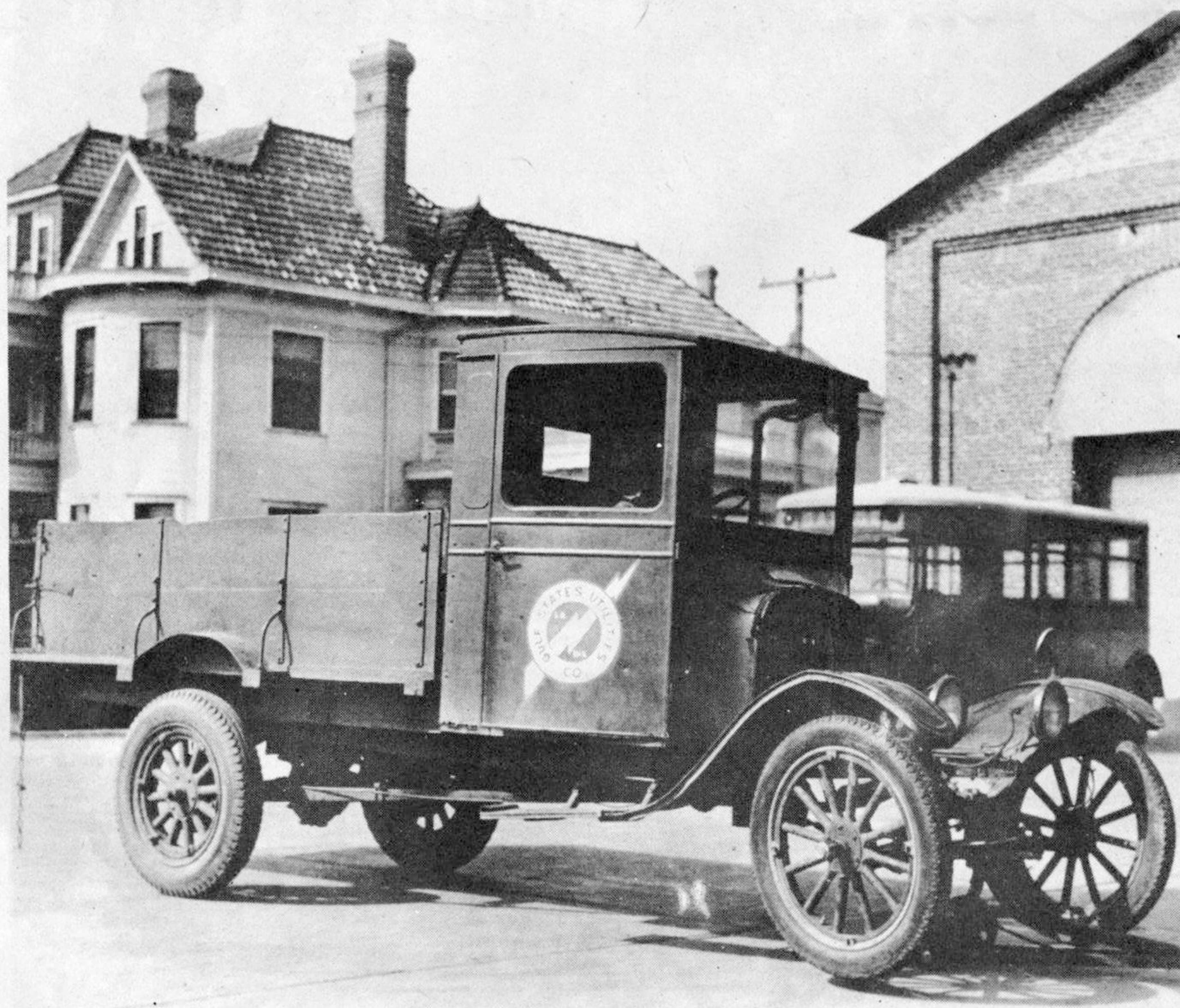




Introducing EDISON PLAZA

**Gulf States Utilities Company's
New Home In Beaumont**

GSU: From ice wagons to nuclear power



A GSU service truck on the streets of Lake Charles in 1926.

Building is safest in city

In the aftermath of the MGM Grand Hotel blaze in Las Vegas, fire safety officials across the country are paying careful attention to safety features in high-rise structures.

The new Gulf States Utilities Edison Complex building has been designed with a plethora of high-technology devices that listen to, sniff and "feel" the structure's inner environment 24-hours each day.

Working with Beaumont Fire Department officials, GSU designers and contractors made certain the new 17-story office complex not only met state and local standards, they exceeded them.

Gerald Condon, coordinator of space administration for the utility company, said the heart of the building's safety system is a Honeywell computer that controls a multitude of functions.

The computer, located in a heat-sealed room on the ground level, oversees the building's temperature, humidity and security. It monitors access to sensitive areas via sensors on doors and cameras.

The computer also controls energy usage, turning lights on

and off as they are needed, and water temperatures.

While it is doing all this, it also watches out for fire. Smoke and heat detectors are tied into the computer, Condon explained, and would automatically set off a heavy-duty sprinkler system in the afflicted area if a fire broke out.

The computer would send an instantaneous alarm to the fire department. The building's eight elevators would immediately travel to the first floor, avoiding the grisly possibility of the doors opening up on a fiery lobby.

Each of the building's two stairways is equipped with a pressurizing fan that would kick on in the event of a blaze, forcing smoke out of the wells so the structure's 1,100 employees could escape safely.

Condon said every fourth floor is equipped with a water hydrant, and the entire building is wired for fire department phone communications.

Tommy May, spokesman for the fire department, called the building's safety features "super-fine."

"I would say it is probably the safest building in Beaumont," he said.

The story of Gulf States Utilities Co. began before the turn of the century — in Beaumont and Baton Rouge; Navasota and Port Arthur; and in other communities in Southeast Texas and southern Louisiana.

One of the major corporate ancestors of GSU was Beaumont Ice, Light and Refrigerating which provided a wide variety of services to the city's 3,000 residents.

In 1888, the Beaumont IL&R sold electricity and ice; ran a meat market; stored meat for people who didn't have ice boxes; furnished water; and received, stored and chilled all the beer that came into the city.

The company had no problem keeping up with Beaumont's growth until 1901 when Spindletop ignited a black gold rush. At that point, it was forced to ration lighting for offices and stores so there would be enough power for homes.

As Southeast Texas became a major oil center, Beaumont Ice, Light and Refrigerating continued to grow by getting into the transportation business. One of its affiliate companies took over Beaumont's streetcar system and built the electric interurban railway which connected the city with Port Arthur.

The interurban went out of business in 1932, while the last streetcar stopped running five years later.

The company now known as Gulf States was incorporated on Aug. 25, 1925, and was chartered to supply the public with electricity, gas, water and ice. Included as part of the GSU umbrella were Silsbee Ice, Light & Power Co., Port Arthur Ice & Refrigeration Co. and scores of other diversified enterprises throughout Southeast Texas.

Realizing that electric refrigeration was the wave of the future, GSU began phasing out its ice business in the late 1920's.

The company's most dramatic boost came in 1938 when it acquired Baton Rouge Electric Co. and Louisiana Steam Generating Co., a large power plant that supplied both electric and steam power to industrial customers in Baton Rouge. This merger occurred exactly 13 years after GSU was incorporated.

By the mid-1950s, GSU served an area that formerly had been served by more than 60 power companies.

Today Gulf States has more than 517,000 customers in a 28,000-square-mile area in Texas and Louisiana. Although electricity is its principal product, GSU does provide natural gas to 86,000 customers in Baton Rouge and continues to supply steam to the north Baton Rouge industrial complex.

Historically, GSU has generated electricity from natural gas because it had been priced well below alternative fuels. For this reason, more than 90 percent of the generating capacity is provided by this one fuel. Oil is the only other fuel used.

However, the 1973 Arab oil embargo heralded the end of the cheap energy era and forced Gulf States and other utilities to begin looking for other sources of fuel to generate power.

Faced with dwindling supplies of petroleum products, rising prices and a federal mandate to build no more gas-powered generating units, the company is building two units that use the only alternative fuels that are practical and available — coal and uranium.

The Nelson 6 coal unit near Westlake, La., is almost ready to go on-line and the nuclear plant, River Bend near St. Francisville, La., should be in operation by December 1985.

In addition, GSU is researching and experimenting with other fuels which someday might generate some of this area's electricity. Solar, wind, biomass and other alternative fuels are under intensive study.

Conservation is also important to Gulf States and its customers, and the company has numerous programs geared to helping residents hold down their electricity use and bills.

So it is that Gulf States, a company that had its beginnings selling ice and a by-product called electricity, has evolved to become a major utility with assets of several billion dollars serving the electricity needs of nearly 2 million people in two states.

