Building Science
The new Building Science building north of Samford Avenue is rising in near-record time. Since AU broke ground for the $9.3 million facility last July, construction crews have erected most of the building’s exterior up to the roof. The 42,500-square-foot facility is the first on campus to make extensive use of new energy-saving technologies.

Tobacco users to pay more for health insurance starting July 1

Prepare to pay $240 more per year for health insurance coverage after July 1 if you smoke or otherwise consume tobacco products — or if you have family coverage and your spouse is a tobacco user. However, you will not have to pay the surcharge if you — and your spouse, in the case of family coverage — do not use tobacco products. But to qualify for the savings, you have to return a Tobacco Use Certification form to the Office of Payroll and Benefits by the end of June.

The additional charge, assessed in equal amounts in each pay period over the course of a year, is modeled after one adopted last year by the Alabama Retirement Systems for the PEEHIP insurance plan for retired education employees and a similar plan for retired state workers.

The surcharge was recommended by the AU Insurance and Benefits Committee in response to a string of double-digit increases in the cost of claims to AU’s health insurance program in recent years. In recommending the surcharge, the committee cited much-higher expenses for medical care for tobacco users. For instance, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates health care costs related to smoking at $75 billion a year.

Tobacco Use Certification forms were mailed to faculty and staff in late January, and updated forms with modified language will be posted on the university Web site, www.auburn.edu, under Special Features, on Tuesday. Any employee covered by the AU health insurance program can download the pdf, complete, sign and return it to the Office of Payroll and Employee Benefits. Employees without access to a computer may obtain a form by calling Payroll and Employee Benefits at 844-4183.

Nearly half the 4,200 employees covered by AU’s self-insurance program for health insurance have returned the original forms. Executive Vice President Don Large said employees will not have to return a second form if they have already returned the first one, but if they choose to do so, the newer form will be substituted in their files.

Each insured employee qualifying for the exemption...
AU authors contribute chapter on leadership to award-winning book

A leadership development book that includes a chapter penned by three AU administrators has been named an Outstanding Academic Title for 2005 by the American Library Association’s Choice magazine.


Bill Sauser is associate dean for outreach with the College of Agriculture, Lane Sauser is chief financial officer for the College of Agriculture and Sumners is director of the Economic Development Institute.

In its review, Choice magazine highly recommends Leadership, praising editors Ronald R. Sims and Scott A. Quatro for producing “a cutting-edge, interest

ing and well-researched volume” that is the first to offer a comprehensive selection of the latest writings on leadership across various sectors.

“The contributors of these 28 original chapters are leaders, researchers, academics and consultants intent on improving leadership” at all organizational levels, the review states.

The magazine’s prestigious list of Outstanding Academic Titles is comprised of the top 10 percent of the almost 7,000 scholarly books the magazine reviewed in the past year. Choice editors evaluate each book based on overall excellence, importance relative to other literature in the field, distinction as a first treatment of a given subject in book or electronic form, originality and value to under

graduates.

United Way Award

Campus United Way leaders recently met with interim AU President Ed Richardson to celebrate an award from United Way of Lee County for exceeding the campus fundraising goal of $140,000 in 2005. Shown, from left, are Diane Townsend, Bill Sauser, Richardson and Susie Hall.

AU Theatre presents The Tempest in March

AU Theatre turns to Shakespeare for its next production, “The Tempest.”

The College of Liberal Arts’ Department of Theatre will present the classic fantasy at Telfair Pett Theatre at 7:30 p.m. March 7-11 and 2:30 p.m. on March 12.

“The Tempest” is the last of Shakespeare’s 38 plays and one of his most popular comedies. The play features shipwrecked travelers, magical spirits and young lovers in a tale that scholars have linked to both the biblical Book of Genesis and Plato’s Republic.

Visiting instructor Chris Quail, a former staff member of the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, is director for the AU production.

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Admission is $20 for the general public, $15 for AU faculty and staff, free for AU students and $10 for younger students. For reservations, call 844-4154.

AU Report, 23 Samford Hall, Auburn University, AL 36849. Telephone: 334/844-9999.

Source of health problems

You and your spouse still love each other, but you have been getting on each other’s nerves a lot lately. Still, you both manage to keep the tension below the surface—never boiling over in front of the children. You bicker but never fight in front of the kids and you both consider yourselves good parents. You make sure the children are well fed, do their daily chores and homework and have a strictly enforced bed time.

So, why are your children unmotivated in school, easily distracted and frequently arguing with each other and their teachers?

Accurate research by a team of researchers from Auburn University and a colleague from Brown University, your marital tension, despite your best efforts to hide it, may set off a chain reaction in your children, affecting the amount and quality of their sleep, which, in turn, makes them more irritable and less focused as they go about their daily activities.

“Family stress can have a devastating effect on children,” said Mona El-Sheikh, Alumni Professor in AU’s College of Human Sciences, lead researcher in a study of the relationship between parents’ marital stress and sleep deprivation in children. Of special note in the study was the finding that the stress level may be below the radar for some parents yet still cause harm for their children.

In results published in the January-February edition of the journal Child Development, the researchers established a link between children’s perceptions of their parents’ marital stress and the quality of sleep the children experienced. The more discord the children sense between their parents, the more the amount and quality of their sleep declined. If mild levels of stress were found to be harmful.

Everyone recognizes that frequent, loud family quarrels can be harmful to children, but the latest study went beyond the obvious to include the impact of mild discord — the cold stares, icy silences, and mutual avoidance, etc. — that never rises to the surface, at least in front of the children.

