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Italian tour provides freshmen with leadership, friendships

By ERICA ROY  
THE BATTALION

Before 30 incoming freshmen learned how to say "Howdy," they learned to say "Ciao" when they toured Italy this summer as part of a MSC leadership development program.

The students, National Merit Scholars who recently were accepted to Texas A&M, visited tourist havens and historical sites such as Rome, Assisi, Ravenna, Arezzo, Florence and Venice.

The group stayed at Santa Chiara, A&M's Italian center. Paolo Barrucchieri, an art history professor at the center, served as a tour guide for the group.

Thomas Fitzhugh, a former student, created the program to attract National Merit Scholars to A&M.

He works with the Memorial Student Center, the Honors program and the Study Abroad Program to organize and raise funds for the trip.

When National Merit Scholars are accepted at A&M they receive an application for the trip.

Only thirty students are chosen to participate.

Fitzhugh, three student leaders and two staff members accompanied the group of freshmen this year.

Nelson Burns, MSC executive vice president for MSC relations and a senior international studies major, was one of the MSC leaders to travel with the freshmen.

One of the various goals of

the trip is to provide the students with an introduction to Italian culture and art.

Greg LaBorde, a freshman business major, went on the trip and said the people and the culture would benefit him.

"It was great getting to meet the people I'd be associating with this year, and seeing all the art work," LaBorde said.

The leaders of the group wanted to provide the incoming freshmen with leadership training and an orientation to the University.

The trip also allows students to form friendships before coming to A&M.

LaBorde and Andrew Burns, a computer engineering major, decided to become roommates after meeting on the trip.

"It (the trip) was a great experience. It gave us a chance to get to know people before school even started and have a lot of fun," Bains said.

"They did a good job of telling us how to get involved at A&M."

Burns said traveling with the group as a student allowed him to help the freshmen find their niche at A&M.

He went on the trip as a freshman and credited it as an important factor in shaping his involvement at A&M.

"I believe strongly in the program," he said.

"It has affected my whole life career and involvement at A&M. It was an opportunity for me to give back to the program."

Collective effort aids recycling project

By COURTNEY WALKER  
THE BATTALION

Empty cardboard boxes littered the hallways as more than 8,000 new and returning campus residents moved into the dorms last week.

But instead of adding empty boxes to the garbage pile, residents were encouraged to try an alternative — recycling.

The Texas A&M Recycling Center had collected 7.5 tons of cardboard by Tuesday morning. The cardboard recycling move-in program lasted from Aug. 25-Sept. 3, and the boxes were donated to Twin City Mission in Bryan, which used the boxes for a fund-raiser.

Cassandra DeLarios, recycling project assistant director and a senior geography major, said the program was designed to provide a service for students and help University maintenance and landscape employees.

"During move-in time, it is very visual how much trash is brought onto campus and there's no way the University employees can do it all by themselves," DeLarios said.

As residents unpacked their boxes, four student workers separated the cardboard boxes from other garbage. The cardboard was taken to Twin City Mission where brokers from mills around the state would buy the cardboard to be recycled.

The revenue Twin City receives for the

**"It's going to take a simple change of perception and habit instead of thinking of everything as trash."**

Cassandra DeLarios  
Recycling project assistant director

cardboard goes to Phoebe's Home, Sheltering Arms and the Bridge, all Bryan-College Station charities.

Mark Weedon, program director of the Bridge recycle/resale for Twin City Mission, said the program collected about as much cardboard as expected but should be able

to collect more cardboard next year.

"For a first-year collective effort between Twin City Mission and A&M everyone was pretty responsive to the program," Weedon said.

A&M had a similar program last year during fall move-in, but used physical vehicles to pick up the boxes and take them to the A&M recycling center.

But DeLarios said the University's facilities were filled to capacity and could not handle the amount of cardboard they received.

"We already have programs for white paper, newspaper, toner cartridges and minium cans, so there just isn't any room," DeLarios said.

A&M began its recycling program in 1994 and collected 530 tons of recyclable material last year. The center hopes to recycle 600 tons this year, which will yield a 10 percent reduction in campus garbage.

"Its going to take a simple change of perception and habit instead of thinking of everything as trash," DeLarios said.

Other events for the recycling center throughout the fall semester will include Texas Recycle Day, Earth Day and the collection

Fran threatens U.S. coast

MIAMI (AP) — Hurricane Fran gained strength and took aim for the southeastern coast Tuesday on a path that could bring it to land later this week.

The U.S. Navy sent ships to sea for safety as Fran's sustained winds grew from 85 mph to 105 mph in a few hours east of the Bahamas.

Following on the heels of Hurricane Edouard, which unraveled off the Eastern Seaboard over the Labor Day holiday, Fran was expected to take a turn to the north-west by Thursday.

"This changes every time we make a forecast," said Max Mayfield, a specialist with the National Hurricane Center. "The big question is how far to the north it will go and when it will make the turn. Right now, the biggest threat is from North Florida to the Carolinas."

Mayfield said conditions were similar to those that affected Hurricane Bertha, which killed nine in July. Bertha

came ashore in North Carolina with sustained winds of 105 mph, causing millions of dollars in damage to homes, cars and infrastructure.

At 5 p.m. EDT, Fran was about 285 miles east of Nassau, Bahamas.

It is moving northwest at 10 mph. A hurricane warning was in effect for the Bahamas, which includes Nassau and Freeport.

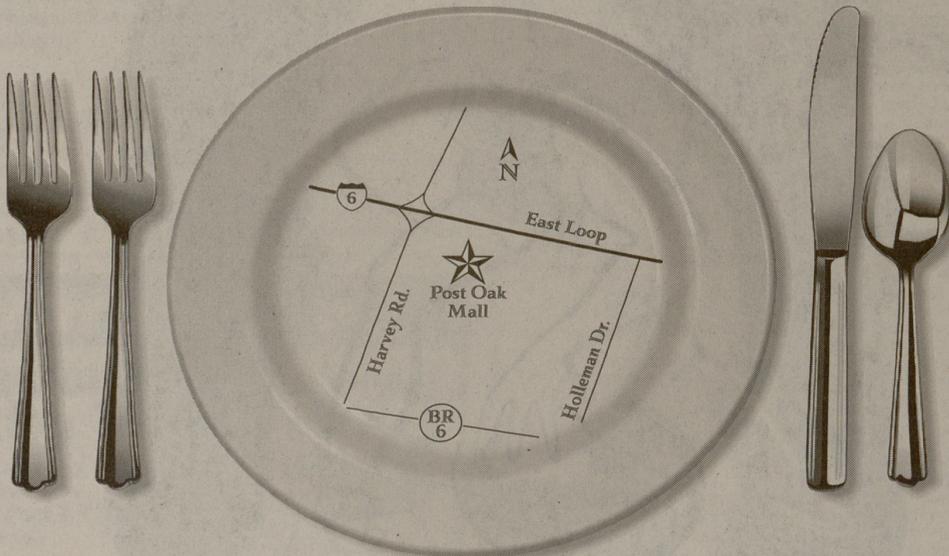
Charles Karam, administrator of San Salvador in the Bahamas, said winds near tropical storm force Tuesday afternoon.

"Apart from that, things pretty much the same," he said. "We feel as though it will be minimal hurricane, but we're watching and listening to reports. We are ready to take necessary precautions."

The Navy wasn't waiting. Jacksonville, Fla., 14 ships were ordered to the open sea.



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AUDITION REQUIREMENTS: the applicant will be asked to perform two works of their choice, as well as sight read an orchestral excerpt.