

'Tilt-rotor, Texas'

Statewide officials attend festivities

By KAY PAINE
Globe-News Business Writer
And RICKY GEORGE
Globe-News Staff Writer

"Welcome to Tilt-rotor, Texas." Potter County Judge Arthur Ware suggested the new nickname for Amarillo after Bell Helicopter's announcement Monday to locate the V-22 Osprey plant here.

Amarillo celebrated a smashing victory for the home team as statewide officials and community business leaders attended the announcement.

"The Osprey has landed," said Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, during the celebratory mood at the Amarillo Civic Center Grand Plaza that attracted more than 600 people.

The short list of other cities in competition for the plant were Arlington, Austin, College Station, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston and San Antonio. The list eventually was pared down to Amarillo and Fort Worth.

"Eight months ago, Bell was looking at 1,200 sites around America," said Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas.

"In the end, Bell Helicopter came here because Amarillo had the best proposal. Amarillo put together the best package. Bell also had a history here, and Bell never had better workers with more pride than they did in Amarillo," Gramm said.

The announcement turned into a rally, complete with T-shirts and applause for Amarillo's recruitment efforts.

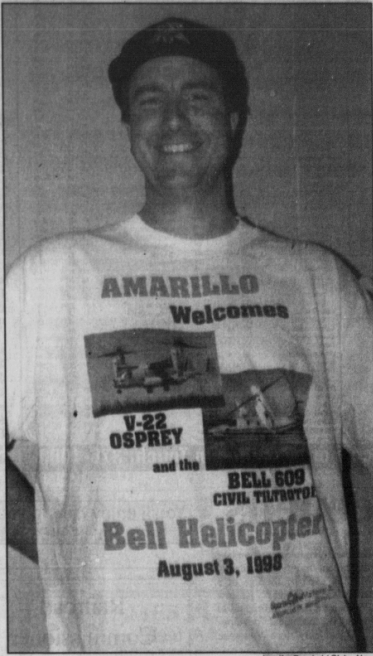
Dignitaries took their seats at a head table at 10 a.m. to give the crowd the news they expected and welcomed.

The head table included both Texas senators, Gramm and Hutchison, U.S. Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Clarendon, Texas Speaker of the House Pete Laney, D-Hale Center, Mayor Kel Seliger, and members of the city commission.

Gilbert Guzman of the Amarillo Economic Development Corporation, Neal Nossaman, representing Amarillo College, and Ware also were at the head table.

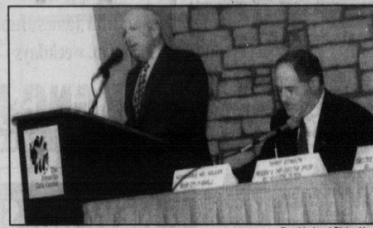
Terry Stinson, president and chief executive officer of Bell Helicopter, and P.D. Shabay, executive vice president of operations for Bell, delivered the news that could mean as many as 1,200 to 1,500 jobs for Amarillo.

"We are very excited over coming to Amarillo," Stinson said. "This will be the first major Air



Jennifer Paschal / Globe-News

Amarillo City Commissioner Trent Sisemore sports a T-shirt commemorating Bell Helicopter's decision to locate its V-22 Osprey plant in Amarillo.



Ron Marlow / Globe-News

Terry Stinson, left, president and chief executive officer of Bell Helicopter, announces his company's decision to locate its V-22 Osprey plant in Amarillo as Mayor Kel Seliger listens.

Force facility to be built in decades. Amarillo put forth an outstanding package. Thousands of people have been fighting for the V-22. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison has fought (for this) since she was a private citizen."

The AEDC estimates its incen-

tive package totals \$45 million, including a 185-acre site; sales tax revenue bonds; credit toward leases; and help with employee relocation and training expenses.

Hutchison said she is excited about the opportunity, and she is

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Bell jobs could be ring away

By JASON BAKER
Globe-News Staff Writer

Information about Bell Helicopter jobs is just a phone call away, Texas Workforce Commission officials said Monday.

People seeking employment information can contact the Bell Employee Training Alliance at 1-800-795-8191 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Monday through Friday.