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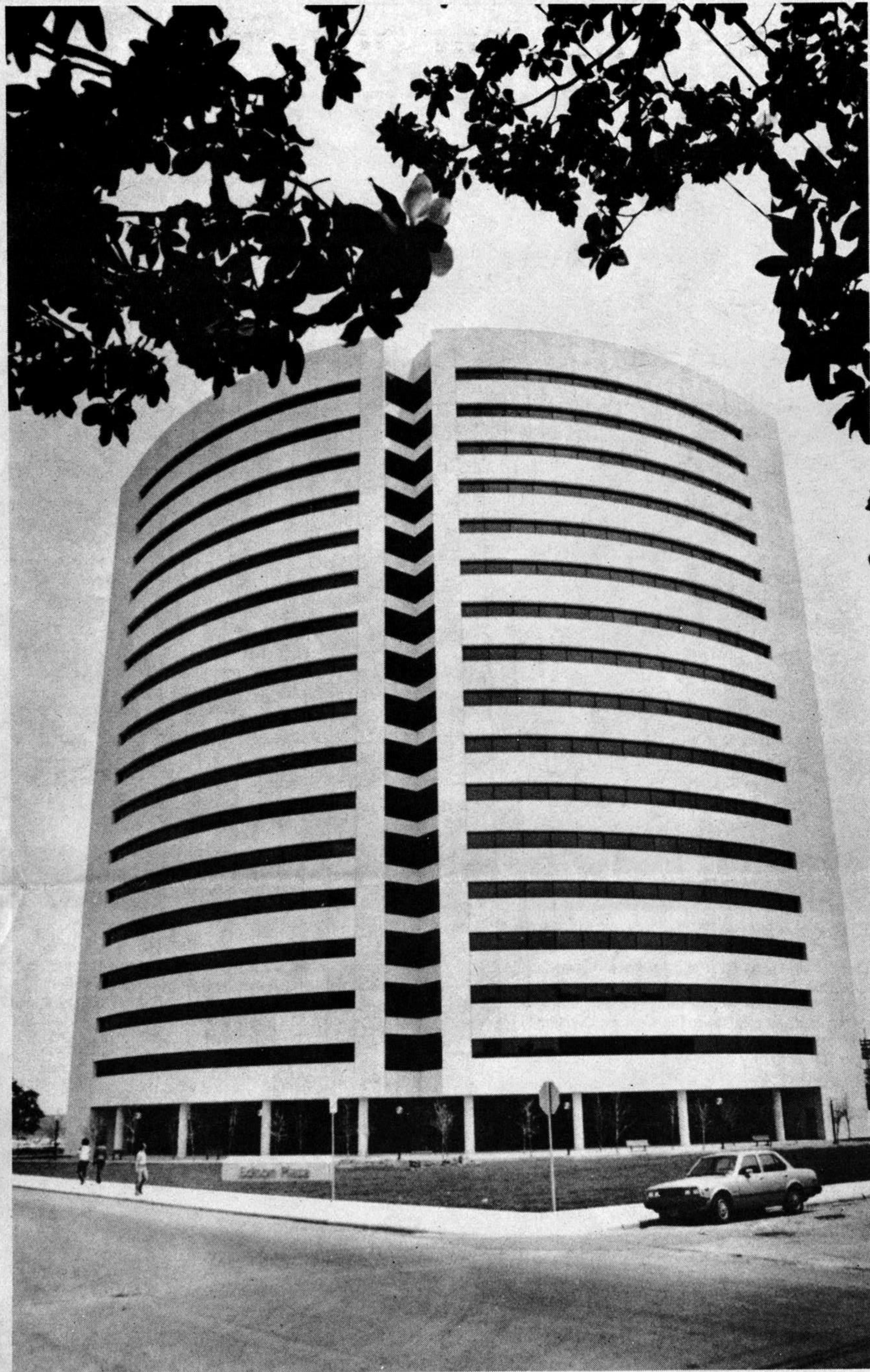
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Edison Plaza is GSU's first office building designed for an electric utility.

Move into new building is return to GSU's roots

When Gulf States Utilities Co. finished moving into its new corporate headquarters in December 1981, it returned to its roots.

The area bounded by Pine, Mulberry, Tevis and Travis streets figure prominently in the history of the company and of the city of Beaumont.

The utility company traces its ancestry back to the Beaumont Ice, Light and Refrigerating Co. that was headquartered near the river front on Cypress Street. But when the Lucas gusher blew in in January 1901 and thousands of prospectors flocked to Spindletop, Beaumont IL&R had more business than it could handle.

For example, businesses wanting their lights connected were told they could have about half of what they needed. The rationing program, however, did not apply to residences.

Shortly after the boom began, the company moved further "uptown" to the site where Edison Plaza now looms on the Beaumont skyline.

That early 20th century office, however, was far from a high-rise. The company was located on the first floor and one of its principal stockholders, V. Wiess, lived upstairs.

The Tevis Street power plant went into operation in 1902 to help meet the demands of the Spindletop boom. The power plant, which stood adjacent to the site of the new building, was demolished in 1980.

Somewhere around 1909 the company relocated to the 300 block of Pearl Street where it remained for a couple of years before moving to the old Interurban office building on Liberty. At one time, that building had been a saloon.

During the 1920s, the tract where the headquarters now stands was an important part of Gulf States. In addition to the power plant, a garage, warehouse and engineering and distribution departments were located there.

When GSU was incorporated in 1925, the company was still based on Liberty Street where it remained until the old Edson Hotel was acquired in 1957.

As the number of employees based in downtown Beaumont grew from 300 to more than 1,100, and the Edson building was outgrown, the move to a new headquarters was vital.

As W. Donham Crawford, who retired in March as chairman of the board and chief executive officer, noted at the Dec. 13, 1979, groundbreaking ceremonies for Edison Plaza, the new building will mark the first time the company has occupied offices designed and built to fit the needs of an electric utility.

GSU serves 517,000

GSU serves more than 517,000 electric customers in a 28,000-square-mile area of Southeast Texas and South Central Louisiana.

Merger extended limits

The Baton Rouge Electric-Gulf States merger of 1938 extended the GSU operation to its present service area limits. The merger also brought into GSU the Louisiana Steam Generating Corp.

Company ran many enterprises

Beaumont's first light company also made and sold ice cream, stored meats, ran a meat market, ran the water system — and stored and chilled all the beer shipped into town.

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GSU leadership also changes

In the middle of the move to Edison Plaza, Gulf States began another transition as the company's board of directors named W. Donham Crawford as honorary chairman of the board and elected Dr. Paul W. Murrill chairman and chief executive officer.

The changes were approved by the directors during a Feb. 4 meeting in Beaumont and Murrill began his new duties on March 1.

Murrill came to GSU from Ethyl Corp. in Baton Rouge, where he was senior vice president for research and development. He has been a member of the GSU board of directors since 1978. Before joining Ethyl a year ago, he had been chancellor of Louisiana State University for seven years.

Murrill, 47, received his B.S. from the University of Mississippi and his M.S. and Ph.D. from LSU. All of his degrees are in chemical engineering.

He and his wife Nancy have three sons.

Other top-ranking members of the Gulf States' management team include Norman R. Lee, president and chief operating officer; Joseph F. Bondurant, executive vice president-operations; Joseph L. Donnelly, executive vice president-finance; Edward M. Loggins, executive vice president-administrative and technical services; Thomas H. Burbank, senior vice president-rates and accounting; William J. Cahill Jr., senior vice president-River Bend Nuclear Group; and Dr. E. Linn Draper, senior vice president-engineering and technical services.

Lee, 57, has served as president of the company since 1973, following one year's service as executive vice president and two years as senior vice president-division operations.

He went to work for Gulf States in 1949 after a two-year stint with Allis Chalmers. His early positions included those of distribution engineer in the Beaumont Division, general substation foreman and project engineer in system engineering. Part of his career was spent in Louisiana, including one year as vice president-Louisiana operations.

A native of Grayson, La., Lee attended LSU before receiving his bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from California Institute of Technology.

He and his wife Nell Ray have two children.

Bondurant, 52, was named to his present position in 1979, following a brief stint as senior vice president-division operations.

Hired by the company in 1957, Bondurant started as an engineer in the Beaumont transmission and distribution department. He also spent part of his career in Louisiana, culminating with the position of Lake Charles division manager.

In 1975, he was named vice president-technical services and transferred to Beaumont. He became vice president-division operations in September 1977.

A native of Fulton, Ky., Bondurant earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Georgia Tech.

He and his wife Sarah have two daughters.

