

THE BATTALION

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Dive store owner's concerns prompted investigation

A&M's scuba program was cancelled after an audit department report found an alleged conflict of interest.

By Michael Simmons
THE BATTALION

The concerns of a local dive store owner prompted the investigation of the Texas A&M scuba program, which eventually led to the June 1 cancellation of scuba classes, according to an audit department report.

An attorney representing Wayne Cotter, owner of Paradise Scuba, submitted a letter to the University on March 8,

suggesting misconduct by A&M scuba instructor Tom Meinecke.

According to a report by the Texas A&M University System Internal Audit Department, the letter outlined practices which it called conflicts of interest by the scuba program offered at the University.

The report defined the alleged conflict of interest as the solicitation of business for local dive shops and the refusal of A&M instructors to sign referrals for students who wished to complete their scuba certification elsewhere.

Robert Armstrong, head of the Department of Health and Kinesiology, said the cancellation of classes and dismissal of the scuba instructors addressed the concerns outlined in the letter from Paradise Scuba.

The department will develop mechanisms to minimize the possibility of a conflicts of interest in the future, Armstrong said.

The University canceled five scuba classes offered this summer and 12 classes scheduled for Fall 1995. The University may begin offering classes again in the Fall 1996, Armstrong said.

During the 1993-94 academic year, over 1,300 students were enrolled for scuba at A&M, Armstrong said.

Cotter said that local dive stores will suffer because A&M shut down its program.

Gary Caldwell, the area representative for the National Association of Underwater Instructors, NAUI, said he has an interest in the scuba program at A&M.

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went to the University to offer them assistance with the reorganization of their program," Caldwell said.

The report from the internal audit department surveyed eight universities in Texas and found that A&M was the

only school that required students to rent or buy equipment for their class.

Tom Meinecke, one of the two A&M scuba instructors dismissed and part-owner of local dive shop Sea U Underwater, said he was unsure of the University's motives throughout the investigation.

"I've been doing this at A&M for 10 years," Meinecke said. "Why they decided it was wrong now, I don't know."

Stephen Whaley, a senior environmental design major, said he took scuba at A&M and was shocked by the complaints made toward Tom Meinecke and Jim Wosley, the second instructor dismissed.

"I never once heard Tom promote a dive store," Whaley said. "There were fliers from both Paradise and Sea U Underwater in the classroom on the first day."

A&M to continue search for new pig farm location

Local residents on FM 60 did not want the Swine Center relocated near their homes.

By Jill Saunders
THE BATTALION

A new location for the Texas A&M Swine Center, also known as the pig farm, is currently being evaluated.

The Swine Center, located on the corner of FM 2818 and George Bush Drive, was originally to be relocated to the Animal Science, Teaching, Research and Extension Complex that will be built on FM 60.

The new Science Complex will house the Sheep and Goat Center, the Animal Euthenics Center and the Nutrition and Physiology Center.

Dr. John Beverly, associate dean for agriculture and life sciences, said community concerns influenced the decision to not include the Swine Center in the new Science Complex, because residents in the area did not want the pigs near their homes.

"We're moving to satisfy the expressed concerns of the community," Beverly said.

Beverly said the construction of the George Bush Presidential Library Complex near the Swine Center's current location is not the reason for the move.

For more than 10 years, the agriculture and life science department has planned to move the Swine Center for three reasons, he said.

"First, the campus is expanding every day," Beverly said. "Second, we need more research facilities. Third, West Campus has expanded, and we have teaching needs and students' extracurricular needs."

Beverly said there are many possible sites for the relocation of the Swine Center.

He said McGregor, located in

central Texas, and an outlying area near Navasota are being considered.

He said A&M's 14 research and extension centers are also possible sites.

Mike Wallace, Swine Center feedmill foreman, said relocating the Swine Center has concerned people about the continuance of classes that teach about swine.

"The sows are born here and grow up here," Wallace said. "People are worried that there will not be any classes regarding swine while the relocation is going on."

Wallace said that almost all of the agriculture and animal science classes visit the center at least once. Classes learn how the pig farm is run, and reproduction classes use the farm to do ultrasound tests on pregnant pigs.

Dr. Darrell Knabe, professor of animal science, said the new Swine Center should be located near campus.

"If it gets moved close to campus, it won't impact students adversely, it will only be better," he

said. "But if it's far away, then teaching functions will be compromised because of the distance."

Knabe said the new facility will vastly improve the Swine Center, which was built in 1952, because the new center will have modern facilities.

"It's not going to be like most people think, which is a big pile of manure," Knabe said. "There will be slotted floors, a flush system and a good ventilation system."

Kenton Lily, Swine Center foreman, said he was also concerned the Swine Center would not be located near the A&M campus.

"The distance will hinder us to teach classes if it is far away," Lily said. "For example, scheduling labs could be a problem."

Beverly said initial actions concerning the Swine Center's relocation will begin this week.