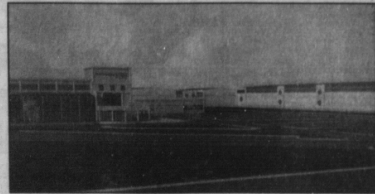
The alliance is structured to provide available job information to prospective Bell employees based on data collected from inquiries, Workforce Development Director Tom Dressler said.

Information about the project also is available through the Workforce Commission's Amarillo offices. However, Dressler said it will be more effective for people to call the toll-free 800 number, where operators can immediately register them into the alliance's forming database.

Three operators from the Workforce Commission will be taking calls and building a database of personal information from perspective employees, Dressler said. The Workforce Commission then will send a Bell company brochure and a response card to those registered who request further information, including aerospace industry job experience.

Once registered with the alliance database, Dressler said individuals will receive a bimonthly newsletter with updates on the progress of the Bell facility.

The Workforce Commission formed the alliance in cooperation with Amarillo College's Amarillo Technical Center, the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce, the Amarillo Economic Development Corp., the Panhandle Regional Planning



Steven Lint / Globe-News

An architect's rendering depicts what the Bell Helicopter plant will look like in Amarillo.

More news:

Amarillo and Bell have had a long history/4A

How the V-22 Osprey works/4A

What the Amarillo Economic Development Corp. offered to lure Bell Helicopter to the city/5A

Some of the key figures/5A

The reaction from city officials/5A

Fort Worth proved to be tough competition/5A

Former employees look forward to Bell's return/5A

Real estate professionals are eager for Bell's arrival/7A

A list of the city's largest employers/7A

Commission, the Panhandle Workforce Development Board and local private employment agencies, Dressler said.

sure a specific number of people who are qualified for the jobs are delivered to Bell's door," he said.

Questions still remained early Monday as to the unionization status of the 1,200 workers expected to become Bell employees.

J.J. Birchard, president of the employees.

"Our task is going to be to make

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New school could be added

By MELANIE YEAGER
Globe-News Education Writer

Bell Helicopter's arrival should accelerate new housing developments in northwest Amarillo, thus speeding up the necessity for a new middle school, Amarillo Superintendent Bob Moore said.

Housing growth potential surrounds AISD's new Woodlands Elementary School, being built at the northwest corner of Coulter Street and Fairway Drive, Moore said.

Scheduled to open in fall 1999, Woodlands will begin with about 275 students, Moore said. The new campus currently would feed into Sam Houston Middle School.

But Houston's student count continues to grow, Moore said. The district already plans to shift some school boundaries, but eventually a new middle school might be needed, he said.

The AISD already owns a site north of Woodlands Elementary for a secondary school.

Local school officials say it's too early to determine the new student numbers exactly and how much each school district will be affected.

"It depends on where the kids end up," said Les Hoyt, AISD assistant superintendent for administration. "I'm sure we'll get our share."

Bell's planned plant location is in the Highland Park Independent School District.

Glen Phillips, HPISD school board president, said school officials don't have an estimated impact of Bell on the district's population or property values.

"But we're excited about them being here and finding out all that information," Phillips said.

Highland Park Superintendent Jerry Wright said, "I really think this is a great opportunity for the region and the economy."

"I think it will certainly help the economy of Amarillo," River Road Assistant Superintendent George Malkuch said. "I'm sure it's going to increase student enrollment. I don't know to what degree."

Malkuch said River Road can handle more students because of ongoing construction of new classrooms.

"We're excited about Bell Helicopter and the economic opportunities," he said.

Globe-News Staff Writer Robyn Followell contributed to this report.

Politics to play role in plutonium battle

AIKEN, S.C. (AP) — Energy Department officials are very aware that politics as much as anything else will play a role in whether South Carolina or Texas gets a \$920 million plutonium treatment facility and the 2,400 jobs that go with it.

"Politics is a very important consideration, all other things being equal," said Bert Stevenson of the department's Office of Fissile Materials Disposition.

"There are the realities of politics, and we would be naive to say that they do not exist."

Both the Savannah River Site complex near Aiken and the Pantex nuclear weapons center near Amarillo want the plutonium facility and the 2,000 con-

struction and 400 permanent jobs that come with it.

