



COSAM Covalence E-News, Re-issue of February 2010

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Master Arborist Visits Arboretum



Master Arborist Chris Hastings takes a sonic scan of the Founder's Oak.

Master Arborist, Chris Hastings, visited the [Donald E. Davis Arboretum](#) on Feb. 10 to demonstrate the latest high-tech mechanism available to help determine the overall health of a tree, the Picus Sonic Tomograph. This device takes a sonic scan of a tree, which can be used to determine whether any rot, fungal decay or cavities are present. Hastings' arboriculture firm, ArborMedics, is the first company in the Southeast to use such a device as a regular diagnostic service. The Picus Sonic Tomograph was used on the Founder's Oak, which has been a part of the Arboretum for the past 150 years.

Results of the sonic scan indicate that while it appears there is a cavity inside the tree's trunk, there is no cause for alarm. "It is not unusual for a Post Oak that has been around for a while to have a hole in the center," says Hastings. "It appears that the cavity is small

and the wall-thickness of the trunk is thick, so important nutrients can continue to move up the trunk."

Hastings recommended that the caretakers at the Arboretum continue to watch the tree for signs of good health, such as regular acorn production, and to follow-up with another [Picus Sonic Tomograph](#) scan in a few years to track the progress of the tree.

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COSAM Dean Delivers Research Awards



COSAM Dean Stewart Schneller presented the final research awards of his tenure on Feb. 16, 2010. As the recipient of the Faculty Award, Dr. Ken Halanych presented a lecture entitled "[Assessing Evolution in Marine Systems with Genomic Approaches.](#)" Dean Schneller presented Dr. Halanych with a \$1,000 honorarium and a plaque.

The following graduate students were awarded a \$250 honorarium at the event: Jan Pawel Boronski, a doctoral student in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics; Kelly Bragan, a master's student in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics; and Sean P. Graham, a doctoral student in the Department of Biological

Dr. Ken Halanych and Dean
Stewart Schneller

Sciences.



(L-R) Dr. Ken Halanych, Sean P. Graham, Jan Pawel Boronski and Dr. John M. Mason, Jr., AU vice president of research

Michael A. Alcorn, a senior in the Department of Biological Sciences, received the undergraduate research award and a \$100 honorarium.

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Noted Security Expert Lectures on Terrorism



Cover of Bruce Schneier's book "Schneier on Security"

Security expert and best-selling author [Bruce Schneier](#) spoke to a mix of students, faculty and administration as part of the Littleton-Franklin Lecture Series on Feb. 2.

Noted by *Wired* magazine as "one of the world's foremost security experts," Schneier warned the audience that "only our reaction to terrorism can destroy our country's way of life." He cited math literacy as an important tool to use while wading through news reports of security threats.

"Terrorism is rare. Doing it is harder than you believe. Refuse to be terrorized." Schneier said that terrorists succeed only 7 percent of the time. He added that the only way to have decent terrorist policy is to understand terrorism and reject after-the-fact thinking.

Co-sponsored by COSAM, the [Littleton-Franklin Lecture Series](#) will continue on April 13 with Michael Gazzaniga, author of *The Social Brain*, *Mind Matters* and *The Ethical Brain and Nature's Mind*.

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COSAM Alumna Retires From Alabama State University



Photo of Dr. Thelma Ivery courtesy of ASU.

Dr. Thelma Ivery, who earned her Ph.D. in Chemistry at Auburn, retired from Alabama State University (ASU) after 45 years of service. The former Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences has said she looks forward to finishing her family-history book, practicing the piano and traveling as often as she can.

The Daphne, Ala., native obtained her undergraduate degree from ASU during the Civil Rights era. She was forced to settle for a Chemistry degree because segregation laws denied her entrance to medical schools. Dr. Ivery is a third-generation educator.

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COSAM Faculty and Students Attend Collegiate Census Summit



(L-R) Deputy Director of the Census Reginald Bigham, Dr. Toni Alexander, Avery Werner, Rajesh Sawant and Atlanta Regional Director of the Census George Grandy, Jr. Photo courtesy of Census media

Dr. Toni Alexander, assistant professor of Geography, and two Geography students, undergraduate Avery Werner and graduate student Rajesh Sawant, represented Auburn University at the 2010 Census Collegiate Summit held in Orlando, Fla., in Jan. 2010. