

State and Local

A&M receives \$8.2 million grant to aid research in Saudi Arabia

By Craig Eichhorn
Reporter

Texas A&M has received an \$8.2 million grant as part of a three-university consortium that will enhance teaching and research programs at King Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia.

King Abdulaziz University, located near the Red Sea in Jeddah, is the second project sponsored by the joint commission in which A&M is providing technical assistance, said Dr. Dwayne Suter, associate dean of agriculture.

"Because of our success at King Faisal University, the U.S. Department of the Treasury requested my counterpart, Howard Massey of Virginia Tech, and I to make a trip to King Abdulaziz University to visit with the dean of meteorology, environment and arid land agriculture," Suter said.

A&M worked with King Faisal University in Al Hasa for the past four years in conjunction with Rice University, Virginia Polytech Institute, Cornell University and Harvard University, Suter said.

The programs for the second cooperative effort are under the sponsorship of the United States-Saudi Arabian Joint Commission on

Economic Cooperation. The funds are provided by the Saudi Arabian government and are administered through the joint commission, Suter said.

Suter and Massey met with Dean Omar Ali Sabbak to discuss A&M's

"We were able to establish good relations and we proceeded with submitting a bid to perform the requested technical services."

—Dr. Dwayne Suter, associate dean of agriculture

possible participation in the next phase of the King Abdulaziz University development program, Suter said.

"We were able to establish good relations and we proceeded with submitting a bid to perform the requested technical services," Suter said.

Sabbak, who has visited A&M, Purdue University and Virginia Tech, wanted a three-member consortium and requested A&M to take the lead, the associate dean said. A&M will serve as the prime contractor with Purdue and Virginia Tech as sub-contractors.

"The advantage of having a con-

sortium is that it doesn't overload any one university," Suter said. "It provides a greater degree of diversity of faculty expertise."

Suter and representatives from the three universities, including computer experts, visited King Ab-

dulaziz University in September 1986.

The consortium's first task was to rehabilitate mini-computer equipment which was installed over four years ago, but still didn't work, Suter said.

The group developed a plan of computerization with microcomputers and continued a needs assessment with Sabbak to provide technical assistance necessary for the academic year, Suter said. The consortium also prepared a management and financial plan.

The technical needs for the project, he said, include equipment and long-term technical assistants for a

year or more, he said. Short-term faculty will be hired to stay less than a year, he said, and library acquisitions also are included as significant components of the project.

One of the main projects the consortium plans to undertake at the university includes development of at least two lysimeters with A&M's hydrology department. A lysimeter accurately measures moisture requirements and its utilization by plants in realistic growing situations, Suter said.

But the project that will involve the consortium's largest assistance is the establishment of a four-story phytotron facility.

A phytotron contains several chambers of various sizes in which scientists conduct experiments on plants. The chambers vary air, temperature, light, moisture and plant nutrients in various combinations.

The phytotron should be completed in 1989 at a cost of approximately \$2.5 million, Suter said.

North Carolina State University is providing the technical assistance for the phytotron and is expected to join the consortium as the fourth university in 1988, he said.

"When completed it will be one of the best, if not the best, phytotron in the Middle East," he said.

Hobby suggests possibility of return to office in 1990

AUSTIN (AP) — Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby, joking that it's too early for his obituary, Wednesday left open the possibility of seeking office after 1990 but said his decision to sit out that election is final.

"Contrary to what apparently is popular opinion, I have not died," Hobby said. "I have not resigned from office. I will be lieutenant governor for 3½ more years."

Professing amazement over reaction to his decision not to run for governor or seek re-election, Hobby said he wants to devote his energies to work on restructuring the state's tax system.

"I've always thought on a scale of news values, when somebody announced they were not running for something — on a scale of 10 that may get a one," he told a news conference.

"I just think I can be more effective during the next three years if I'm not perceived as someone with political ambitions or partisan motivations and so forth," he said.

Hobby serves on the Select Committee on Tax Equity, which is expected to make sweeping recommendations to the 1989 Legislature for overhauling the Texas tax system. He said that is "a task that comes along about once a generation."

When he steps down, the 55-year-old Democrat will have been lieutenant governor for 18 years.

"Yes," Hobby said when asked if his decision was final. Asked why he made it, Hobby said the time was right.

"The realities of running a campaign in a state as large as Texas are that it's always campaign time," he said. "There are always decisions to be made, decisions which are important not only to the candidate but to many other people as well. I could not

recently defer those decisions any longer."

Hobby denied fearing a challenge from Attorney General Jim Mattox or anyone else, although he admitted he prefers holding office to campaigning for it.

"I don't like putting myself forward, projecting myself," he said. "I don't like to read stories in the paper... see myself on television. I'm just not basically that kind of person. I don't like doing it, but I've done it successfully for 14 years."

While declining a more elaborate explanation of his reasons, Hobby said he hasn't tired of public service and believes "I would make a very good governor."

Hobby said that except for a 1990 race, "I'm not ruling out anything."

Republican Gov. Bill Clements, in Dallas, said Wednesday that he wasn't surprised by Hobby's move.

"I think Mr. Hobby obviously was getting somewhat frustrated with his position in the Senate," Clements said. "The legislative session just completed was not satisfactory from his standpoint. He probably recognized that the election process in 1990 would be very difficult for him."

Hobby said he plans no endorsements in either the governor's race or the race for his successor. "I've never done that and don't plan on starting now," he said.

One official whose name has been the subject of speculation about a race for one of those jobs, State Treasurer Ann Richards, said Wednesday it's too early to make a decision.