Workers would remove plutonium from nuclear weapons and process it to make fuel for commercial nuclear reactors.

The nation has about 50 tons of excess plutonium. The plant would process about 33 tons of that. Officials worry if the plutonium is left untreated, it could fall into the hands of terrorists.

South Carolina lawmakers say SRS should get the facility because the plant already does other work with plutonium. Cost estimates, released last week by the Energy Department, indicate it could cost as much as \$80 million.

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Canyon ISD's ratings are 'phenomenal'

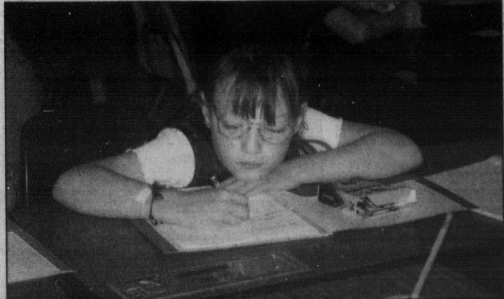
By MELANIE YEAGER
Globe-News Education Writer

Wide-smiling J. Pat Hickman couldn't contain his excitement Monday about Canyon Independent School District's slate of excellent state ratings.

"Those ratings are phenomenal! . . . Wow! How cool!" said Hickman, Canyon school board president, to those attending a new teachers' luncheon at Valleyview Junior High School.

If school officials' predictions hold true, all of CISD's campuses will be either recognized or exemplary, CISD Superintendent Mike King said.

A final hurrah depends on the pending ratings of Oscar Hinger and Lakewood elementary, expected to be rated exemplary and recognized respectively. Each school must wait because they had students on the alternate calendar tak-



Jennifer Paschal / Globe-News

Fourth-grader Nisa Neely gets down to business Monday during the first day of classes at Pleasant Valley Elementary School.

ing the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills test later in the school year.

staff at Pleasant Valley received good news on the first day of school. After four years of striv-

Meanwhile, in north Amarillo, students and

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Amarillo, Bell have historically complex relationship

By MAX ALBRIGHT
Globe-News Business Editor

In February 1968, the president of Bell Helicopter and his entourage whirled into Amarillo with some good economic news.

Bell President E.J. Ducayet said the nation's largest supplier of helicopters for the Vietnam War would locate a repair-and-modification center in Amarillo.

Bell, under a lease agreement with the city of Amarillo, took immediate possession of Hangars No. 4000 and 5000, Headquarters Building 5105, Training Building 2206 and Steam Cleaning Building 2105 at the soon-to-be-closed Amarillo Air Force Base. The base had been an economic mainstay of Amarillo.

Job seekers began pouring into the Texas Employment Commission office soon after the announcement. Bell officials said about 1,000 workers would be on the job by the end of the year.

The announcement came at a luncheon of more than 200 business people at the Amarillo Country Club. Bell officials arrived about two weeks later: a Jet Ranger; and a new UH-1D, a military troop carrier, destined for Vietnam.

"I think if all the people are as enthusiastic and cooperative as the people we've met so far, we're off to a fine relationship," Ducayet told the crowd.

Bell spokesmen said war-damaged helicopters — primarily Bell-produced "Huey" UH-1D utility troop carriers and UH-1B gunships — would be brought into Amarillo for repairs and modification. Initial delivery of helicopters would be by truck and later about military aircraft.

"I've tried very hard to be a dis-



File photo

In 1981, Bell employees were engaged in repair at Amarillo.

interested bystander while you all were diving up my air base," Gen. Loren McCollom, commander of the Amarillo Air Force Base, told the luncheon crowd. "But I couldn't stand by for long without getting involved.

"I think they (Bell) have made a real fine decision. I don't think they'll realize how good a decision until they have dealings with the

community." Dec. 31, 1968, would mark the last day for the Amarillo Air Force Base. "Bell is not a panacea to the ills of Amarillo," Wales Madden, civic leader, said.

First helicopter

The first Bell helicopter from the



File photo

Job seekers lined up in 1968 for possible jobs at Bell.

Vietnam War arrived via truck at the new Bell repair facility the morning of Feb. 26, 1968, according to a Globe-News account.

