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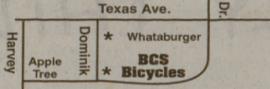
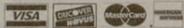
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**2001-2002 UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE
RESEARCH FELLOWS PROGRAM
CALL FOR STUDENT RESEARCH PROPOSALS**

Outstanding juniors who will have completed nine hours of honors coursework before the fall semester and who have at least a cumulative grade point average of 3.4 are invited to apply for participation in the University Undergraduate Research Fellows Program during their senior year. The Fellows Program offers a two-semester independent research experience that culminates in a senior honors thesis. It is the most prestigious research opportunity available to undergraduates at Texas A&M and provides participants with opportunities usually extended only to students pursuing graduate degrees. Over the last several years, 40 to 70 students have been selected annually as Fellows based upon faculty review of research proposals submitted to the University Honors Program. The Fellows Program features a close, master-apprentice relationship between student researcher and faculty advisor and involves both students and advisors in periodic interdisciplinary group meetings, to encourage the development of a scholarly community.

Faculty acquainted with capable juniors who meet the criteria for participation in the Undergraduate Fellows Program may wish to encourage them to consider preparing a proposal. An informational meeting concerning the 2001-2002 Fellows Program, open to faculty as well as students, has been scheduled for 4:00 PM on Thursday, 15 February, in 292B MSC. Research proposals will be due on Thursday, 22 March. Students will know whether they have been admitted to the program in early April. For additional information, contact Dr. Donald R. Dickson, Fellows Coordinator, d-dickson@tamu.edu or visit the Honors website at <http://honors.tamu.edu>.

**Inmates' escape plans discovered
Guards find outgoing letter with sketch of cell**

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — It was an escape plan, but prison officials say it was half-baked, at best. A plan by two inmates to escape from the Bexar County Jail was stopped after officials discovered an outgoing letter to a girlfriend that contained a diagram of a cell. Then they found crude knives made of stiff wire taken from springs on a mop bucket. Despite the plan's haphazard appearance, officials insist there were sinister undertones, including a plot to kill a jailer. Implicated in the plan is Joshua Maxwell, 22, who is awaiting a capital murder trial in connection with the slaying of a Bexar County deputy during a cross-country crime spree, sheriff's officials said Monday. The plot began to unravel Jan. 21, when jailers during a routine mail inspection opened a letter Maxwell wrote to his girlfriend and co-defendant, Tessie McFarland, who has been in a separate area of the jail since their Oct. 17 capture. Inside the envelope, authorities found a diagram of Maxwell's cell and the floor plan of his maximum-security unit in the sixth floor of the jail, sheriff's Capt. Gabehart said. "We inspect hundreds of pieces of mail a day, something like a drawing sticks out. We opened it and 'Hey, this looks familiar,'" Gabehart said in Tuesday editions of the San Antonio Express-News. "It was a drawing because we started paying closer attention to mail." The next day, a fellow inmate in Maxwell's unit, investigators that Maxwell and another inmate, Jose Pinoza, planned to assault a jailer, then crawl onto the roof of the jail and rappel down the side with bed sheets. How the two planned make it past perimeter fences and heavily armed security was not clear. The inmate also told jailers that Maxwell and Espinoza had made two knives and stashed them for the escape. Jail officials soon found the knives hidden in a corner area both men had access to. "It was half-baked," Gabehart said. "You can't go through the roof unless you have a jackhammer. There would have just been locked in with a dead or wounded officer."

State battles to shut down casino

EL PASO (AP) — Attorney General John Cornyn says the state will go to court in July to try to shut down the Speaking Rock Casino, owned and operated by the Tigua Indians. A group of state lawmakers, however, hope to circumvent the legal action with bills that would specifically allow the casino to continue offering gambling. The state contends that slot machines and card games at the casino on the tribe's southeast El Paso reservation are prohibited by Texas law. The Tiguas argue that the State Lottery Act allows for those games of chance. "The question is whether the Tiguas may legally operate a casino in Texas," Jane Dees, a spokeswoman for the attorney general, said Monday. "We believe the answer is no."

She said Cornyn believes it is a simple case. Tribe spokesman Marc Schwartz said the Tiguas are looking forward to resolving the issue. "Texas is already a gambling state," Schwartz said. "It has a variety of different laws providing for a variety of different gambling. Our law is modeled exactly after the Texas act." Tigua attorney Tom Diamond said it still is possible there could be an out-of-court resolution. U.S. District Judge Harry Lee Hudspeth in his order for a July 24 trial date requests a report on "alternative dispute resolution." In the Legislature, Reps. Juan Hinojosa, D-McAllen, and Terry Keel, R-Austin, have filed a bill that would allow the Tiguas and two other Texas tribes — the Kickapoo at Eagle Pass and the Alabama-

Coushatta in East Texas — to be gaming on operations on existing reservations. Sen. Eliot Shapleigh, D-El Paso, has a companion bill in the Senate. "These people were here before us," Hinojosa said in Tuesday editions of the Austin American-Statesman. "They are sovereign nations recognized by our country. They should at least give them the right to be able to take care of their own folks and own needs." The Tigua tribe has said the gambling has generated money to be used in businesses, build houses for members and make charitable contributions. After the state filed the lawsuit, Tiguas asked in October 1999 to be thrown out, claiming they had sovereign immunity from being sued. "Next Congress issues a waiver."

News in Brief

Husband jailed for murdering priest

DALLAS (AP) — A man infuriated by a priest who said God made him have an affair with his wife was sentenced to 20 years in prison Monday after a jury convicted him of murdering the holy man. Ramesh Kumar Wadhwa, 52, of Coppell, pleaded no contest to stabbing a popular Sikh priest, who claimed God led him to have the affair with Wadhwa's wife. Wadhwa told jurors that he sat down for lunch with Iqbal Singh in

his office-apartment in Coppell last January, expecting to hear the priest confess to having had an affair with his wife and apologize. Instead, Wadhwa said he flew into a "sudden passion" when Singh blamed God for his affair with Sarita Wadhwa and said five other members of the small Sikh congregation knew of and supported the relationship. Sarita Wadhwa had told her husband two days earlier that Singh had been forcing himself on her during weekly counseling sessions. Singh was found stabbed to death in the apartment after a phone call from Wadhwa's attorney.

Police found a bent, broken knife blade next to the body, and bloodstained clothes belonging to Wadhwa in a bedroom closet. A second bloody knife was found on the side a plastic bag in the kitchen. Wadhwa faced up to 99 years in prison for the murder. Wadhwa, who owns a check-cashing business, was eligible for probation because he had no previous felony convictions. Wadhwa was a musician on probatombomb teacher of the tabla, the drum used in Sikh — who are Hindu religious services.

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