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Integrity surveys reissued in electronic form

By Sarah Walch
THE BATTALION

Four thousand Texas A&M students will receive an e-mail Monday asking them to fill out an electronic survey to update current statistics on A&M's academic integrity.

It should only take about 10-15 minutes to fill out, said Bill Kibler, associate vice president for Student Affairs.

"Students who are lucky enough to receive this e-mail can take the survey, click on one button and it's done," he said.

The effort comes after an attempt to poll students in the spring semester

using paper surveys fell short of being statistically significant. The minimum requirement for an accurate poll is 380 surveys. In April, only 180 surveys of the 4,000 mailed out were returned, said Robbie Blakely, senior management information systems major and co-chair of the Academic Integrity Assessment Committee.

Blakely said feedback is necessary to make good recommendations for changes within the University.

Anonymity is respected with the survey, which questions students on amounts and kinds of cheating, Kibler said.

"Since the questions are of a sensi-

tive nature, we make sure there is no way to trace response back to any individual," he said.

There are some limits on who can respond, Blakely said. First-time students are excluded because transfer students and freshmen are less likely to have as much experience with the A&M environment.

This requirement prevents the assignment of the surveys to specific classes and the rewarding of any extra credit, Kibler said.

The results from 1997's academic integrity survey were disappointing, Kibler said. The survey found that 88 percent of students cheated in some

form, ranging from sharing homework answers to using crib sheets on an exam, during their time at A&M, well above the national average of 80 percent.

"We were a lot more typical than we would like to be," Kibler said. "We came out on the upper end of the data for large public universities."

The timing issue was a problem with getting enough responses in the spring, Kibler said.

The committee is also revisiting a faculty survey on academic integrity after an equally disappointing response in the spring semester, he said.

"The results will enable us to

demonstrate the gravity of the situation," Kibler said. "Our guess is that (the results) will be consistent with the 1997 results. We have no reason to think the results will change. The University hasn't done anything different in the past five years to change the way academic integrity is addressed."

After the results are announced, the committee will be rolling out recommendations on things that might affect student's academic honesty, Kibler said.

"From New Student Orientation to graduation, we will be looking at changing current policies to make a difference," he said.

Bumping along



JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Waco native **Sam Mangram** waits in line for a photo opportunity with his 1926 Ford Model T Touring in front of the George Bush Presidential Library Complex Friday afternoon. **Mangram** and

other members of the Texas T Party drove into College Station from various Texas cities for an annual convention and a tour of the Bush library.

University recognizes on campus Bonfire group

By Rolando Garcia
THE BATTALION

A new student group committed to reviving the tradition has begun what could be an uphill battle in hopes that a strong show of support from students in favor of returning Bonfire to campus will help sway University administrators.

The Bonfire Coalition for Students, which gained official University recognition as a student organization last week, is allied with the Bonfire Coalition, a broad umbrella group including students and former students committed to working with University officials to bring Bonfire back on campus.

Brad Shipman, chairman of the student group, said maintaining interest among a growing number of students who have never worked on Bonfire or seen it burn is key to returning the tradition to campus.

"We just need to get people thinking about it again and educate students about the meaning and history of Bonfire," said Shipman, a sophomore environmental design major.

Plans for a high-profile pro-Bonfire campaign are still on the drawing board, Shipman said. They may include T-shirts, signs, rallies and presentations about the history and myth surrounding Bonfire.

"If students demonstrate that they really want to see Bonfire return quickly and safely, I think the administration will have to take that into consideration," Shipman said.

In February, then A&M President Dr. Ray M. Bowen canceled plans for a 2002 Bonfire, citing cost and liability concerns. Current president Dr.

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BONFIRE COALITION **Goals for 2003:**

- Returning Bonfire to campus
- A memorial on November 17 at 7 p.m.
- Lifting the moratorium on the sale of Bonfire-related merchandise
- Designating November 18 as "Bonfire 1999 Remembrance Day"

RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION

Archeologists use artifacts for food facts

By Kim Weatherly
THE BATTALION

Alston V. Thomas, assistant professor of anthropology at Texas A&M, said he and his team of archeologists can determine the way in which Native Americans used the land to acquire and prepare food by studying their artifacts.