The airship — painted with snarling tiger teeth and a hawk dressed in a black-and-gold football uniform — showed no signs of combat damage. It came to Amarillo for repairs.

The new hires at Bell Helicopter and managers, who had been transferred to Amarillo, were still unpacking boxes and crates. Soon, five "Huey" choppers were lined up in Hangar 5000.

Seesaw employment

Between March 1969 and March 1970, Bell employed about 1,200 workers, according to an Amarillo Chamber of Commerce report at the time.

Also during 1970, Bell workers overhauled about 300 helicopters, and on June 24, 1970, repaired the 500th aircraft since the plant opened.

For 22 years, however, employment levels at Bell in Amarillo saw-sawed, going up and down with war, federal contracts and politics. The plant closed in 1990.

During January 1973, 250 employees already on leave had been laid off indefinitely.

Manufacturing

In 1974, with employment at 500, the Bell operation in Amarillo became more than just an overhaul-and-modification plant. It started manufacturing helicopter parts.

Among other projects, Bell Helicopter Amarillo produced skid gear assemblies for most Bell helicopters and cargo crew door assemblies for most Bell models. In 1980, Bell led the world in helicopter production. Increased domestic and international orders for Bell's commercial LongRanger led the way in manufacturing at the Amarillo facility, where airframes for the LongRanger were produced. The plant also made a variety of

parts and components for many Bell helicopters. In 1981, Bell received a \$56.7 million contract to modernize the U.S. Army's fleet of Cobra attack helicopters. That same year, Bell employment hit 1,650 in Amarillo, according to company spokesman Bob Leder.

In June 1983, however, Bell Amarillo laid off 300 people. Bell hosted a family day for its 700-plus employees in June 1986.

In January 1987, President Reagan's budget called for an end of the Advanced Helicopter Improvement Program. Texas politicians scrambled to save the program and its 200 affected Bell jobs in Amarillo, though the U.S. Army also wanted it terminated.

In 1988, Bell began laying off its remaining 500 Amarillo employees. Manufacturing work transferred to Fort Worth.

In early February 1990, 40 employees worked the last shift at Amarillo Bell.

The flight of the Osprey

By RICKY GEORGE
Globe-News Staff Writer

A bird of a different feather, indeed.

The V-22 Osprey features tilt-rotor technology. Tilt-rotor technology combines the wing of an airplane with the rotors of a helicopter. The tilt-rotor aircraft flies off like a helicopter and then lifts like an airplane.

The Osprey's two engines rotate into an upward position for takeoff, driving propellers to lift the aircraft in the same manner as a helicopter. Once airborne, however, the engines drop down into the normal horizontal position found on airplanes.

Bell, a subsidiary of Providence, R.I.-based Textron, will produce the V-22 Osprey for the military. Its two big customers for the V-22 are the U.S. Marine Corps and the Air Force, said spokesman Bob Leder. The Marines are expected to order more than 470 Ospreys, while the Air Force is expected to order 50.

The Marines have embraced the program, Leder said, because they do beach assaults and come in from the sea. Currently, the Marines would take helicopters for such operations.

Each branch of the military has its own missions for a tilt-rotor aircraft, Leder said. The V-22 sells for about \$30 million and can carry 24 combat-equipped troops in its cabin plus a three-person crew.

The Army would use the V-22 as a Medivac craft, flying wounded soldiers to major hospitals in the rear echelon, he said.

The Navy envisions the Osprey for anti-submarine warfare, and the Air Force wants it for special operations.

The Marines had the largest requirement, Leder said, as a way to move their troops for amphibious assaults.

The civilian version, the Bell Boeing 609, carries six to nine passengers. So far, the company has about 65 orders.

Bell's tilt-rotor concept started in the late 1950s with the XV-3, Leder said.

Built for the Army, the XV-3 was put on the back burner because Bell was still heavily involved in building helicopters for use in the Vietnam War.

The next tilt-rotor concept aircraft was called the XV-15, which was built in the 1970s as part of a

SCIENCE MATTERS

How it works:

It's a whirlybird. It's a plane. It's both. Tilt-rotors, the aircraft that take off like helicopters and fly like turboprop airplanes, are poised to expand from military research to commercial service.