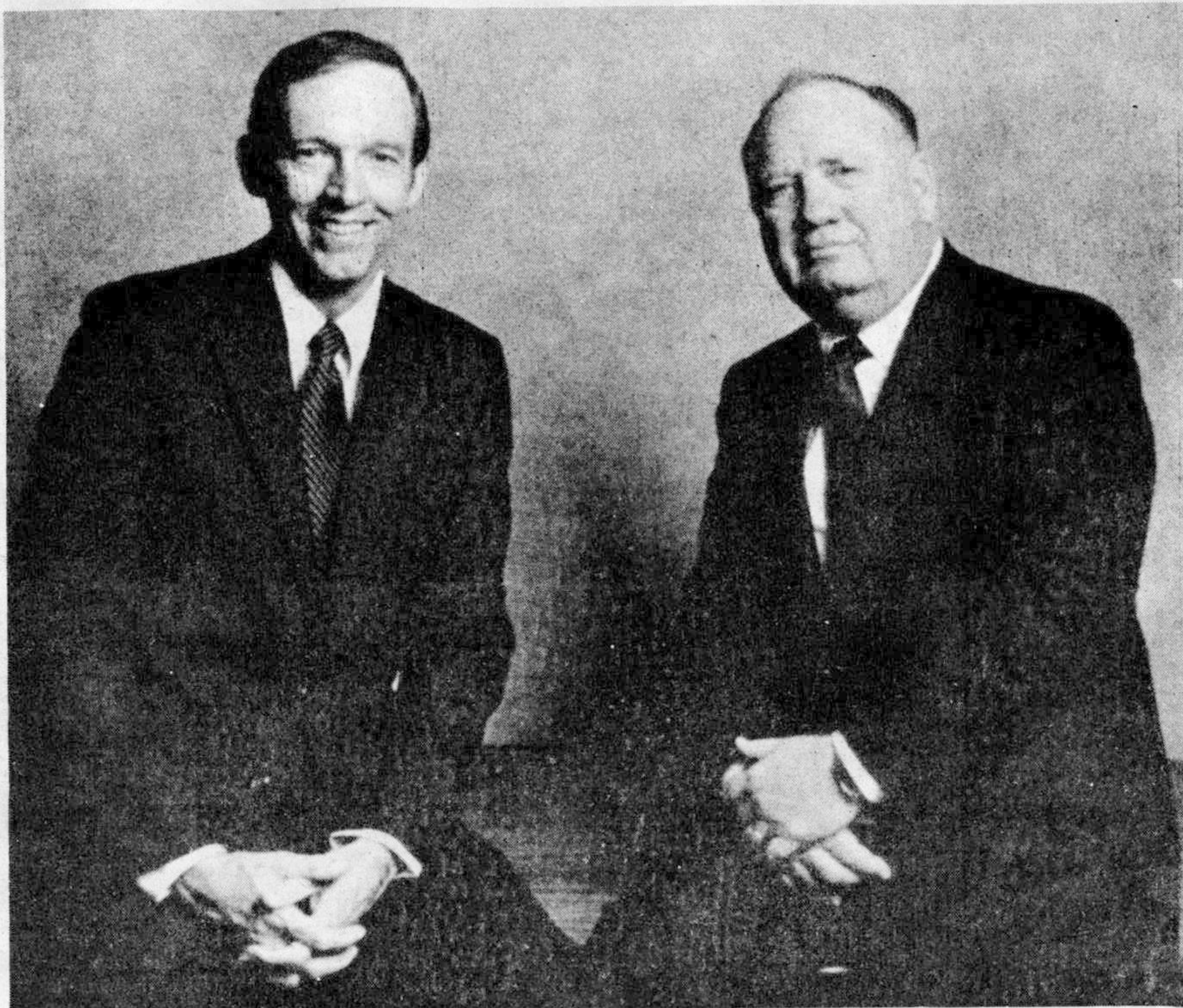
Donnelly, 52, joined Gulf States in 1979 as senior vice president-financial services. Later that year, however, he was promoted to executive vice president. Previously he had been vice president of finance for Pennsylvania Power and Light Co. in Allentown, Pa.

A native of Scranton, Pa., Donnelly graduated with honors from the University of Scranton and later earned a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania, also with honors. Donnelly has worked as a law secretary for the chief justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and was deputy attorney general of the Pennsylvania Department of Justice.

He and his wife Lynn have three sons.

Loggins, 51, was promoted to his present position in February 1979. Before coming to administrative services, Loggins had been assigned to key positions in technical services and personnel.

A native of Winona, Miss., Loggins graduated from the



Dr. Paul W. Murrill, left, and Norman R. Lee.

University of Texas with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering.

He was employed by Gulf States in 1958 and was assigned to an engineering position in the Western Division at Navasota. He has also served in the Baton Rouge Division and at Sabine Station power plant near Bridge City. He was named manager of the Western Division in 1975.

Loggins and his wife Patricia have four children.

Before coming to GSU in late 1978, Burbank, 60, was senior vice president of finance at Edison Electric Institute (EEI), the principal national trade association of the country's investor-owned electric utility companies.

He had also worked for Ebasco International and Connecticut Light and Power Co.

A native of Bridgeport, Conn., Burbank received his bachelor of science degree in mechanical engineering from Yale University in 1945.

He and his wife Margaret have four children.

Cahill, 58, was named senior vice president-River Bend Nuclear Group in October 1980. He had been vice president-River Bend construction prior to that.

Before coming to Gulf States, the New York native had served in various positions with Consolidated Edison of New York.

After graduating from the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn in 1949 with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering, Cahill began his career with Con Ed by being assigned to various power plant engineering jobs. His latest position at Con Ed was vice president in charge of licensing of nuclear plants, quality assurance, research and development and computer applications engineering.

Cahill and his wife Edna have three children.

Draper, 40, assumed his present position in September 1981. He had served as vice president-nuclear technology since December 1980. He joined the company in early 1979.

Before coming to GSU, Draper was an associate professor in the College of Engineering at the University of Texas in Austin. He also was director of the nuclear engineering program.

An expert in the field of nuclear energy, Draper has presented testimony on nuclear power in the states of California, Texas, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Florida and New York, as well as before committees of the U.S. Congress.

Draper received his B.S. degree in 1964 and his B.S. in chemical engineering from Rice University in Houston. He received his Ph.D. in nuclear engineering from Cornell University in 1970. He specializes in the fields of nuclear waste management and public understanding of nuclear energy.

He and his wife Debby have four children.

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Edison Plaza Museum is planned

Nestled in the shadow of Edison Plaza, Gulf States Utilities Co.'s new corporate headquarters, is a vintage, two-story, red brick building that is destined to become a showplace for the electric utility industry.

What had served for at least half a century as the Travis Street substation for GSU will become the Edison Plaza Museum, where memorabilia of the man who electrified the

world, Thomas Alva Edison, will be on display.

The museum, which is scheduled for opening in September, was the brainchild of W. Donham Crawford who served as chairman of the Gulf States board and chief executive officer from March 1978 until he took medical retirement this March.

A non-profit foundation, Edison Plaza Museum was

chartered in December 1980. Its non-profit status enables other foundations and organizations to donate or loan artifacts.

Joe DeJean, a self-proclaimed "museum bug, by nature," will serve as curator of the museum and, meanwhile, he is actively scouting and cataloging acquisitions.

Since he took on the task of getting the museum off the ground, DeJean said his perspective of other museums has changed.

No longer is he interested only in the artifacts; now he's concerned primarily with how other curators group their artifacts, what size of display cards are used, how the exhibits are integrated and other physical features that create an effective display.

Although the opening of the museum is about five months down the road, a number of items destined for the museum are already in hand, DeJean said. The Ford Foundation, the Charles Edison Fund, General Electric, GSU employees and other industry trade allies and institutions have loaned artifacts to the Edison Plaza Museum.

"We will have most of Edison's original energy-related inventions on display in our museum," said GSU vice president Fred Repper, who serves as president of Edison Plaza Museum. "It will also contain other inventions of general consumer interest," he said.

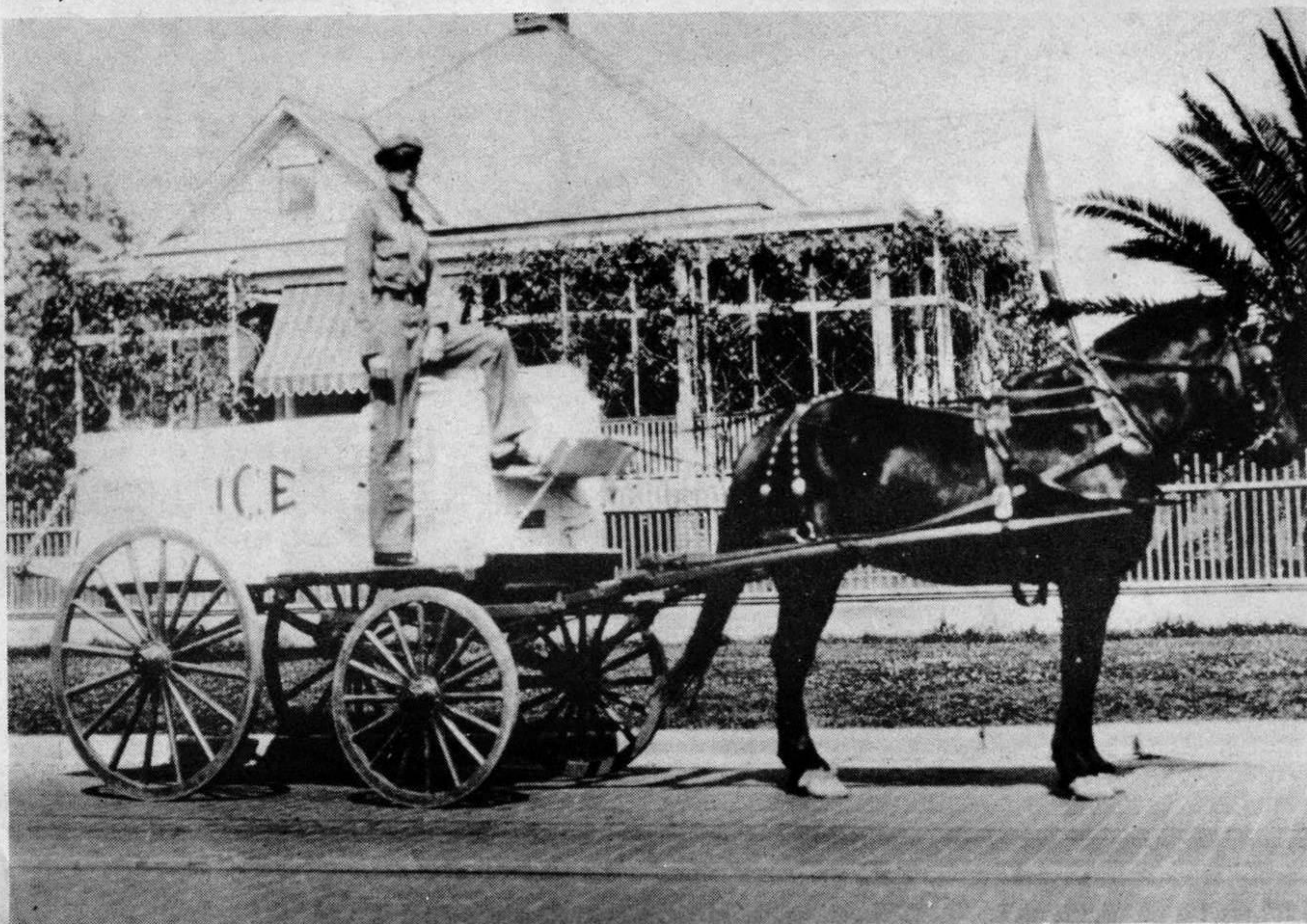
Among the inventions to be on display will be a record player, a motion picture machine, light bulbs and many others.

