

Lubbock inventor patents brush to clean dirty beverage can tops

LUBBOCK, (AP) — Once in a while someone invents something that makes people say "I wish I'd thought of that," while the one who did makes money.

Remember the pet rock? Lubbock inventor Warren J. Sandvick is hoping people by the many thousands soon are wishing they'd thought of the Eze Cleaner.

The 26-year-old inventor received a patent in August for the unique little brush. He carries the prototype in his pocket.

The 19-line governmental legal description on Sandvick's patent describes the Eze Cleaner this way: "A device for cleaning the top surface of beverage cans is formed from a circular disc provided with symmetrical openings and has a plurality of brushes extending downwardly . . ."

In other words, it's a brush designed for cleaning soda cans, and it works. "Just two twists under the faucet and — Boom! — that baby's clean," Sandvick said.

Sandvick's agent, American In-

ventors Corp. of Westfield, Mass., is seeking a manufacturer for the brush, which Sandvick said he'd prefer to see mass produced in Lubbock, or at least in West Texas.

"The manufacturer is going to be the one that makes all the money," Sandvick said, predicting the item would sell well.

American Inventors Corp. conducted Sandvick's patenting process, including an extensive patent search and a marketability study for the Eze Cleaner.

Sandvick, who earned an associate degree in electronics technology from South Plains College, worked for a time as a computer technician before deciding he'd rather have the computers working for him.

He now is involved in establishing Advanced Tele-Communications Services in Lubbock. The service is a telemarketing and survey operation.

It was invention's mother, necessity, which led him to create the Eze Cleaner.

Tired of using wet napkins to clean soda can tops, Sandvick built

the brush "out of necessity" and now says it's amazing to him that no one thought of it before he did.

"Everybody complains about dirty cans, but nobody does anything about it," he said. "I got tired of drinking out of nasty cans."

Dirt that collects on soda cans can range from West Texas dust to spilled colas, tiny metallic bits or paint flecks rubbed off from the cans, or any number of unidentifiable gunk, Sandvick said. He compared drinking from an unwashed can to licking the floor.

"Even the ones that look clean are dirty," Sandvick said.

Sandvick's brush is circular, with a bristle pattern designed to clean the top, inside rim and outer edge of the average soda can. The bristles also get into the narrow groove common to the inside edge of soda can rims, digging out the dirt there.

He thought up the idea almost three years ago, and made the prototype one year ago, but had to wait until mid-August for his patent.

"I would think the (beverage) industry would come up with something like this," he said.

Sandvick said of the invention, "My first one, but not my best one." Two or three other inventions are on the way, he said, all of them consumer convenience devices. "They do a job that is already being done, but they do it so much better."

The need to keep his as yet-unpatented ideas secret prevented Sandvick from further discussion.

Building the prototype cost Sandvick \$10, he said. The round handle, made of an eighth-inch thick slice of PVC (polyvinyl-chloride), was hand drilled with the numerous holes for the bristles.

Sandvick spent four hours gluing the bristle into the holes, he said. In mass production the brush bristles will be embedded by machine.

According to the results of the American Inventors Corp. patent search, Sandvick's Eze Cleaner is the simplest of the many of can cleaners ever invented.

Overcrowding temporarily closes prison

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — The Texas Department of Corrections is admitting new inmates Tuesday after being closed Monday due to overcrowding, officials said.

Prison officials announced Friday the 26-unit prison system would be closed to new inmates Monday after the prison population exceeded a court-mandated 95 percent capacity.

The inmate population at midnight Thursday was 38,990, or 95.13 percent — 53 over the legal limit. As of midnight Sunday, the population was down to 38,927, or 94.97 percent — 11 available beds, prison spokesman Charles Brown said.

Texas prisons had not been closed due to overcrowding since September 1987.

The Texas prison system, the nation's third largest behind California and New York, operated under an open-and-shut cycle early in 1987 that left the system open only on Tuesdays and Wednesdays because of overcrowding.

'Big Tex' gets ready to greet visitors to state fair in Dallas

DALLAS (AP) — "Howdy, Folks!" It's that time again. Big Tex, the 52-foot cowboy, is ready to boom out his mechanical greeting to 3 million visitors to the 1988 State Fair of Texas.

Final preparations are being made for Friday's opening of the 17-day extravaganza. Organizers of the fair, which started in 1886, promise something for everybody: from corny dogs to cotton candy, jam judging, pig races and a tribute to Elvis.

"I want to get set up and get the excitement going," Stephanie Ellis said as she prepared a dart-throwing booth along the Midway.

Now retired, Ellis used to take vacation to work at the fair, something she's been doing "for a long time."

"It'll be a rugged two weeks," Ellis said, but she's looking forward to renewing friendships among the 15,000 people who work at the fair.

"We're kind of a big family for two weeks, then no contact for a year," she said.

Three million visitors are expected at the fair, which runs through Oct. 23, spokesman Nancy Wiley said.