Thomas was invited to celebrate Texas Archeology Awareness Month and to educate the public about Indian lifeways in his speech,

"Indian Lifeways in the Post Oak Savannah." He spoke in detail about past land-use systems, his primary research interest, at the Star of the Republic Museum at Washington-on-the-Brazos Saturday.

Thomas said the Brazos Valley is overflowing with artifacts dating back to the North American Indians.

In addition to the Indians, Thomas said elephants roamed the area several thousand years ago. Some remains have been found, and several digs are now in

progress in and around Lake Somerville to find more remains and more evidence of Indian lifeways, he said.

Sandra Vega, an employee of the Star of the Republic Museum, attended the speech.

"It was brief but very informative," Vega said. "He talked about how the average person can perform his or her own archaeological dig."

Sarah J. Keil, the Public Programs Coordinator for the museum said Thomas was invited

to speak because his topic was closely tied with the focus of the museum.

"We are here to represent, interpret, and preserve the Republic period of Texas, from 1836 to 1846," Keil said. "American Indians and their lifeways are an integral part of that history."

For more information, visit the Star of the Republic Museum at Washington-on-the-Brazos or speak with Thomas in the Anthropology department on campus.

Scholarly journal seeks to publish student entries on European Union

By Sarah Darr
THE BATTALION

The European Union Center, housed in the Presidential Conference Center of the George Bush Education Foundation, is looking for scholarly papers, commentaries and book reviews from students to publish in their online academic journal, said EU

Notes graduate assistant and master's student Elke Blodau.

The opportunity to have a paper published is open to all undergraduate and graduate students at Texas A&M, Blodau said. Students who are interested need to e-mail their papers to the EU Center, where it will be proofread. The only requirements are that the papers must be relevant to the

European Union, and they must be academic in some way, Blodau said.

"Although the papers must be scholarly, students can use a casual writing style," Blodau said.

The first edition of EU Notes was published last spring and due to little student

response they are planning only one edition per semester, said Lucero Carranza, the assistant director of the EU Center. Only five students have had their work published in the journal, Carranza said.

If student interest increases, the center plans to publish more editions per semester, Carranza said.

The goal of EU Notes is to allow students the opportunity to have a work published so that anyone online can read the student's papers, Carranza said.

"By having their works published, students will be able to let everyone know what they are interested in," Carranza said.

EU Notes is one of the projects funded by the center, whose main goal is student outreach, Carranza said. As long as there is student interest, EU Notes will be available.

See **EU Notes** on page 2

Investigators release little information in sniper case

ROCKVILLE, Md. (AP) — Investigators hunting an increasingly brazen sniper defended their meager release of information, saying Sunday they don't want the killer to know what they know.

Authorities pointed to the dangerous balance between pleading for public help and revealing too much.

"We don't want to release anything that may cause anyone to think they're a suspect," said Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agent Mike Bouchard.

Montgomery County police Chief Charles Moose, meanwhile, has cut back on his news briefings while saying he wishes there was more he could reveal.

"I wish we could give you a name, a mug shot and an address but we're not at that point," he said in one of four appearances he made Sunday on national TV talk shows.

Moose has become the public face of a massive task force investigating a random shooter who has fired a single round into each of 10 victims, killing eight, in suburban Washington since Oct. 2.

The last killing occurred Friday morning, when a 53-year-old father of six was shot while fueling his sedan in a gas station just south of Fredericksburg, Va. At the time, a state trooper stood just 50 yards away, investigating a traffic accident.

Also Sunday, calls continued to flood tipster hot lines with information about white box trucks and a second white vehicle, a Chevrolet Astro van, seen at two or more of the killing sites.

And authorities began describing the serial sniper as not just a local threat, but an attempt to terrorize an

See **Sniper** on page 2

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Source: European Union Center
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