"This will probably be the only Edison memorabilia exhibit west of the Mississippi," commented Repper.

The exhibits, which DeJean plans to change as more and different artifacts arrive, will be displayed primarily on the first floor of the old substation, with some exhibits to be grouped upstairs. The second floor will serve as a classroom/auditorium where school and civic groups touring the museum can assemble.

Most of the first artifacts on display in the new museum are coming from national sources, said DeJean. He believes that more regionally-obtained exhibits will soon take their place.

The museum is governed by a board of directors composed of Thomas H. Burbank, Joseph E. Bondurant, Dr. Robert Kemble, W.W. Phillips Jr. and Repper. Besides Repper, who is president, other officers are Kim McMurray, vice president; Ann Cobb, secretary-treasurer; and DeJean, curator.



Mules pulled ice wagons of GSU ancestor company.

Training facilities are consolidated

Skills training, management development, and operations training are all part of Gulf States Utilities' training and development programs — a department that has been given a boost through its new facilities at the Edison Plaza.

The new building has allowed GSU to consolidate the majority of its seminars and training lectures onto one floor and has complete television studio capabilities. "We can do basically anything a TV studio can do except broadcast," said Robert Adams, Jr., training support specialist.

With color monitors, a character generator and videotaping equipment, Adams can produce training films, tapes of lectures or informational films for or about the company.

The training and development department is headed by Don Zick and is responsible for three areas of operations:

The skills training group is responsible for providing technical skills and craft training, primarily for classified employees.

The management development group is responsible for providing supervisory, managerial, and professional training and development programs, primarily for management employees.

The operations training group is responsible for providing a variety of programs, including clerical and office skills training, skills assessment and orientations.

With the exception of some obvious job groups — such as utility pole climbing, forklift operations or welding skills — candidates or trainees for almost all job classifications will find their way through Zick's department at one time or another. Zick said that in 1981, over 2800 of GSU's total of 4600 employees participated in a training program or seminar.

Division offices remain in old location

Although Gulf States Utilities Co. has legally moved its place of residence from the former Edson Hotel, 285 Liberty, to Edison Plaza, 350 Pine, the utility company has not completely abandoned the building that was its corporate home for almost 25 years.

The first two floors of the former main office building have become headquarters for the Beaumont division of GSU, one of five divisions within the two-state service area.

In addition to having more room in the new building, Zick said the new meeting room, with chalkboards on two walls, can function either as a long, vertical room or a wider classroom.

Zick has an in-house staff of 14 instructors who will bring GSU employees from anywhere in the utility's coverage in for a seminar or, if necessary, can take the seminar to the employees.

Beaumont customers will continue paying their bills and arranging for service on the first floor of the building, according to Arden Loughmiller, division vice president. Other Beaumont division offices will be located on the second floor.

The energy control center, which monitors the power supply and demand throughout the system, will be moving to the third and fourth floors.

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Yule view

This is the Edson Hotel as it looked in the 1957 Christmas season, after it became headquarters for Gulf States Utilities Co. The 20-story building was the GSU corporate home for almost 25 years, until the move to Edison Plaza.

Early scenes

In photo below left, customers line up to pay bills in a GSU office amid displays of "modern" electric appliances in 1934. Below right is a building erected shortly after the turn of the century on the site where Edison Plaza now stands. Between 1902 and 1909, one of the companies that was to become Gulf States operated from the first floor and one of its principal stockholders, V. Wiess, lived upstairs.



Building systems are under control of 'magic timer'

In a glassed-in office off the main lobby dwells the "brain" of Edison Plaza, the 17-story corporate headquarters of Gulf States Utilities Co.

The Honeywell Delta 1000 computer activates, operates and monitors the heating, cooling, ventilation and lighting systems for the building as well as monitoring security and life safety systems.

The computer has been called the "magic timer" because it can be pre-programmed to turn on the lights in the morning before employees arrive and "condition" the air for heat or cooling — all without a crew on duty to manually perform these tasks.

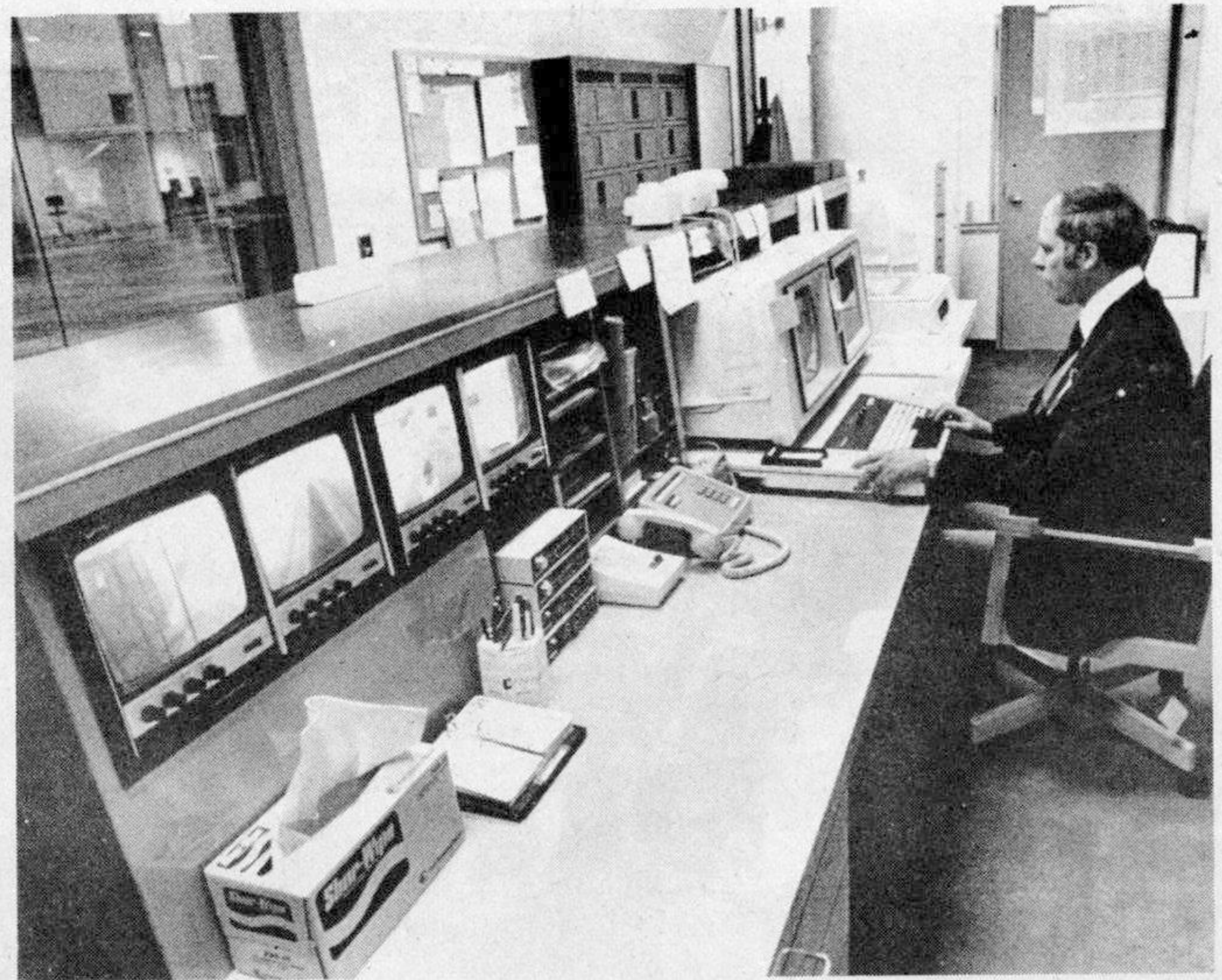
Lights are automatically turned off after working hours in a timed sequence that allows cleaning crews to complete their work.

But employees who work late at night can make arrangements to have the lights and air in their zones only — instead of the entire floor — remain on.

A major function of the computer is monitoring the air handling units and chilled water supply, located in the central plant in the nearby company garage.

The security and life safety systems are tied into the computer so that anytime an alarm is sounded any place in the building, an audible and visible signal, as well as a computer printout noting the location, time and cause of the alarm, alerts the security representative on duty.

Television cameras randomly scan the plaza lobby, transmitting the pictures to the security room which has four small screens.



Joe Russian mans security console of computer.

Many hands involved in Edison Plaza

While the gleaming white high-rise, Edison Plaza, is the corporate home of Gulf States Utilities Co., a lot of hands went into its creation — from the people who cleared the land to those who designed, built and furnished the 17-story structure.

Project manager for Edison Plaza was Beck/Mayan, a joint venture of the Houston office of HCB Construction and Mayan Construction Co. of Houston.

HCB, which also served as general contractor for the project, is headquartered in Dallas and has been in business for about 68 years. The Houston district office worked directly on the Beaumont project.