"I feel very strongly about this job I have," she said. "I seriously do not know what I'm going to do next."

Officials: Texas courts push up medical costs

AUSTIN (AP) — Spokesmen for the Texas Medical Association said Wednesday medical costs are being driven up because Texas courts won't enforce state laws.

"The increasing inability for Texans — particularly those in rural areas — to receive the medical care they need is a problem that could be cured if the Texas courts would uphold the liability laws already on the books," TMA President Dr. David Vanderpool of Dallas told a news conference.

"The Texas Supreme Court has it taken upon itself to act like a political body," says Rep. Mike McKinney, D-Centerville, a physician. "I think

we have to look at some sort of judicial election reform."

"I can foresee the time when people who need specialized care will go to other states because specialists in this state will not want to undertake some critical procedures because of the threat of malpractice litigation," says Dr. Denton Cooley, widely known Houston heart surgeon.

Vanderpool said a recent telephone survey by the TMA showed that some physicians and hospitals in 11 TMA county medical societies that involve 26 counties have eliminated or limited obstetrical care because of the rising cost of professional liability premiums for malpractice in-

surance. There is no obstetrical care at all in at least 21 counties, he said.

"Nearly 40 percent of Texas' family physicians have stopped or limited what they do best — delivering babies," Vanderpool says. "The problem is insidious."

Vanderpool said state laws passed in 1977 provide courts the power to limit malpractice awards, excluding medical, hospital and custodial care, but the courts have not used them.

"Without reasonable limits and guidelines, as is currently the situation, premiums are expected to continue to go up to cover the increasing number and amount of awards," he says.

It isn't much fun to be called the "tortoise" bank in College Station.

But it's pretty hairy to be the hares in the banking game.

It used to bother us when someone called us the "tortoise bank" in College Station. They said we just plodded along, taking care of our customers without much fanfare while others soaked up the glory and the growth.

Now that the tough times are nearly over it seems that being cautious isn't in disfavor by regulators or customers. Homestead Savings came through the market downturn with a profit. We didn't turn down

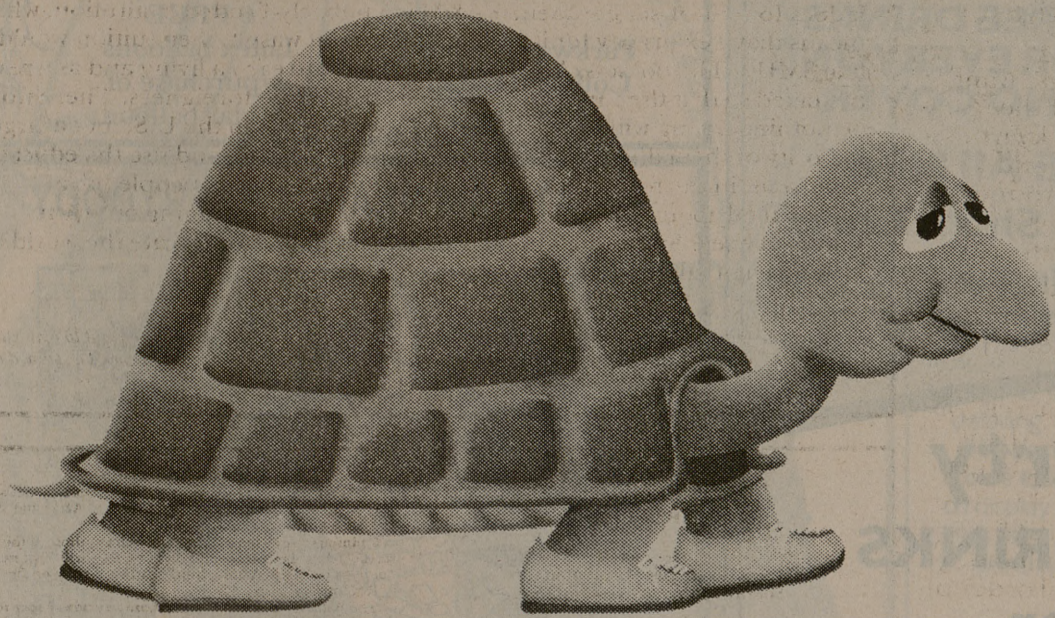
a single customer who came to us with a reasonable loan request. We gained in net worth at a time when many financial institutions would have settled for holding their own.

Our customers think we made a good choice when we decided to invest our operational profits in services.

If you are tired of being harried at the bank, come home to Homestead Savings.



Homestead Savings Association of Texas
Drawer HC/College Station, Texas/(409) 693-1063 Member FSLIC



YESTERDAYS
Daily Drink & Lunch Specials
Billiards & Darts
Near Luby's / House dress code
846-2625

FASHION SHOW
Talent Show - all age groups. Hurry! Enter the Great Bryan/C.S. Fashion Show & Talent Competition. And... you get a FREE model or actor workshop. Call right away!
409/361-4607
8a.m.-5p.m.

IT'S A BEER NITE

This World Calls for **LÖWENBRÄU PARTY NITE**

Huge 50 oz. Pitchers \$2.00

Prizes given away starting at 8 pm! No purchase necessary.

8 pm til midnite!

THURS JULY 30

Flying Tomato PIZZA 'N PAN
303 W. UNIVERSITY • 846-1616

TM The Flying Tomato Brothers TM The Flying Tomato is a registered trademark © 1987 Flying Tomato Inc.

Call Battalion Classified 845-2611