education reforms, Lewis drew loud applause when he asked his 149 House colleagues to join him in a pledge against new taxes.

"For the first time in recent history, we are entering a session minus the financial surplus we have enjoyed for so many years," Lewis said, referring to a \$1.2 billion revenue shortfall that represents the overriding issue of the legislative session.

Lewis said the "easy course" would be to raise taxes, but quickly added: "We will do with what we have or we will do without."

He drew the most fervent applause when he reiterated his attack on federal intervention in the state's troubled prison system, vowing to fight court-ordered reforms "to the highest court in this land."

Budget woes to make toughest session ever

United Press International

AUSTIN — For veteran state Sen. John Traeger, the 69th Texas Legislature could turn into a saga that more closely resembles a Texas western.

"It's going to be my 11th session, and it's going to be the toughest, roughest, worst session I've ever been in," Traeger said Tuesday after the Senate completed its first day of business.

Faced with a budget deficit of some \$1.2 billion and the necessary cutting state agency and university budgets almost across the board, the Legislature will have to raise taxes, the Seguin Democrat predicted.

"I just don't believe we're going to get out of this session without a bill," Traeger said. "We've never had a negative cash situation like this before."

Traeger predicted the state sales tax will be raised from 3 1/2 cents to 3 3/4 cents and that tuition will be raised for state colleges and universities.

The Senate reflected the state's budget predicament in one of its resolutions, voting to freeze its own expenditures and staff salary allocations to 1968 levels.

In the House, Speaker Gib Lewis reflected a decidedly different attitude from Traeger, urging lawmakers to join with him in a plea against a tax increase, saying, "We will do with what we have or we will do without."

Traeger predicted that the budget crunch would force the Legislature to adopt money-making measures that it previously turned down, including parimutuel betting on horse races.

Sen. Hector Uribe, D-Brownsville, said he would work to pass a lottery bill that could raise up to \$300 million, and he suggested legislation to trim the budget effectively before raising taxes.

Gov. Mark White told a county commissioners and judges association that the state can make it by trimming budgets without raising taxes.

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