HCB is currently completing the Four Leaf Towers in Houston and built the Marsh Field department store, the Westchase Hilton and the Brookhollow office Building.

Mayan is Houston-based and has been in business since 1971. Some of the projects in which it has been involved include the Woodway Towers, the Insurance Corporation of America building and the Scurlock Tower in the medical complex, all in Houston.

Project architect was Morris/Aubry, a Houston architectural planning and interiors firm that served as project planning and interiors firm that served as project coordinator for the Astrodome. It was founded in 1938. It designed the Wortham Theater Center, the home of the Houston Opera and Ballet.

Local architect for Edison Plaza was George Ingram Associates, Inc., which was established in Beaumont as a sole ownership firm in 1952. The Beaumont firm has projects throughout Texas and adjoining states.

Businesses from throughout the Golden Triangle played a vital role in Edison Plaza.

Lamb's provided most of the general office furniture for the new building, as well as serving as supplier of much of the GSU office furnishings in the past.

Owner Tom Lamb is the fifth generation of his family in the business which began when his great-grandfather founded a job printing firm on Bowie Street. Lamb's is in its 86th year and has been located at 985 Orleans since 1936.

Eldridge Electric Co. of Beaumont Inc. assisted with the wiring of Edison Plaza. Located at 110 N. 13th St., the company has been in business here since 1944. President is Cora Hines.

Coastal Specialty Co., located at 1090 S. Fourth, provided the lath and plaster and dry wall construction. The 17-year-old business is owned by S.V. "Buddy" Hughes.

Installation of the outside plumbing and the fountain that tracks the perimeter of the

building was done by T. Warren Inc., Tommy Warren, president. The company has been in business for about six years and is located at 4375 Washington Blvd.

Huber's Inc. supplied the ceramic tile, the carpeting and the stonework in the lobby of Edison Plaza. Located at 2910 Eastex Freeway, the company has offices in Port Arthur and Lake Charles. President is Jack Huber.

The landscaping of Edison Plaza — the grass, shrubs, and trees watering system — was done by Al Cook Nursery and Landscaping, a subsidiary of Hamlin Nursery & Co. Larry Hamlin, president, purchased the business, which is located on Highway 105, three and a half miles east of the Eastex Freeway, about three years ago.

Duffy's, a sheetmetal fabricator and installation contractor located at 700 Highway 365 in Port Arthur, installed the louver doors on the garage which adjoins Edison Plaza. The company has been in business since 1965. President is Danny Adair.

Home-owned Hagan Fences, located at 790 Railroad, did the fence work in the garage. Owners are James Hagan and Bill Kemp.

Local steel suppliers for the GSU headquarters were Southwest Structural Steel Inc. of Vidor and Southern States Steel. Southwest Structural, which has been in business at 3995 N. Main, Vidor, for seven years, provided the steel for the parking garage and walkway which connects the garage with the building as well as with miscellaneous steel. E.B. Anders is president.

Southern States Steel, located at 9675 Walden Road, is a division of Commercial Metals Co. of Dallas. Hugh Ghormley is president of the company that provided the reinforcing steel for Edison Plaza.

Burchfield Hardware Co., which has been in business here since the early 1930s, provided the toilet accessories for Edison Plaza. Doug Burchfield Jr., owner of the business located at 798 N. Pearl, is the nephew of Sam W. Burchfield who founded the hardware store which was first located on Fannin Street, across the street from the Jefferson Theater.

Aiding in the demolition of an old power plant on the block where Edison Plaza now stands were Jones Boys Inc., Manshack & Sons Inc. and H.H. Kilgore Construction Co. Inc.

The Jones Boys, a family-owned business in Beaumont since 1911, is headed by Casey Jones. Manshack Inc., on North Highway 87 in Orange, has been in business for about 30 years and was incorporated in 1981. President is Mike Manshack. Harry H. Kilgore is

president of Kilgore Construction which is located at 1535 Lindbergh Dr.

Carl's Paint and Drywall in Orange did the wall covering and painting inside Edison Plaza. Carl Duplissey is president of the company which has been in business since 1964.

D&D Construction Co. Inc., located at 8665 Calcer, laid asphalt for the large GSU parking lot that covers the block bounded by Pine, Elizabeth, Walnut and Magazine streets. A.L. McKinney is president of the company that has been in business since 1973.

The parking lot in front of Edison Plaza was the work of F. Gatlin Asphalt Co. Fedor Gatlin is president of the firm located at 595 S. Fourth.

Brown Fence Co., Perkins Brown Jr., president, erected the fence for the Travis Street substation which will become the Edison Plaza Museum. Brown, who has been in business for 27 years, is located at 1324 Burt St.

Presently doing the electrical work for the future museum is Crown Electric, 1120 Lindbergh. In business since 1980, the owners, Wayne Brockett and Charlie LeBlanc, have, combined, 40 years experience.

T.C. Gray Inc., general contractor, is remodeling the interior of the substation that will become a museum. T.C. Gray is owner and president of the firm located at 1130 Lindbergh.

Coastline Coating Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Barras Industries for three years, does electrical painting, or resurfacing, for Gulf States equipment. Located at 6408 Gulfway Drive in Port Arthur, Chuck Hawkins is president of the company. He has been in business for 30 years.

Overhead Door Co. of Beaumont installed the three doors in the receiving area of Edison Plaza as well as the two doors in the garage. Buford Coe is president of the company that has been in business at U.S. 90 and Main Lane, west of Beaumont, since 1963.

Nuclear unit nears the halfway mark in La.

Work on River Bend No. 1, GSU's first nuclear-powered generating unit, located near St. Francisville, La., is almost 50 percent complete. The unit will have a capacity of 940 megawatts.

85,000 customers live in Baton Rouge area

Gulf States Utilities Co. distributes gas to more than 85,000 customers in Baton Rouge and vicinity. It also sells steam to industrial customers in Baton Rouge.

Forerunner formed in 1882

Organized in 1882 by a group of local citizens, the Beaumont Ice, Light and Refrigerating Co. began early the next year to furnish electric service to Beaumont, then a small but prosperous lumber and cattle community.

First night football game

Outdoor lighting brought about the first night football game in GSU's service area at the old Beaumont High School on Sept. 19, 1930.

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The boardroom on the 17th floor offers view of the city.

Vacant space available in GSU's old offices

Looking for office space in downtown Beaumont?
Has Gulf States Utilities got a deal for you!

Since approximately 650 GSU employees have moved from the former main office building, the landmark Edson Hotel at 285 Liberty, to the new corporate headquarters, about 62,000 square feet of office space on 16 floors of the former company headquarters building have been placed on the market for leasing, according to Jim Cornelius, GSU real estate director.

Gulf States will continue to occupy the basement and first four floors, he said, leaving the fifth through 20th floors available for lease.

"We're actively offering the space for lease," and the utility company has contracted with American Real Estate Corp. to serve as leasing agent, Cornelius explained. He noted that the 19th floor, where GSU's top executives had their offices, has been leased by a Beaumont law firm.

Other businesses have been in contact with the agent, including the federal government's General Services Administration and industries interested in establishing downtown offices, he said.

"We've been advertising locally and in national publications," said Cornelius. "We've got a lot to offer tenants of the building," he said, listing as examples the security and fire safety systems throughout the building.

And, he said, "we'll work with prospective tenants to remodel to accommodate specific needs."

Leasing the vacant space for offices was not the only option

considered by GSU, according to the company real estate director. "We did consider turning most of the building into apartment units, but when we conducted a study, it revealed that would not be economically feasible," Cornelius said.

He explained GSU worked closely with the Central City Development Corp., which is involved in the revitalization of downtown Beaumont, and took a hard look at the apartment concept, even to the extent of exploring federal funding.

At the time Gulf States purchased the old hotel and converted it for use as company headquarters about 25 years ago, the building became home to about 300 employees — with lots of room to expand — and the Beaumont Club, which occupied the third floor.

And when the time came last December to begin the move to the new headquarters, Edison Plaza, about 1,200 employees, including the 650 in the old main office building, had to be gathered in from five downtown locations.

The former headquarters building will now be known as the Liberty-Pearl Complex.

Rails once played big part

Transportation was a large part of GSU's predecessor companies' business during the 1920s, but one by one all the rail properties were sold as Gulf States began to specialize in electric service.

Planning made GSU move work

On the evening of Dec. 11, 1981, just two years after groundbreaking ceremonies for Edison Plaza were held, the first wave of Gulf States Utilities Co. employees made the move from one of five downtown office buildings into their new corporate headquarters.

By March 20, all 1,189 Gulf Staters destined for the 17-story high-rise were at home in their new quarters and adapting to the building that had been designed for them. This was accomplished without injury to personnel and with no significant damage to furniture or equipment.

What made all this work was the planning behind the move, said Jack Worthy, GSU vice president of general services. For the past several years, Worthy's prime responsibility has been Edison Plaza.

"These things don't just happen," he said, "any more than building a power plant just happens. Someone had to do a lot of planning."

And the man in charge of detailed planning for the move was Joe DeJean, director of Edison Plaza programs, who began his task more than a year before the first stick of furniture ever reached Edison Plaza.

The basic challenge, he said, was accomplishing the move without major disruption. Therefore, much of the transfer of furniture and equipment was done after regular working hours and on the weekends. This involved about 15,000 pieces of furniture plus all the paraphernalia that goes in and on the desks and cabinets.

"This was the biggest corporate move we've ever seen in the almost 30,000 square miles we serve," commented DeJean.

