Autumn color
With Thanksgiving approaching, Auburn is finally seeing signs of autumn. A prolonged drought and unusually warm temperatures delayed the onset of autumn color until cooler air moved into the area over the past two weeks. The first signs of fall could be seen in the dogwoods that are plentiful around campus and in the occasional poplar and maple trees that dot the landscape.

University seeks input from faculty, staff, others in online survey for AU priorities
Auburn has entered the third phase of a strategic planning process to establish the university’s priorities for much of the next decade and possibly longer.
In this phase, the administration is seeking input from all major constituencies, including faculty and staff, through an online opinion survey and a series of group meetings and focus group sessions on campus and around the state.
President Jay Gogue has asked all members of the university community to participate in the Web-based survey, which is available through the “AU Strategic Planning” button on the university’s home page (www.auburn.edu). The survey will remain open through Nov. 21.
In comments to the Board of Trustees on Nov. 2 and in a letter on the Strategic Planning Web site, Gogue said, “A university’s strategic plan is of value if and only if the community of people who give life to the institution share its assumptions and embrace its aspirations.”
Gogue, citing an assessment of the university’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (a SWOT assessment), said the online survey and the upcoming meetings and focus groups are critical to the university’s efforts to complete an effective strategic plan. The SWOT assessment is also posted at the Strategic Planning Web site, and Gogue is asking survey participants to familiarize themselves with it before completing the online survey.
Gogue said the strategic planning process will address two core questions:
- Given Auburn’s strengths, distinctive features and constraints, what are the appropriate aspirations for Auburn a decade into the future in the three key mission areas of instruction, research and extension?
- What are the major strategic initiatives we need to implement over this decade to meet those aspirations?
The AU president is to report on the strategic planning process in early February at the next scheduled Board of Trustees meeting.
Although initial steps were taken earlier, Auburn began the process on a large scale in 2005 with a
Major Melvin Owens, a 26-year veteran of law enforcement at AU, has been named the university’s new executive director of security and public safety.

“President Gogue made the appointment based on the recommendation of a security consulting firm, which specifically pinpointed Major Owens as the ideal candidate,” said Executive Vice President Don Large.

“Owens is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, has been named one to create a safe and secure campus environment,” Owens said.

Owens said public vigilance and a comprehensive, unified effort are necessary for effective campus security. “This can best be accomplished by building collaborative relationships with the entire campus community,” he added.

Owens, who worked with the Office of the President, began his career at AU in 1981 as a patrol officer and soon moved into the investigations section. In 1988 he was promoted to captain of auxiliary security. “I look forward to working together with everyone to create a safe and secure campus environment,” Owens said.

Owens is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, and he performed additional studies in criminology and justice education at the University of Virginia.

Melvin Owens
Veteran police major named head of campus security, public safety

**Upcoming Events**

**Tuesday, November 13**

**THEATRE** Shakespeare’s “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” 7:30 p.m., Telfair Peet Theatre; also Wednesday-Friday; box office 444-8134

**FREE CONCERT** AU Community Orchestra and guest artist, cellist Dong-Oo Lee of Korea’s Ulsan University and formerly of Korea’s National Symphony, Haydn’s “C Major Cello Concerto,” 7:30 p.m., Opolska Performing Arts Center

**Wednesday, November 14**

**PUBLIC LECTURE** Frey Gaillard, author of “Prophet from Plains: Jimmy Carter and His Legacy,” 3 p.m., Archives and Special Collections Department, Draughon Library

**Monday, November 19**

**NEXT AU REPORT**

**No Classes** during week of Thanksgiving, offices remain open Monday and Tuesday

**Wednesday, November 21**

**HOLIDAYS** Offices closed for Thanksgiving

**Monday, November 26**

**CAMPUS REOPEN** Classes resume and offices reopen following holiday break; no AU Report on Monday following Thanksgiving, publication resumes on Monday, Dec. 3

**Thursday, December 6**

**JULIE COLLINS SMITH MUSEUM** "Faces and Stories: A Portrait of Southern Writters," portraits by Finland-based photographer Curt Richter, through Jan. 5, 3 p.m., Southern Museum. Exposition: works by a leading figure of Chicago’s Imagist Movement of the 1970s and ’80s, through Jan. 5

**Campus Forum**

**Religious studies in the post 9-11 world**

By Richard Penaskovic, Professor of Religious Studies, Department of Philosophy

Many scholars in religious studies have in the past banded their heads against a wall trying to persuade their secular colleagues, skeptical administrators and a suspicious public of the importance of educating students about religion, often to no avail.

Now, at last, the familiar litany of reasons against the academic study of religion, such as “religion is a private, personal matter,” is being heard by a new audience with an understanding that the importance of religion has been in the spotlight in recent years.

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Education has sharp rise in scholarship aid

The AU College of Education recently awarded 118 undergraduate and graduate scholarships and assistantships totaling more than $210,000 for the 2007-08 academic year, an increase of more than $60,000 from last year.

The funding includes four new scholarships and assistantships awarded this year: The Alabama FFA Officers Alumni Association Annual Scholarship; Sandra Bridges Newkirk Endowed Scholarship; Harold and Shirley Patterson Annual Scholarship; Continuous Improvement Graduate Assistantship and the G. Dennis Wilson Endowed Graduate Award.

Dean Fran Kochan said the presentation ceremony, held annually since 2002, is as much about recognizing the investment in education made by donors as it is about the achievements of the students. “Identifying and assisting so many deserving students is paramount for our college,” said Kochan, “and is made possible by the generosity of donors. We are delighted to honor those who have helped create an enduring legacy through the support of these student awards.”

Cater Lawn activity to highlight AU recycling program

To celebrate America Recycles Day, the AU Recycling Program will conduct its second “Landfill on the Lawn” event on Cater Lawn from 1 p.m.-3 p.m. Thursday.

The event will focus on collecting material for the university’s single-stream recycling program. Single-stream recycling means that all recyclables can be mixed in one recycling bin.

Auburn’s single-stream recycling program, which started in 2005 with the help of SP Recycling in Atlanta, has collected more than 500 tons of recyclables, saving the university at least $10,000 in disposal fees.

In addition to collecting recyclables, event organizers will be gathering data for planning purposes and for use in spring semester’s Recyclemania Competition.

For more information on the AU Recycling Program, visit the Web site, www.auburn.edu/recycle or contact the program by electronic mail at aureuse@auburn.edu.

Casting a spell

In this scene from Shakespeare’s “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” Puck, played by Phillip Beard of the English Department, casts a spell on the First Fairy, played by AU student Natalie McCormick. Presented as a “jukebox musical” with songs from several decades and styles, the AU Theatre comedy continues Tuesday-Friday at Telfair Peet Theatre. For tickets, call 844-4154.