

The Battalion (USPS 045 360)

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Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editorial board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Texas A&M student body, administrators, faculty or the A&M Board of Regents.

Comments, questions or complaints about any of the editorial content of the newspaper should be directed to either associate editor at 845-3313.

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BATTIPS 845-3315

The Battalion encourages its readers to contribute story ideas and suggestions by calling BATTIPS. The Battalion's phone line designed to improve communication between the newspaper and its readers.

Program conducts energy-cost audits

By Karen Praslicka
The Battalion

Texas A&M staff members and students are working together in a state conservation program that saves schools and state agencies money by cutting down on their energy costs.

The LoanSTAR program (Loan to Save Taxes and Resources), developed four years ago when the Governor's Energy Office of Texas made a proposal to the federal Department of Energy to use revenue from the Petroleum Violation Fund, also known as the Oil Overcharge Fund. The fund was established with the money from charges to businesses which violated federal laws during the 1980s.

The DOE approved the proposal for a \$98.6 million loan system for the governor's office to fund conservation programs among schools and state agencies.

Dr. Dan Turner, associate dean in the College of Engineering and program manager, said LoanSTAR works with schools and state agencies that request energy audits.

The governor's office has several engineering firms contracted to perform the audits, which determine ways the schools and agencies could save money by conserving energy.

A&M researchers work with the engineering firms after the audits are conducted. Researchers

review the results of the audit and install monitors at the school or agency involved in the audit.

The 50 full- and part-time researchers at A&M analyze data from the monitors to determine if the savings reported in the energy audits actually exist.

"It's a very sophisticated and high-tech system," he said. "There are hundreds of channels of data to be analyzed."

Turner said there are presently about 45 buildings across the state being monitored by A&M. By the end of this year, 20 more monitors should be installed, he said.

The federal government has made proposals for programs based on a model of the state LoanSTAR program, Turner said.

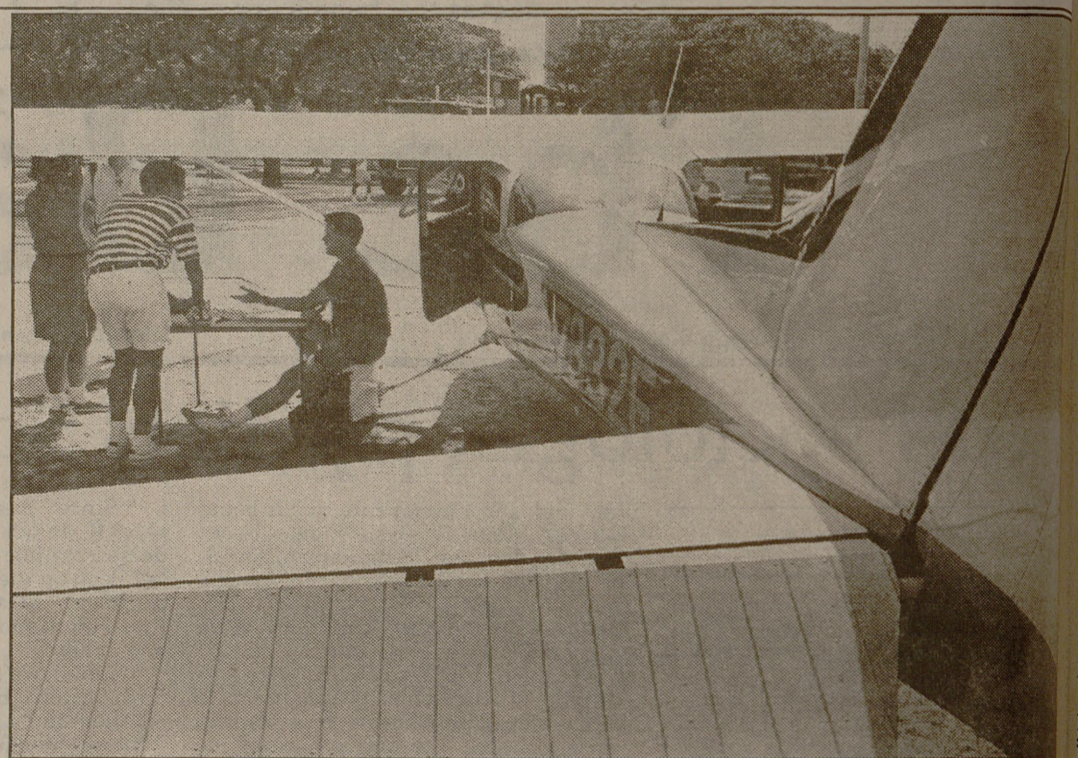
"It's interesting that the federal government is designing a program based on a state program," he said. "It's the best program of its type in the country."

There are part-time faculty members, researchers, graduate and undergraduate students, and full-time researchers working on the program at A&M.

Turner said so much traveling is involved that the program could not function with only students involved.

Graduate students interested in the program can contact a faculty member on the project. Turner said students with a strong interest in the energy area and those with a strong background in the

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Winging it

Dudley Wysong of the Texas A&M Flying Club promotes the club's activities and benefits to passers-by Tuesday while stationed underneath the wing of a Cessna 172 at the Gen. Ormond R. Simpson Drill Field.

TED W. ALBRACHT/The Battalion

Four freshmen win space science contest

By Alysia Woods
The Battalion

Four Texas A&M freshmen have brainstormed for the past three years and designed an expedition that is literally out of this world. They designed a trip to Mars

and, as a result, won a national competition called "Destination: Mars" and a visit to Washington, D.C.

Lee French, Tim Kieschnick, Zane Rhodes and Jason Korb, all recent graduates of Giddings High School in Giddings, a small town 50 miles south of College Station, have been chosen as winners of a

space science competition sponsored by NASA and the National Science Teachers Association.

Teams of high school students entered the nationwide competition.

The team created a cost-efficient model of how a spaceship

See Mars/Pa



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