Working with DeJean in coordinating and overseeing the move was Sanfred Olson, owner of OK Moving and Storage. To make their task easier, a color coding system was devised in order to get each piece of furniture in the right office in the 462,000 square feet of Edison Plaza.

Internally, DeJean worked with two "prime movers" from each of the 70 departments and groups being moved to the new headquarters. Their responsibility was to serve as liaison between DeJean and their fellow employees and to make certain each piece of furniture, box and book crate was properly labeled.

When the time came for a department to move, one prime mover remained at the old location and the other acted as receiver at the new building.

The move itself was done on an assembly-line basis, with one group of contract movers loading dollies, another transporting and a third group unloading. The only people who actually went back and forth between the old and new offices were the men driving the vans, said Olson.

Moving some of the pieces of furniture and equipment took a large degree of ingenuity. For example, oversized pieces of furniture that would not fit inside the freight elevator had to be hung from the bottom of the elevator in order to haul them up to the appropriate floor.

After the last offices in Edison Plaza were filled and most of the bugs had been worked out, DeJean looked back on his handiwork.

DeJean also feels his prime challenge was met: "Moving from so many areas to so many work stations could have meant a tremendous loss of work hours, plus an effect on employee morale. It was very important that these people were able to go right to work in their new location the morning after the move," he said.

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Edison Plaza cafeteria is like restaurant

By 5:30 a.m., at least half of the 15-member Saga Corp. food service staff is at work.

Not much later, Ella Mae McCarty, head baker, is whipping up a coconut cream pie filling for lunch. Others are preparing salads and entrees for the lunch crowd that will be served from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. — not in a Beaumont restaurant, but in Gulf States Utilities Co.'s employee cafeteria.

By 6:30 a.m., Loicy Jones, grill cook, is at her post in the Edison Plaza cafeteria, frying or scrambling eggs to order and dishing up bacon, sausage, pancakes, grits, homemade sweet rolls and giant biscuits — whatever her customers order. Breakfast is served at

7:45 a.m.

The scene is repeated each weekday, with the Houston-based food service company offering breakfast and luncheon specials each day, in addition to the regular fare. For instance, two days of one week may feature breakfast tacos and steak and eggs as specials. Luncheon specials frequently include seafood, a favorite for Gulf States employees, reports Clyn Whitworth, Edison Plaza cafeteria manager. Whitworth has headed the facility since March, when he left his three-year post as Saga's cafeteria manager at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas.

Even though the cafeteria features some of the most appetizing prices in town for equally mouth-watering food, the facility is ordinarily open only to Gulf Staters and their guests.

Whitworth estimates that about 70 percent of the Edison Plaza population — 1,189 Gulf Staters are based in the new headquarters — lunches in the cafeteria. About 150 eat breakfast in the facility, which has a seating capacity of 280. The total number of seats includes those in two small dining rooms reserved for training groups and other special gatherings. One special use for the entire dining area will be the annual shareholders meeting on May 13.

Diners can view downtown Beaumont through the full-length windows, but the interior view is almost as fascinating. Stainless-steel serving areas gleam in the cafeteria. In the dining area, plants and standing panels enhance the scenery. Behind the scenes, a huge kitchen, complete with giant-sized mixer and freezer, is used to prepare the food.

The "scramble" design of the cafeteria hastens service during the busiest part of the lunch break, from 11:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Patrons split into separate serving lines for salads, sandwiches or hot foods, as well as two beverage serving areas.

Whitworth, who has been in the food service business since he was 16, admits that there is a knack to satisfying a large number of diners daily. To begin with, he keeps "very accurate counts" of how many eat every day and what they select — the cash registers record such data. If an item does not sell well, he simply eliminates it from the menu.

Factors other than appetite can affect the number of customers lining up in the cafeteria. "If the weather is bad, we're more apt to have a larger crowd," Whitworth reveals.

"The Monday after payday is very heavy, but on payday, lots of people go to the bank on their lunch hour," he adds.

Whitworth says that, on the whole, he has been pleased with cafeteria operations. "Our only feedback has been positive," he says.



Desserts are prepared for lunch.

Printing department expands work load

High up on the 10th floor of the new Gulf States Utilities building are machines that spew out pounds of printed items daily, material needed to keep the company's lines of communication open, says GSU's Byron D. Strait.

The chief of GSU's "reproduction department" for nearly four years, Strait, 29, said the increasing work load being handled by the department provides an exciting challenge for the 17 men and women who work there.

"Rush orders" for special reports and other items, he said, "give us a chance to churn out a lot of work in a short period of time, and still have good quality at the same time."

"Every day is a challenge in trying to get all of the orders out," he said, adding that he also enjoyed "the logistics" involved in making sure the department has the 80 or so chemicals and other materials it needs to perform its work.

Economics have forced the reproduction department — a name that generates a few jokes from time to time, Strait said — to do more and more work that previously was done by private businesses.

"Up until this year," he said, "we had a good deal of our printing work done by outside firms. Now, most if not all of it is done in-house. And it saves the company a lot of money, too."

Strait, who received a BA degree in management from Lamar University in 1976, said the six machines in his department produce close to a million and a half copies monthly of memos, forms, letters, reports and brochures that touch on everything from

internal messages to nuclear power to tips on energy conservation.

"We also have to fold, collate, bind and laminate a lot of this material," he said. "You name it — we do it. And we hope to do more in the future."

Strait said he first started working for GSU part time while attending Lamar. Then there were two full-time jobs elsewhere — prior to his current position — before the road led back to Beaumont's own utility company.

"I enjoy working with the others here in this department," he said. "And I like the people in the company, too. They've been good to me here."

Edison's invention started it all in 1879

Thomas Alva Edison invented the first practical incandescent electric lamp on Oct. 21, 1879. His perfection of the concept ultimately led to the creation of electric utility companies.

1938 was important year in GSU history

May 24, 1938, marked the first time average annual residential usage exceeded 1,000 kilowatt hours. Now, most homes use more than that in an average month.

First coal-fired unit

The company's first coal-powered generating unit, Nelson No. 6, located near Lake Charles, will come on-line in mid-1982. The unit has a capacity of 540 megawatts.

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GSU library is computerized

The information nerve center of Gulf States Utilities Co. is the corporate library, located on the 10th floor of the company's new corporate headquarters, Edison Plaza.

In addition to the basic functions of cataloging and indexing, "the library's most important responsibility is to be able to provide a total information service, drawing upon any and all resources available," said Karen McConnell, corporate librarian.

Modern technology, such as computer tie-ins with libraries and data bases all over the country, micro-fiche, and other advances, "helps us get the right information to the

right person at the right time and in the right form," she noted.

The results of this effort to fill the need for information can be measured in terms of time or money saved, technological breakthroughs achieved, efficiency increased and waste or duplicative effort prevented, said McConnell.

One computer, the On-line Computer Library Center, gives the Gulf States corporate library immediate access to about 3,000 other libraries in the United States. Through the computer, McConnell and her staff can immediately determine which libraries have

the desired publication and, still by computer, put in a request for it.

The OCLC keeps track of the book or publication until it is returned to the owner.

The same computer also "places book orders without us having to write a letter to do anything else except enter the order in the computer," McConnell said. The library center sends the order directly to the book vendor and handles everything but paying the bill, she explained.

Another computer in the 10th floor library ties in with hundreds of data bases in five or six different systems, she said. The one used most frequently is the Department of Ener-

gy's data base.

In addition to the books, periodicals, technical papers and computer tie-ins, the corporate library also offers information via microfiche. For example, said McConnell, Federal Registers dating back to 1936 and the Code of Federal Regulations back to 1938 are on microfiche. An "energy fiche" contains information gleaned from government documents, reports, magazines and other sources.

The corporate library has eight satellite libraries, including one at River Bend, GSU's nuclear power plant under construction in St. Francisville, La.

Proposed thoroughfare leads to Edison Plaza

A proposed four-lane divided thoroughfare slicing through a portion of the northern sector of Beaumont's central business district would terminate practically at the front door of the towering new Edison Plaza, headquarters for Gulf States Utilities Co.

The thoroughfare, extending four blocks from Laurel Street connecting with Crockett Street, is part of a major revitalization effort taking place in downtown Beaumont through a cooperative agreement between the City of Beaumont and the Central City Development Corp.

A nationally-recognized urban development firm, Zuchelli, Hunter & Associates Inc. of Annapolis, Md., has been contracted for the development of the projects in three targeted areas:

- A major lodging facility (hotel) and parking in close proximity to the downtown Civic Center and Theater for the Performing Arts.

- Adaptive reuse of four major buildings, including the Stedman Building, for specialty retail, eating/drinking/entertainment, office and residential use; a site for major office development; and associated public improvements and parking.

- Adaptive reuse of eight downtown buildings (including the Kyle Building) for specialty retail, eating/drinking/entertainment, office, residential development, public improvements and parking.

- Dennis Sederholm, president of the Beaumont Chamber of Commerce, estimates the redevelopment program in the downtown area should result in capital investment in excess of \$50 million.

Elements of the two-year work program that intends to package all the proposed projects are designed to change the downtown area's image from a daytime work center to a nighttime entertainment and recreation center.

In order to accomplish the packaging and assimilation of land parcels for redevelopment, a number of street changes are being proposed.

Don Zuchelli, partner in the urban redevelopment firm who is overseeing the Beaumont project, contends the configuration and

urban design of any major redevelopment effort in the northeastern district of the downtown will be substantially affected by the final alignment of the proposed Liberty/Laurel corridor as it penetrates the downtown.