The study, using sleep differences as a predictor of behavioral problems, found that parents may not be as successful in hiding marital problems as they think, and may be harming their children in the process.

“The study confirms what everyone has suspected,” said Mona El-Sheikh, Alumni Professor in AU’s College of Human Sciences, conducted the study of 54 eight-and-nine-year-olds between 2003-05, using standard psychological tests to measure level of marital conflict from the perspective of parents and children.

Other survey instruments measured the level of daytime sleepiness of each child.

In the journal article, the researchers cite many previous studies by other social scientists that established a link between marital discord and sleep problems in children.

To measure the level and quality of sleep at AU, the Auburn researchers used a device with the con

sultation of co-author Christine Aceto of Brown University. Worn at night on the person’s wrist, the device records the length and stability level of sleep, including indicators of poor sleep quality such as excessive daytime tiring and turning.

All the children went to bed at an early hour. However, compared to children from more stable home environments, children who sensed marital discord among their parents lost a half hour of sleep or more per night and displayed signs of poor qual

ity sleep. Those with higher levels of sleeplessness also displayed proportionally more problems in school, including irritability and inattention.

“Children will pick up on conflict, even when parents try to hide it. You cannot sweep it under the rug.”

“Parents need to be aware that family conflict and stress can continue, can affect their children’s health,” El-Sheikh said.

Besides establishing a link between marital discord and sleeplessness in children, with resultant behavioral problems in the children, the study found that the children perceived marital problems to a greater extent than the parents realized.

“Children will pick up on conflict, even when parents try to hide it,” said El-Sheikh. “You cannot sweep it under the rug.”

All marital problems are periodic conflict, but not all conflict is bad, El-Sheikh said. Ideally, she added, parents are not only committed to resolving conflict, they do so in front of the children, involving them in the process.

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Magazine, ACES, Engineering staff win CASE honors

Auburn Magazine and the communication units for the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System received honors this month in Nashville at the Southeast regional meeting of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

ACES received a Grand Award, the region’s top honor in the illustration category. The winning design, developed by Bruce Dupree, presents a detailed cross section of Alabama wildlife and flora in a poster format for an Alabama 4-H Natural Resources promotion.

The Media Center in Engineering received two awards. The unit received an Award of Excellence in the category of education fundraising projects for the college’s Auburn Fund annual fund package, which consisted of three mailings. The unit also received a Special Merit Award in the Audio Visual Communication/Slide and Multimedia Programs category for the “Ross Renovation Virtual Tour” on the college’s Web site.

Auburn Magazine won a Special Merit award for the magazine’s fall 2005 issue, which featured advance coverage of AU’s 150th anniversary, including a photo essay, “The Art of Place,” that recalled people, locales and circumstances that helped make Auburn what it is today. The award cited the work of Auburn Magazine editor Betsy Robertson and creative director Shannon Bryant-Hankes.

CASE, with 3,200 members, is the primary association for education professionals in communication and advancement fields. AU is in District III, which represents most colleges and universities and other educational institutions in eight states of the Southeast.

Child sleep problems

continued from page 3

perate fights are not the solution, but neither is allowing the discord to continue without trying to resolve it, she said. And children need to see that the conflict has been resolved.

“The message is to engage in constructive, not destructive conflict,” she said. “Let the children know that some conflict is normal in healthy relationships, and that you are capable of working things out together without endangering the marriage.” In this way, children learn how to handle conflict outside the family, she explained.

“When children see that there are healthy ways of dealing with conflict, they will feel that their family is secure,” El-Sheikh said.

Providing children with a sense of stability is the first step to helping them to sleep soundly at night and promoting emotional maturity in their daily lives, she said, adding that parents have to take additional steps to ensure that their children are getting a good night’s sleep.

“Don’t just send them to bed. Don’t let them use the computer or watch television after bedtime,” she said. “It does not do any good to set a bedtime if you are not going to enforce it.”

A&P Assembly officers

Harriet Huggins, left, of the Learning Resource Center will end her term as chair of the Administrative and Professional Assembly on March 31, turning the leadership post over to Drew Burgering, center, of Communications and Marketing. The assembly has elected Maria Folmar, right, of Governmental Services as chair-elect of the organization, which represents administrative and professional staff members at AU.

Draughon to present first Sesquicentennial lecture

Prominent Southern historian Ralph Draughon Jr. will discuss Auburn during the Civil War Era in the first lecture of AU’s Sesquicentennial Lecture Series on Thursday.

Draughon, a researcher and retired professor from the University of New Orleans, will speak at 4 p.m. in the Special Collections Room of Draughon Library. An Auburn native, Draughon is the son of AU’s 10th president, for whom the library is named.

The public lecture will examine the years from 1853, when townpeople initiated efforts that resulted in the establishment of the college, through the Civil War years of 1861-65 and Reconstruction until 1871.

Art exhibit presents views on civil, human rights issues

Civil rights and human rights issues are explored in art at Biggin Gallery through March 8.

The Department of Art exhibition features prints, drawings and mixed media presentations by master of fine arts candidates from universities throughout the United States.

Prints by Luca Cruzat are presented as statements on repression and were influenced by dictatorship in his native Chile from 1973-90.

Works by Drek L. Davis of the University of Georgia contrast the messages of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X with today’s pop culture icons.

Works by other artists make statements on political pressure and the social implications of expression.

How Auburn Stacks Up

Auburn colleges with spring ’06 enrollment between 500-2,000

Source: Institutional Research and Assessment

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