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• Life is Messy

Texas A&M custodians struggle to make ends meet

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**Weather:**  
Partly cloudy with a high of 95 and a low of 72.

# THE BATTALION

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106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

## Students make illegal phone calls using state code

**KIM TRIFILIO**  
*The Battalion*

Some students from Texas A&M and other Texas public universities have stolen state government access codes, enabling them to make free long-distance phone calls from off-campus telephones to several university campuses, according to Ronald Jackson, assistant director of Texas Agriculture Extension Services.

Jackson said the Texas Senate analyzes the phone bill each month and first noticed discrepancies in the bill for November 1999.

"The billings in November had a significant spike in the amount," Jackson said. "The bill was in excess of about \$15,000."

Jackson said the codes the students used are part of the Tex-an phone system, a state-wide network that allows state employees to make free long-distance calls to other state offices.

"The purpose is to give state employees access to state-contracted long-distance rates," Jackson said. "The phone calls can only be made from one state entity to another state entity. For instance, I could call someone from my office to an office at Texas Tech."

A code user at the University of Houston (UH) who wishes to remain anonymous said she obtained the access code from another UH student and used it to call students at A&M and Prairie View A&M.

"I got it from a girl I knew, and I don't know where she got it from," she said. "I've had the code since Spring '99, but the codes keep changing and so I keep getting the new one. I would use the code to call friends, but most of the time it was like a calling card for important things. I don't use the code anymore because I realized how serious this was. I really thought it was innocent."

According to the *Daily Texan*, the University of Texas-Austin's newspaper, Capitol police began an investigation last November after the Texas Senate and Adjutant General's Department in Austin found abnormalities in the phone bill.

Jackson said there are several theories about how students obtained the state government code.

"One theory is they got it by using the computer," Jackson said. "They put numbers in the computer to find all the permutations of that number. When they hit one that worked, they emailed it to their friends at other universities."

Dr. Brent Paterson, dean of Student Life, said that if A&M students are found guilty of using the code, they could face consequences with the University.

"We cannot do anything until the investigation is complete," Paterson said. "If we find that Texas A&M University rules have been violated, then charges may be issued."

Jackson said the long-distance phone code has been deactivated and a new phone system has been implemented to avoid any more illegal phone calls.

"There is a new system now where each individual has a credit card with a specific number," Jackson said. "Therefore, phone calls can be linked to who made what calls. What we did to stop it was disable the code. If you entered the code, you could not gain access. This was done in December right before the holidays."

Jackson said other Texas government entities have seen abnormalities in their monthly phone bills.

"I know UT had problems," Jackson said. "I also think this happened at the University of Houston, Sam Houston State University and Senate offices in Austin. The problem in the Senate office was recently found in April."

Jackson said students taking advantage of government privileges costs taxpayers thousands of dollars.

"This is very unfortunate," Jackson said. "This is misappropriation of the states' money and misuse of the taxpayers' money."

**SCHOOLS THAT USED CODE**

- University of Texas
- University of Houston
- Sam Houston State
- Senate Offices in Austin
- R61M System Schools

SUSAN REDDING AND ANDY HANCOCK/THE BATTALION

### Wheel of fortune



**Andrew Jean**, a senior psychology major, works on a competition mountain bike at a local bike shop. Jean was adjusting the Shimano XTR rear derailleur on the bike.

ANDY HANCOCK/THE BATTALION

## Blinn offers registration options

Students may enroll by appointment, phone and the Web

**ANNA BISHOP**  
*The Battalion*

For Texas A&M students who co-enroll at Blinn College's Bryan campus, registration may have gotten easier.

"The lines for registering are really awful," said Allison Gunn, a junior marketing major. "It takes me a good two hours to get everything accomplished. With so many students enrolling at Blinn, it seems there must be an easier way of dealing with all the traffic during registration time."

Relief is in sight for Blinn students and co-enrolled A&M students with the introduction of phone registration at Blinn.

Students enrolling in Blinn for the fall semester will now have three options when it comes time to register: the traditional in-person appointment, online registration through Blinn Online Registration and Information System (BORIS) and telephone registration.

"Anytime we can help students, we will do it," said Gena Parsons, public information officer at Blinn. "Because phone registration will cut down on students having to wait in extremely long lines to register in person, as students have voiced their concern, we believe students will be pleased with this new service."

Blinn Registrar Dennis Crowson said the new phone registration is a companion to BORIS, which was added for summer registration this year.

"The new phone registration was piloted during the summer, tested well

and will be available to all students beginning in mid-July," Crowson said.

To avoid overloading BORIS or the automated phone registration system, students were divided by the first letter of their last names.

To register by phone Parsons said that an estimated 1,400 A&M students will co-enroll this fall at Blinn, in addition to the 9,000 Blinn students who will register from the Brazos Valley.

Open phone and Internet registration will continue through Aug. 14.

Parsons said, students can call (979)821-0466 or (979)251-7392, enter their Blinn identification number and follow the instructions. She said 16 phone lines will be available for students registering at the Bryan campus and eight lines will be available for students at the Brenham/Schulenburg campus.

Like the A&M phone registration system, Blinn's phone registration system allows students to pay for their classes over the phone with a credit card, Parsons said. Students can also pay fees, such as parking, using the phone system.

Students who wish to use BORIS should log on

to the student information link at [www.blinnol.edu](http://www.blinnol.edu).

Parsons said that, by using their ID numbers and passwords, students can add or drop courses, check current class schedules, print unofficial transcripts, and change their addresses, phone numbers and other personal information.

BORIS and phone registration will be available Monday through Friday from 5 p.m. to 4 a.m. and on Sundays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Blinn classes begin on Aug. 28.