A 1984 study showed the fair had a total economic impact of \$127 million on Dallas, with the average fair-goer spending six hours and \$7.25 inside the 277-acre Fair Park, Wiley said.

New this year is a multimedia musical on the life and times of Elvis Presley. "Elvis: A Musical Celebration," will be playing at the Music Hall. It features more than 30 songs Elvis made famous.

In 1956, the King of rock'n'roll, then 21, performed at the State Fair of Texas. Fans screamed behind a 10-foot chicken wire fence in the Cotton Bowl.

Other events this year include pig races at Porkchop Downs and new categories for llamas and draft horses. The horse show agenda also includes competition for Palominos, Arabians, Appaloosas, donkeys, mules and miniature horses.

Then there are the 64 horses on the fair's 1914 Dentzel carousel. They were carefully removed and stored while the merry-go-round was relocated to the far southeast end of the Midway.

"I love my horses," Dottie Bryant

said as she touched up the brown paint on a chestnut. "I'd love to have one in my living room."

Bryant has spent the past decade caring for the carousel horses, which are to be renovated next year.

The carousel is the focus of a new area of children's rides and attractions near the roller coaster.

But they're dwarfed by the 212.5-foot Texas Star Ferris wheel and other rides along the Midway, including the Wave Swinger trucked in from Virginia by crew foreman Randy Gladding.

"We move this 18 times a year," he said, replacing burned out bulbs among the 2,864 red and white lights that decorate the German-made ride.

"She's our pride and joy," Gladding said with unconcealed affection for the \$900,000 machine made in 1978.

"I call her my wife," he said. "She's a machine but she's a female since she acts up sometime," he said.

He enjoys living on the road, but looks forward to Dallas.

Women

(Continued from page 1)

tended A&M in the 1920s under a rule that allowed relatives of professors to attend A&M.

Locke probably was the only woman to receive an A&M diploma before the 1960s. She didn't graduate with her class, however — she had to pick up her diploma at the registrar's secretary's apartment.

Although not many women were walking around the campus before 1963, all one had to do to see a female was open *The Battalion*.

Women's pictures often were in *The Battalion*, not for scholastic achievement or awards, but as a beauty queen, a band or class sweetheart, and usually she was someone's sister or girlfriend.

By 1969 no limitations were

"The harm that will come with co-education exceeds the good by 1,000 percent. Girls divert the attention of boys."

— T.L. Smith
1898 opinion of women at A&M

placed on women applicants, other than meeting A&M's standard academic qualifications.

In 1972, campus housing was opened to women, and by 1974 the Corps of Cadets had allowed women to join.

Andrea Abat, a construction science major, is the first senior woman in the Aggie Band.

Abat said she was treated like any other freshman when she joined the

band. "Sure, I was harassed, but so was every one else," she said. "It's tough, but it was worth it."

She said she never felt any different from her buddies. "We pulled each other through as equals," she said.

Only seven of the 300-member band are women, but the A&M campus as a whole has no shortage of women students. It's women professors that the University is looking

for.

Sheppard, who has been associate provost for a year, said she would like to see more women in faculty positions, especially in administrative roles.

"A&M has made tremendous progress, but there are still some things left to do," she said.


In 1963, A&M employed five female professors — four in the Department of English and one in the Department of Education and Psychology.

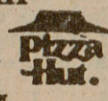
In 1988, A&M has 1,728 professors, 195 of whom are women.


Three women are department heads and three are administrators. The College of Liberal Arts has sixty-nine female professors — more than any other college — while the College of Geosciences has the fewest, with six female faculty members.

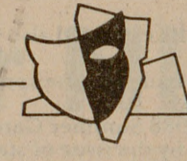
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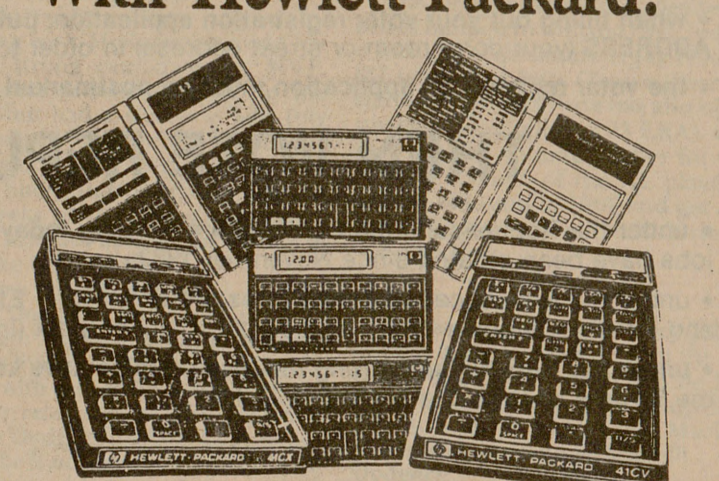
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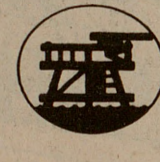
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