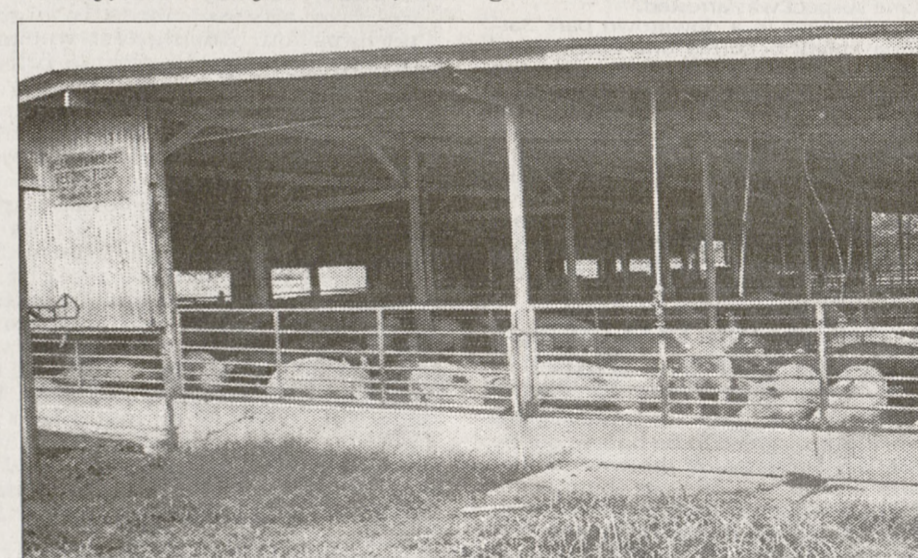
"During the next week or two we will advertise for bids," Beverly said. "In late summer the Board of Regents will vote on the bids. Maybe construction will begin in the fall."



Nick Rodnicki, THE BATTALION

NEXT STOP ... COLLEGE STATION

Union Pacific "3985" Challenger makes a final stop by the Recreation Sports Center for refueling before heading to Hearne on Saturday afternoon. It is the world's largest operating steam locomotive and weighs 1 million pounds.



Mike Friend, THE BATTALION

Pigs wallow and squeal at the A&M pig farm at the intersection of FM 2818 and George Bush Drive.

Corps hosts Texas Aggie Youth Camp

250 teen-agers will participate in the leadership camp over the next two weeks.

By Tara Wilkinson
THE BATTALION

Teen-agers from all over the nation are visiting Texas A&M this week to attend the third annual Texas Aggie Youth Camp, a leadership camp organized and run by the Corps of Cadets.

About 250 teen-agers will attend two week-long sessions run by 37 cadets working full time, and 15 cadets working part time.

Duke Fisher, a senior marketing major and member of the Aggie Band, said the camp gives teen-agers between the ages of 13 and 16 a taste of life in the Corps.

"They get to act like cadets," Fisher said. They go through a lot of leadership training that cadets go through, like the obstacle course and the stamina course. We teach them how to work in squads and develop leaders in those squads."

Fisher, who also worked at last summer's camp, said the campers learn a variety of concepts, including A&M traditions.

"I was very surprised at how much they actually got out of it," Fisher said.

David Melcher, camp chairman and

member of the Aggie Band, said the teen-agers will live on the Quadrangle and eat three meals a day in Duncan Dining Facility. They will be divided into outfits and participate in morning and evening formations.

Melcher, a senior management major, said campers spend their afternoons playing tennis and racquetball, bowling, lifting weights and swimming. They also learn CPR, marksmanship or hunter safety.

After dinner, they will play intramural sports and have free time at night to visit the MSC or go swimming.

At the end of each week, there is a barbecue and an awards ceremony.

"It's competition, but we try to make it team competition rather than individual competition," Melcher said.

Lt. Col. Duke, assistant camp director, said 30 percent of campers this summer are returning campers and five campers are staying for both sessions.

"From 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., they never get a chance to sit down except to eat," Duke said. "We really keep them moving. Because they get choices in their activities, it will be a completely different experience each time."

Duke said campers develop strong



Mike Friend, THE BATTALION

Texas Aggie Youth Campers learn to salute and march in formation Sunday afternoon on the Quad.

Business school to begin distance learning classes

By the end of the summer, two-way audio-video videoconferencing will link the College of Business Administration with other system schools.

By Scott McMahan
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M's College of Business Administration plans to be connected with the Trans-Texas Videoconferencing Network, TTVN, by the end of this summer in order to begin distance learning classes with other A&M System schools.

Dr. Dean Wichern, associate dean of business administration, said the equipment must be installed in the Wehner Building before they de-

cide exactly how to use it.

"We are just in the early planning stages," he said. The network allows an interactive two-way audio-video meeting between two or more locations which will enable participants to see and hear each other simultaneously.

Videoconferencing locations spanning hundreds of miles can be connected to create an interactive meeting or class. Travel time and cost are no longer factors in planning meetings or providing courses to locations across the state of Texas.

TTVN has videoconferencing connections with the University of Texas System, the Texas Woman's University System, the Sprint Meeting Channel, the Texas Educational

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