Future commercial tilt-rotor
NASA is studying the development of a 40-44 passenger tilt-rotor; a look at its features

- Seats 40 to 44 passengers; has galley and bathroom
- Twin engines connected by drive shaft to maintain control in case an engine fails
- Quiet blade design reduces noise at airports
- Glass cockpit for better pilot visibility

Going the distance
Tilt-rotors have longer ranges than helicopters because they can fly like conventional fixed wing planes

Why tilt-rotors?
Bad weather and air traffic congestion often delay commercial flights. Tilt-rotors could ease short-range traffic at airports because they can take off and land almost anywhere.

Tilt-rotors in or near production

- V-22 Osprey**
World's first production tilt-rotor; carries 10,000-pound external load and a small truck or 24 equipped soldiers. In development since 1962; may be delivered to U.S. Marines in 1999.
- Bell Boeing 609**
First commercial tilt-rotor; 6 to 9 passengers; cruises at 275 mph with 750-mile range. Expected in mid-1998; intended for executive travel, medical evacuation and disaster relief.

Tilt-rotors of the past

- XV-3:** Experimental military aircraft; first flew in 1955
- XV-15:** Two were built to test rotor design, controls and aerodynamics; first flew in 1977

Tilt-rotors can take off and land at small landing terminals away from congested airports

SOURCES: Mike Mawhinney, Ames Research Center; Boeing; FAA; research by KRISTEN WALBOLT

NASA photo

Knight-Ridder News Service

Jobs: Unionization possible, officials say

United Aerospace Workers Union Local No. 218, which represents Bell Helicopter workers in Fort Worth, said he expects the Amarillo facility to unionize, though nothing had been finalized as of Monday.

"I'm sure there will be efforts along that line," he said.

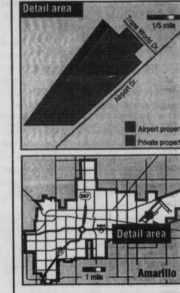
Birchard said regional union directors and representatives from the International United Aerospace Workers Union will be in contact with Bell representatives in the next few weeks as plans for the Amarillo facility are finalized.

A local branch of the UAW maintained membership at the first Bell facility in Amarillo beginning in 1968, he said.

Brian Ahearn, secretary/treasurer for Teamsters Local Union No. 577, said if the UAW chooses not to recognize Amarillo workers, he expects either the Teamsters or another local union branch to attempt unionization at the facility.

Ahearn also said he did not yet know whether construction of the facility would be done by local or government contractors.

Primary plant site



Bell Helicopter Textron has accepted Amarillo's offer of a site for the V-22 Osprey plant.

Bell: Leaders expect growth

From Page 1A

proud of Amarillo's team.

She said the Bell Helicopter announcement stemmed from ground-work laid when voters and their legislators approved the decision to earmark a portion of sales tax for economic development.

Hutchison said Amarillo's educational base will support Bell Helicopter because all of the educational entities have come together.

Hutchison predicted that a service industry will grow out of the Bell decision that will add millions of dollars to Amarillo.

"This decision by Bell Helicopter to locate in Amarillo will change the course of Amarillo," she said.

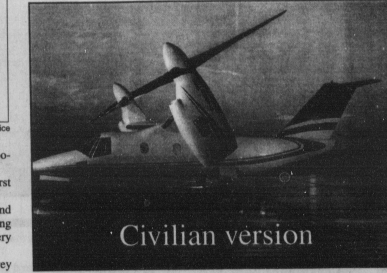
Hutchison said the support for the V-22 program is strong, with the Marines already having ordered the aircraft.

"If we had these for the hostage rescue in Iran under Carter, we would have succeeded if we had this technology. It gets in and gets out of places where we don't have friendly bases," she said.

Thornberry spoke about the decision's global impact.

"This is the most important development decision in our area in years. The V-22 adds to our strength along with Panex. We will become a focus of the world," he said.

Thornberry commended the team effort to bring the plant to Amarillo.



The Bell Boeing 609, the first commercial tilt-rotor, can carry up to nine passengers.