**Blinn Phone Registration**

- 16 phone lines - Bryan Campus
- 8 phone lines - Brenham/Schulenburg Campus
- Fee Payment by phone with credit card

(979) 821-0466  
OR  
(979) 251-7392

RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

## Non-traditional students find acceptance, support at Texas A&M

**MAUREEN KANE**  
*The Battalion*

Junior education major Darrylin Davis is not a typical Texas A&M student. She is a 49-year-old mother of two from San Antonio.

Davis began her educational career at A&M in '91; after getting married, Davis decided to quit school to be with her family.

In January 1999 the health agency where she worked closed, and she was forced to look for another job. Davis realized it would be difficult to find employment without a college degree, so she returned to A&M.

Davis and about 2,500 other Aggies are called non-traditional students by the University.

Tracey Forman, assistant coordinator for Adult and Graduate Student Services, said non-traditional students include undergraduate students more than 24 years old; students who are single, married or divorced parents; veterans; full time workers; students who took time off from college, or took time off before starting college; graduate students and those who have taken all classes through distance courses.

"There are a lot of students who fall into one of these categories and not another," Forman said. "If they feel different than an average student, then they are not traditional. They are all very unique people with very different goals."

Davis said that although returning to college was initially a challenge, she has adjusted.

"My first semester I had to Q-drop a course and ended up finishing 10 hours with a 2.2 GPR," Davis said. "In addition to working, I now carry 14 to 15 hours, and have raised my GPR to 3.1. Although it has been difficult socially, I have found other non-traditional students through the Transitions 1999 conference I attended last summer. I am also a member of Aggies Plus (an organization for non-traditional students), and will serve as treasurer for the upcoming year."

Transitions, a conference for non-traditional students, will be held on Aug. 18 and 19. Information about Aggies Plus and Transitions can be found at <http://aggiesplus.tamu.edu>.

Forman said the non-traditional undergraduate population at A&M is lower than that of other universities.

"We have significantly less non-traditional students in the undergraduate population," Forman said. "Only about 5 percent are non-traditional at A&M, whereas at most schools, the population is 40 to 50 percent."

Forman said one of the reasons for the small population of non-traditional students could be that A&M is not close enough for students to commute.

"We don't see as many non-traditional

**"Only about 5 percent are non-traditional at A&M, whereas at most schools, the population is 40 to 50 percent."**

— Tracey Forman  
assistant coordinator for Adult and Graduate Student Services

students as some larger communities," Forman said. "A&M is still very catered to traditional students and doesn't cater as much as other schools to non-traditional students."

Davis said she has had a positive experience at A&M and attributes this to acceptance by her peers.

"My younger classmates have been extremely accepting of me, which was one of my biggest fears," Forman said. "They even invite me to participate in study groups. I cannot say enough about the professors who have also been very supportive of me."

Mary Moore, a senior animal science major and vice president of Aggies Plus, returned to A&M in 1998. She said she has made a lot of friends who are traditional students through her classes.

"Once people find out I'm a little older they look to me as a role model or someone to turn to," Moore said.

Forman said non-traditional student organizations provide non-traditional students opportunities to get involved in a wide array of activities while meeting students who share a common experience.

"Non-traditional student organizations' goals help other non-traditional students to get acclimated to campus even though they may feel a little outside the student population," Forman said. "They do things to meet people because there are not a lot of people between the ages of 24 and 48 that are not faculty at A&M."

Tim Flanary, a member of Aggies Plus and a junior electrical engineering major, said that he has been warmly accepted at A&M, but he felt more comfortable at Houston Community College (HCC), which he attended before transferring to A&M.

At HCC, Flanary said, "I was in the majority (non-traditional students). I wasn't a minority like I am up here, but I still feel accepted here as well."

Flanary said that he arrived at A&M with preconceived notions about whether he would be accepted as a non-traditional student.

"I may not go out with traditional students socially, but I have been accepted," Flanary said. "I no longer worry about being an older student because I feel like I fit in. A lot of the things I was fearing never did materialize."

Commit

ews blackout rule. "But they have not wasted the time Sunday in Japan. They've... ed. And I'm very grateful for... whether we get an agreement... they have tried," Clinton said... that "whatever happens, I... have continued to make head... summit statement appl... n's peace efforts and plea... help from wealthy industr... to help underwrite the multib... cost of any Mideast agree... nton left behind in Okinaw... rd of pre-negotiated sum... ents expressing high-mind... to help poor nations escape... ot, combat infectious diseas... education and join... technology revolution.

BERNARDO GARZA/THE BATTALION



Leon took part in

governor

s to make her the capital's first governor. Parat acknowledged defeat... t suggested her opponents... ere bought. Thai elections... usly corrupt, though... k's voters are considered... ible to massive bribes... the poorer countryside... incumbent governor, Bhich... l, chose not to run for a second... spite receiving praise for his... clean up the environment... e quality of life. ... ials said nearly 60 percent... <'s 3.8 million registered voters.

f... injuring three and forcing... nds to flee their homes... ment officials said Sunday... 16 inches of rain fell Sat... mostly in Seoul and Kyong... pulous province surround... capital, Home Ministry... said.

major roads and flights have... perating normally and one... e of a major railroad was b... red. But operations by rail... tion's 128 coast ferries... suspended.

Damage done  
Tokyo quake

O (AP) — A moderate... earthquake shook a string... nic islands off Tokyo on... the Meteorological... said. Police reported no... or injuries. ... quake, with a preliminary... de of 5, was centered... e seabed near the islands... na and Kozushima and... st after noon local time... cy said. ... was no danger of under... es triggered by volcan... or earthquakes. ... quake was most strong... the island of Shikinejima... 3 miles south of Tokyo.