



## Aggies win for articles on firearms

University News Service

Four Texas A&M students won the 1984-85 Sanders Research Paper Awards presented for their articles on the history of American firearms.

First place winner is James D. Bigley, a graduate student from Dallas, Pa., who wrote "Patton and the White Pistol: A Texas Born Legend." This is the second consecutive year that Bigley has won the first prize.

Second place went to John Adams Jr., a graduate student in Bryan, who wrote "Whitney in Company: Arms and Knowledge on the Western Frontier."

Third place went to Russell H. of Houston, who wrote "The Colt" and Robert C. Stine of Bryan, who wrote "The Metzger-Sage Gun Collection and the Single-Action Revolver."

The annual competition is sponsored by the Sanders-Metzer Collection Committee. Prize money for the competition was provided by Dr. Sam Houston Sanders, one of the principle donors to the gun collection housed in the Memorial State Center at A&M.

## Funeral procession

Photo by ROBERT RIZZO

A biker's funeral service was held Wednesday for John Robert Baker, 35, of Bryan, died Sunday morning as

a result of a motorcycle accident. A group of friends who ride motorcycles will be holding a copper-dollar run and

campout every weekend in memorial of Baker. About 50 bikes participated in the funeral procession.

# System safeguards computer information

By SHERRY TOFTE  
Reporter

A Texas A&M math professor has developed a system to protect electronic information.

Dr. George Blakley calls the system the threshold scheme. He said it operates by taking a bulk of information and performing mathematical operations on it to produce several parts. Each part contains information unlike the original message.

He said the key to the system is that the original can be destroyed. All

that is needed to decipher the original code is a designated number of parts or a threshold. Anything less will not reveal any part of the code, he said.

"There's a threshold amount of knowledge and if you aren't at the threshold, you don't know anything, but if you reach the threshold, you know everything," Blakley said.

The system is analogous to putting tons of information into a blender, grinding it up to form some electronic mixture, then distributing the

mixture among many different storage areas, he said.

"I am not talking about copies of the original," Blakley said. "Instead, we call them shadows of the original because they only reflect a part of the original message."

Blakley said the system should only be used for information that is too valuable to keep only one copy of, but that also is important to make numerous copies for fear it will fall into unauthorized hands.

"The information being protected tends to be the kind you don't want to disseminate freely," Blakley said.

He said that for the past 20 years, information on aircraft designs, banking records or government records has developed a need for protection, from either a threat of being destroyed or from misuse by unauthorized people.

Big corporations have complex safeguarding systems to protect plans and valuable information that com-

petitors may be interested in, he said. "There really is industrial espionage," Blakley said. "IBM has elaborate security systems because many competitors would like to get a hold of their information."

Blakley said the system is mistake-proof. He said even if part of the information is destroyed or lost, it still is possible to rebuild the original code with the other known parts.

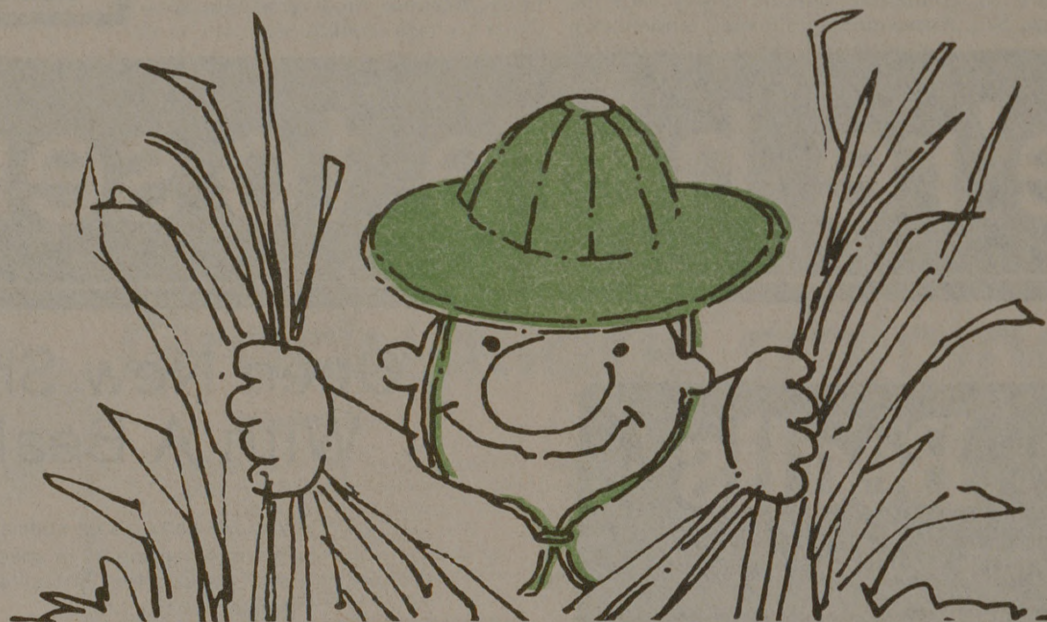
Blakley also said the best feature of the threshold scheme is that it is ex-

tremely fast and easy to implement on a computer. In fact, he said, already has been implemented in storing archival banking data in the Rocky Mountain states.

However, Blakley said, the threshold scheme is not effective in storing all types of information.

"The information must be threatened in two ways," Blakley said. "It must be too valuable to be revealed to unauthorized hands and too valuable to be lost or destroyed."

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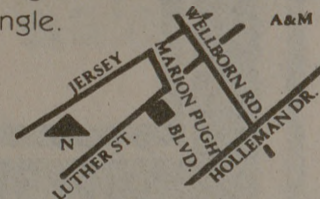
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