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Merchant: Motorcycle, moped riders often unfamiliar with laws

By Jamie Russell
Reporter

Mopeds and motorcycles are as much a part of college life as backpacks and calculators, but many operators of these trendy two-wheelers are unfamiliar with the laws governing their use.

Joe Fisher, owner of University Cycles, says students don't understand that Texas has two classifications for two-wheeled vehicles.

Two- or three-wheeled vehicles with a maximum speed of 30 mph and an engine displacement of no more than 50 cubic centimeters (ccs) are classified by the Texas Department of Public Safety as mopeds. Those capable of greater speeds or that have a larger engine displacement are considered motorcycles.

"What these vehicles look like style-wise has absolutely nothing to do with anything," Fisher says.

Besides a distinction in the vehicles' physical variations, there are differences in licensing procedures.

"Texas just got this moped classification in the law a few years ago," state trooper Eddie Carmon says. "They (motorcycles and mopeds) used to be classified under the law as 'motor driven vehicles,' but because of all the types of scooters available today, a law was passed segregating mopeds and the restrictions covering them."

To obtain a moped license in Texas, the DPS requires that a person be at least 15 years old and complete a two-part written test.

A motorcycle license restricted to the operation of vehicles with an engine displacement of 125 ccs or less may be obtained by 15-year-olds who also complete a riding test.

New shop offers students chance to lease scooters

By Audrey Cardenas
Reporter

Many Texas A&M students may find a solution to their transportation problems with the help of Scooter Brown's, a new motor scooter shop in College Station.

Differing from other cycle shops in the Bryan-College Station area, this one focuses on leasing scooters. Students may lease Honda Spree scooters for \$49 per month and Yamaha Razz scooters for either \$59 or \$69 per month, depending on which type is leased.

Joe Fisher, owner of Yamaha Cycles, says, "There are a large number of students who would like to have a scooter, but can't afford one. The scooter leasing business will be quite an advantage for them because it will make scooters more affordable."

For students, particularly those from out of town, receiving a loan from a bank can be difficult, especially when the amount is less than \$1,500, Fisher says.

"A lot of kids who want scooters

125-cc restriction can be removed when a person reaches age 16 provided they successfully complete a 30-hour motorcycle operator training course.

This course is offered by local sponsors participating in the Texas

ing borrow scooters because fun and deceptively easy to Fisher says, which concerns aties.

Because of the scooter craze, authorities are concerned that untrained riders may lead to an increase in the number of accidents on the roads, which, in turn, could cause an increase in insurance premiums.

Texas law requires all vehicles operated within the state be insured. "If you don't have insurance, you can't take the driving test," says Fisher. "The next thing you know, you're driving around with no insurance and no license."

"If they get pulled over, liable to get three tickets — no operator's license, one for insurance and one for the fact they were pulled over."

"The ramification is that if you have one driving record in the state of Texas, if a ticket is picked up for a motorcycle or moped it goes on your person's driving record just like any other."

When students borrow a person's vehicle, it is important to make sure that vehicle has insurance or that the policy covers the person's driving record, says Fisher.

"My suggestion to students is, 'is one, do not loan your car out and two, don't take a scooter unless you're set up for it.'"

Almost all motorcycles are designed to carry two people, but scooters are not, particularly those under 150 cc, he says, because they have no foot pegs and no grab rail.

Motorcycle Operator Training Program. Motorcycle operators over 18 aren't required to complete the course.

"Ignorance is no excuse," Fisher says of the restriction.

Many people who have no train-

A&M following recent trend toward historic preservation

By Bridget Harrow
Reporter

A Texas A&M repository is joining a recent trend toward preservation of historic buildings and landmarks.

The repository, established by the Center for Historic Resources, is seeking to collect materials pertaining to Texas' "built" environment.

The built environment, as it is called by architects, consists of historic structures, construction technology, gardens, the natural landscape and urban and rural development. The repository's purpose is to collect such materials as photographs, maps and artifacts to help reveal more about the built environment.

Joan Rabins, assistant director of the center, says she believes the repository is a great feature of A&M and a focus for the state.

"We want to cover every avenue related to this subject," Rabins says. "Right now, there is an impulse in Texas toward historic preservation. An east-side preservation project in Bryan has identified some houses there as historical landmarks, and the scope may broaden. We already

heard from people out of Texas."

Dr. Gordon Echols, director of the center, already has collected some early photographs of Texas buildings by Raiford Stripling. Stripling, dean of Texas restoration architects, worked on the System Administration Building and others on campus in the 1930s.

"The repository will not be collecting materials just to save them but to make them available for research."

— Joan Rabins, repository assistant director

"The repository," Rabins says, "will not be collecting materials just to save them but to make them available for research — putting them in a suitable order. We'll be able to get a researcher right to a specific collection."

An oral history program also will be a part of the repository, she says. It will consist of taped interviews of Texas architects about their careers

and recollections of the built environment, she says.

Surveys are sent out to people likely to have information or know of the existence of materials having to do with the built environment, Rabins says. Most people know if they give items to the repository, those items will be better cared for, she says.

"We have a controlled atmosphere," she says. "We control the temperature, keep materials away from sunlight and ultraviolet lights, and place (the materials) in acid-free boxes and folders."

Since the repository was approved only last fall, it is still in the drafting stage, she says.

"We only have temporary space right now; however, we are looking for something with a little more elbow room," Rabins says. "And eventually, we hope to pick out a historical Texas building and have it brought to campus."

"It will probably be one that might have been destroyed otherwise. We won't remove one that has already been recognized or preserved. We are not in the business of messing up the built environment, but restoring it."

Singing Cadets to tour Europe this summer

By Amy Roberts
Reporter

Texas A&M University's Singing Cadets will perform in Germany, England and Switzerland May 17 through June 5.

"We want to promote A&M to gain a little more world recognition," said Mike Mickam, a singing cadet. "We thought this would give people a better idea of what A&M is about since music reaches so many people."

The Singing Cadets will sing American gospel songs and spirituals, folk songs and Dixieland jazz during the first half of the show, he said.

"The second half of the show is dedicated to George Gershwin since he was such a recognized American musician," Mickam said.

They also will sing school songs, including "The Spirit of Aggieland" and "The Aggie War Hymn."

But spreading the spirit of A&M is expensive.

Robert Boone, director of the Vocal Music Program for 27 years, said the choral group has to raise \$112,000 to cover the cost of the trip. Each cadet must pay \$250 and raise \$1,000.

The Singing Cadets are selling \$10 coupons as a fund raiser. By random selection, on May 1, one donor receives an opportunity to go on the trip.

The Singing Cadets also are giving a benefit concert during graduation exercises to raise money toward the trip.

Boone said the 71 members will go to Europe, even if they do not manage to raise all of the money.

Boone said the group will give ten official performances in the three countries, but they will also sing unofficially on street corners and other public places.

The Singing Cadets will arrive in London and immediately travel across the English Channel to

Germany, where they will visit Trier, Saarbrücken, Kaiserslautern and Saarbrücken.

The Singing Cadets will stay with three different German families during their eight-week tour in Germany, Boone said.

Mickam said, "We will get a better taste of man culture because we will actually be exposed to it through the hosts."

Boone said the cadets will give a special performance in Saarlouis because of the celebration of the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution in Saarland.

"It is called the largest American city of the United States because there were 13 Americans stationed there," Boone said.

The group will then visit the Swiss cities of Bern and Geneva, and finally return to England where they will be a part of the Charles Dickens Festival in Rochester.

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