In an effort to resolve this problem in a manner which efficiently moves traffic as well as creates optimum development sites, Zuchelli and his associates have proposed, and the City of Beaumont is in general agreement, a two-way boulevard through the heart of downtown.

This proposed alignment would bring west-bound Liberty and east-bound Laurel together by means of a new segment of Neches Street to create the boulevard through the downtown from Neches to Main. The boulevard would generally follow the existing alignments of Laurel and Crockett, with minor realignment to create a gentle arc.

In conjunction with these improvements, Zuchelli is further recommending that Neches be extended from Crockett to Laurel and that a segment of Crockett, from Neches to Orleans, be closed to traffic.

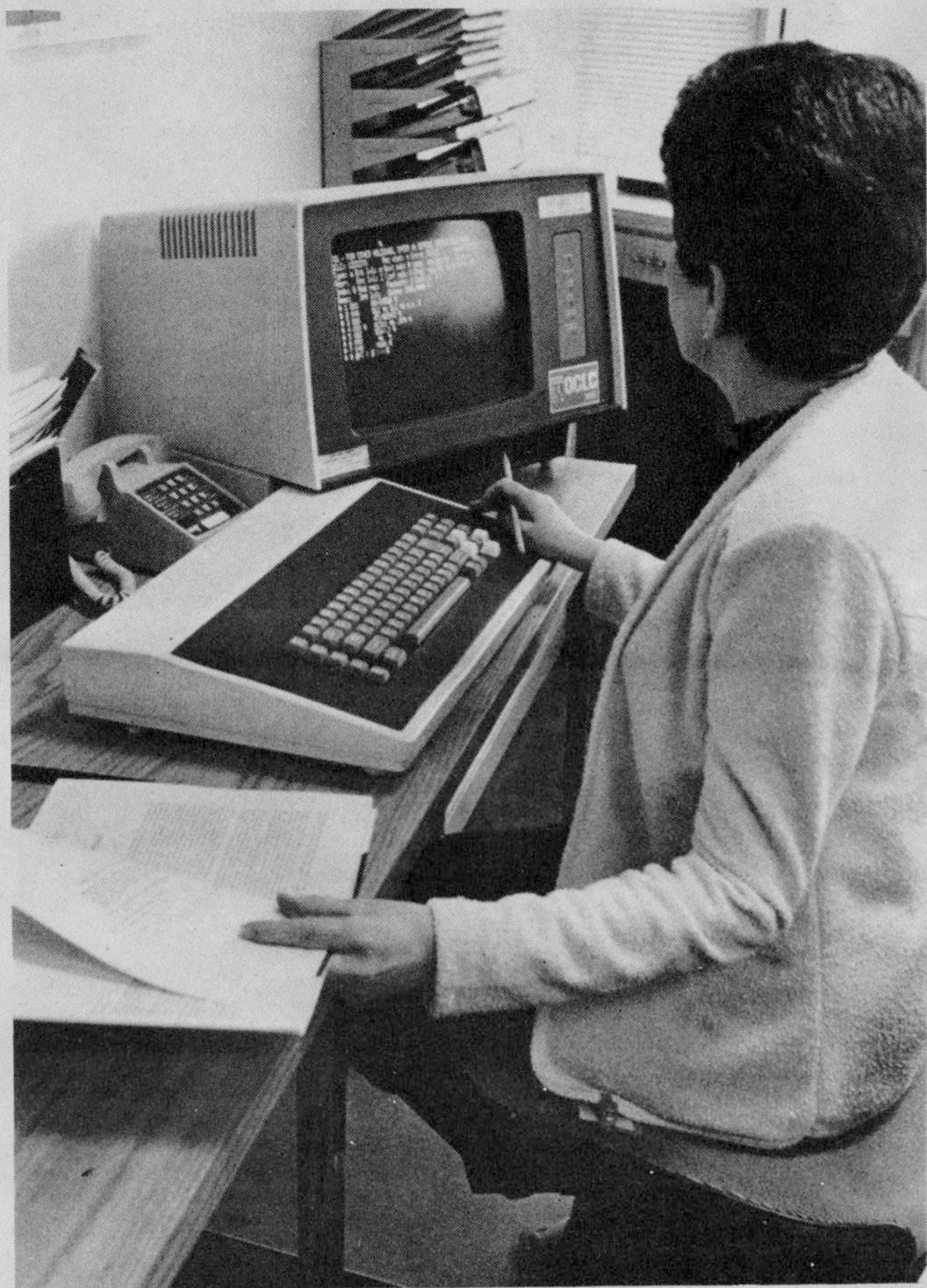
Zuchelli says that once in place, this revised street pattern will greatly enhance vehicular circulation in the district as well as provide a significant new "gateway" in to the downtown.

Besides new urban design benefits, several new private development sites can be created where currently such opportunities either do not exist or are marginal.

The proposed new boulevard would terminate at Main Street and the east-bound traffic would be facing directly the impressive, new 17-story Edison Plaza building.

According to Zuchelli, "The new Edison Plaza building is the new focal point in downtown Beaumont and this redevelopment strategy on which we are working takes advantage of this situation."

From the proposed location of the new major entertainment and shopping complex in the Stedman Building area, visitors at street level will have an impressive and practically unobstructed view of the new Gulf States headquarters.



Virginia Gobles operates library computer.

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Mail services is communications hub

The mail services in the new Edison Plaza is the hub of communications for the entire Gulf States Utilities corporate system.

Headed by Gulah "Dude" Marshall, supervisor of mail services, the department is the

largest volume mailer in Jefferson County. Plus they operate a complete inter office communications system from the corporate headquarters that serves 34 system wide offices.

New building is model of energy conservation

Edison Plaza, Gulf States Utilities Co.'s new corporate headquarters overlooking the Neches River in downtown Beaumont, is a model of energy conservation and efficiency.

The curved-quadrant design of the building and its construction makes Edison Plaza "a state of the art" structure in terms of reduced energy consumption, said Jack Worthy, GSU vice president of general services.

For example, he said, electric resistance heating will be needed only an average of five days a year, and then only for a few hours in the morning to take the chill out of the air. For the most part, lights, office machines and people will generate the heat needed for the building.

Comfort inside the approximately 462,000 square feet of Edison Plaza is controlled by a sophisticated variable air volume system that uses sensing devices to tell the central computer where heat or cool air is needed.

Chilled water circulating from the central mechanical plant in the adjacent garage provides the air conditioning.

Because Edison Plaza was designed and built for the efficient use of energy, it is estimated the annual energy consumption will be about 66,000 British thermal units (BTU's) per square foot, compared with between 90,000 and 120,000 BTU's needed in the average office building erected before the days of energy conservation consciousness. The amount of energy saved is enough to operate 150 typical all-electric homes.

Lights are a "double threat" because additional lighting means more demand on air conditioning to remove the heat generated by the lights. By using the right combination of fluorescent fixtures with reflectors for general lighting and "task" lights at work stations, the lights in Edison Plaza require only a 1.85 watts per square foot "power budget," compared with between 3 and 3.5 watts per square foot in the average office building.

"The use of glass in Edison Plaza — less

than in most buildings — is very important to our energy-saving efforts," said Worthy, who explained the setback solar gray windows permit the entry of natural light but block out the sun's heat and glare.

Most buildings have a glass-to-wall ratio almost 60 percent higher than the GSU headquarters building, he noted.

Because of the building's design — a curved quadrant — 85 percent of the interior is usable office or work space. Hallways, elevators, stairwells and restrooms make up the other 15 percent.

"Compare this with the 60 percent usable space in most office buildings and you see how efficient the design is," said Worthy.

The key to utilization of work space is the open office where portable 65-inch high sound-absorbent panels, or dividers, create three-sided offices.

Most of the traditional offices in Edison Plaza — those with doors and walls — are located along the two straight sides of the building, with the curved side facing into the city left unencumbered to preserve the feeling of open space.

As a department's needs change, the relocation of the open offices can be accomplished at an estimated cost of \$3 to \$7 a square foot, compared with the \$35 to \$40 per square foot that would have to be spent tearing down walls, replacing ceiling tiles and carpeting, relocating electric outlets, lighting and phone jacks and, sometimes, the air conditioning and heating duct work.

Access flooring is used throughout the building, with the necessary cables, lines and wires running in a six-inch space between the metal panel and carpeting and the cement subfloor.

Worthy said that studies have shown the open office environment, when used properly, increases productivity as much as 10 percent, which has a positive impact on employment.

Marshall says in her 25 years with GSU she remembers the time when postage was not the big cost factor it is today.

"We do everything thing we can to practice cost control," she said, explaining GSU now carrier-route sorts their mail, which is going a step beyond presorting.

"We save 4 cents on every bill sent by carrier route sorting them," she said.

GSU mails bills to over 500,000 customers per month along with all shareholder operations mail — such as dividends and proxies — to over 8,500 stockholders.

The inter-office courier service allows GSU to "carry all our own mail and supplies to 34 system wide offices," she said.

Clyde Charlot is section head of the mail service's couriers, who keep six vans on the road operating the inter-office system.

The envy of any federal post office, the GSU system has been perfected until one day

service is expected.

"We operate on a number of daily deadlines," Marshall said.

Some couriers leave the Edison Plaza at 4:30 p.m. and return at 1:30 a.m. Others, who deliver in the Golden Triangle area, leave at 7 a.m. and return in the afternoon.

"The fast courier service gives us a quick turn around of information and communications in the company," the supervisor said.

Another courier picks up utility bill payments at the post office at 4:30 a.m. delivers them to the mail service department to be opened on a tri-cut machine and delivered to the cash processing department.

The mail services has a total staff of 20. And, according to Marshall, she not only keeps current on all methods of mailing but is constantly "seeking new ways to mail more effectively at less cost."



Mail services workers sort GSU mail.

GSU leases Edison Plaza

Although Edison Plaza was specifically designed and built to fit the needs of Gulf States Utilities Co., the utility company is not the owner of the 17-story tower.

Statmont Associates, a Connecticut-based limited partnership, was created for the sole purpose of building and owning Gulf States' corporate headquarters building, explained

Greg Copeland, GSU director of long-range financing.

He said the partnership is composed of a number of private individuals who supplied the equity for Edison Plaza.

Gulf States has a 25-year initial lease on the building with options for extensions of the lease and purchase of the building.



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Beaumont Enterprise & Journal

Thursday, May 6, 1964

Something New Shines in Beaumont! EDISON PLAZA

The Headquarters of Gulf States Utilities

Who ever heard of a 17-story efficiency? Now you have, because Gulf States Utilities Company's new corporate headquarters, Edison Plaza, is an efficient place for almost 1,200 people to work.

Edison Plaza is one of the most energy efficient office buildings in this part of the country. Modern methods of cooling, heating, lighting and space management help make the building a place where energy is used wisely. We ask you to conserve energy, so it's only

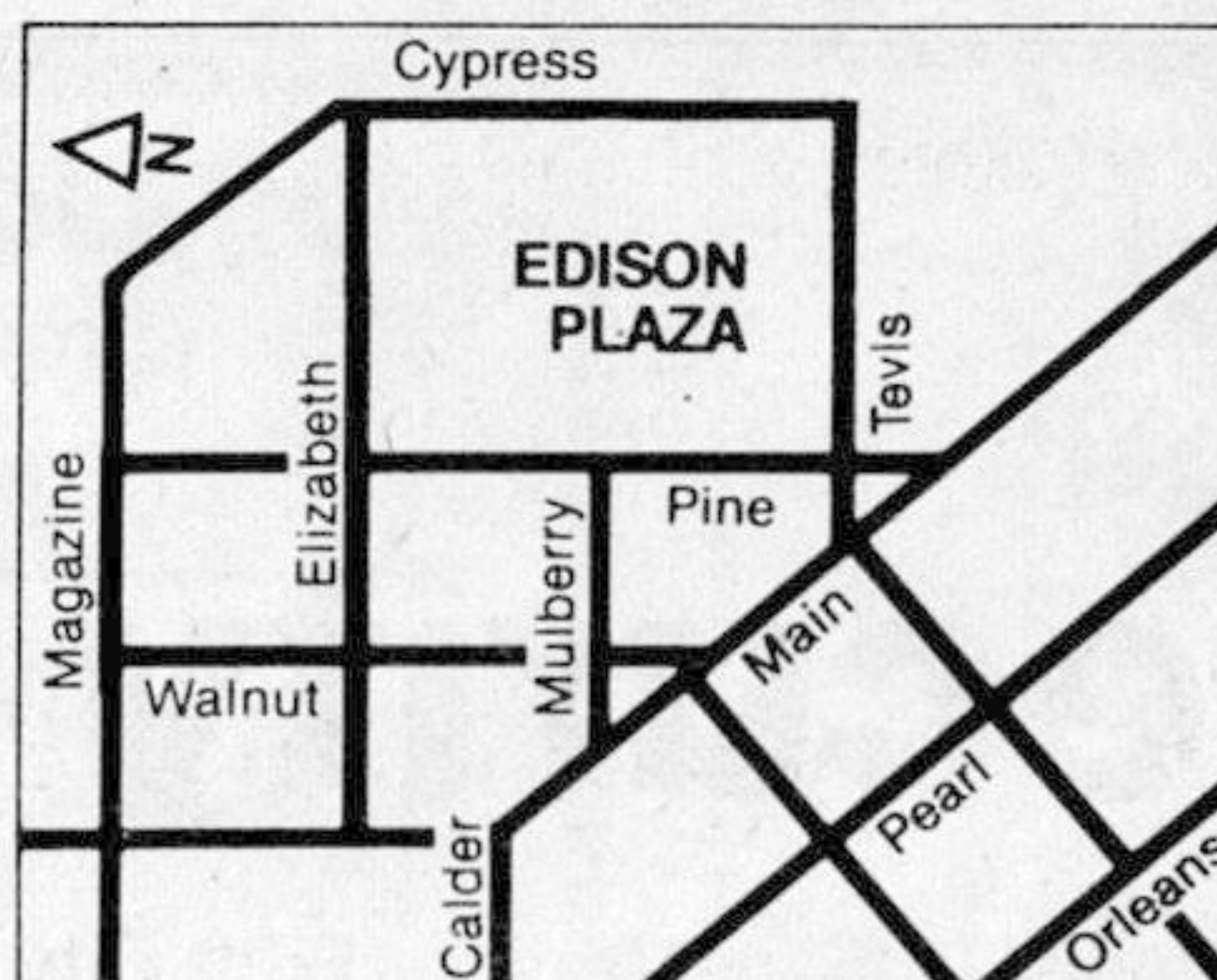
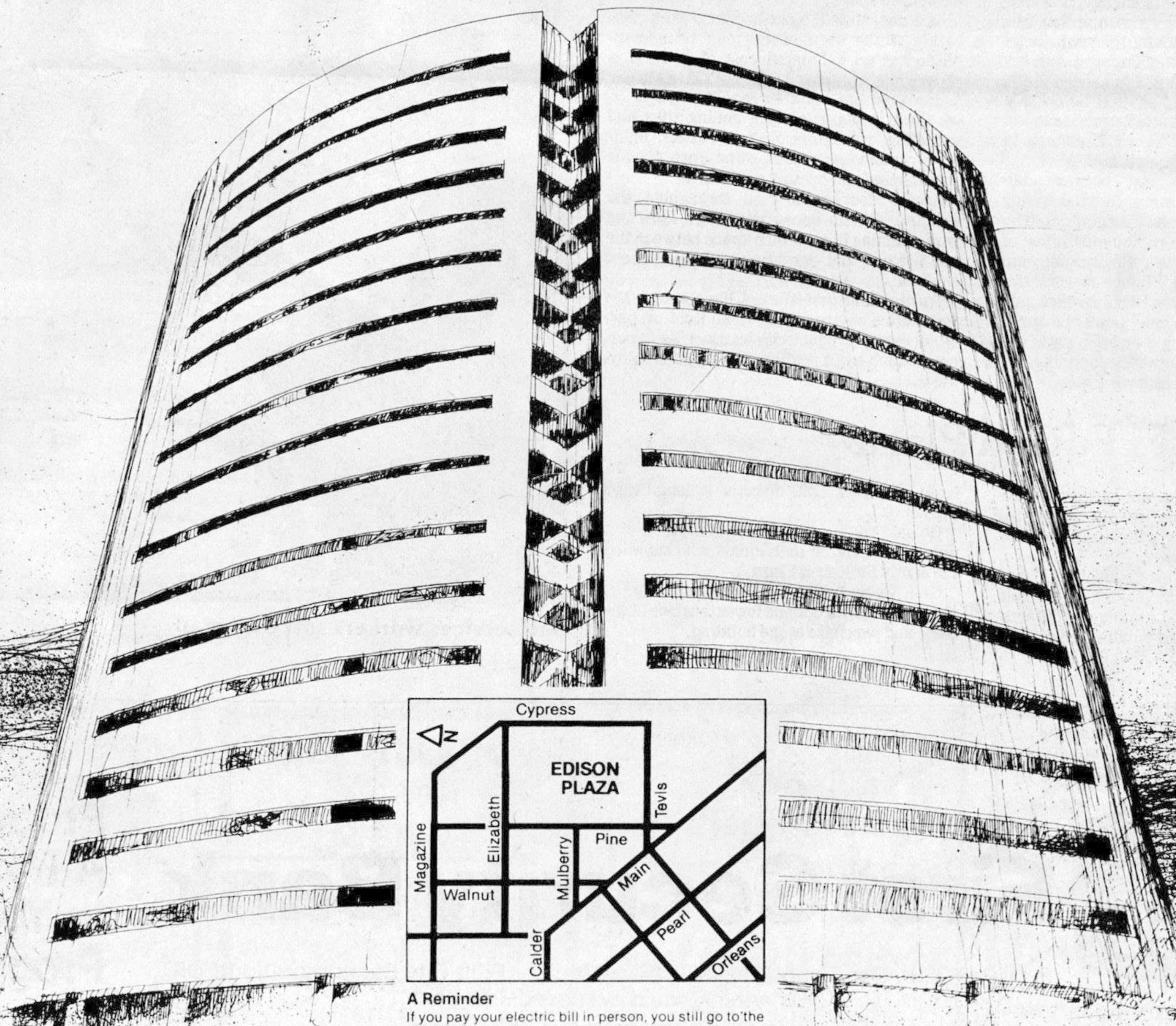
appropriate we save energy, too.

We're proud of our new building, Edison Plaza. Inside, the people are all working on something that's not so new — bringing you the energy you need in the most efficient way possible.

With the majority of our employees in one place, and not scattered in several buildings as before, more work gets done

in more efficient style. That means we can do an even better job of bringing you the energy you use.

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Energy is everybody's business.



A Reminder

If you pay your electric bill in person, you still go to the old GSU main office building at 285 Liberty, corner of Liberty and Pearl, in downtown Beaumont. We still have people there to help you with your bill payments.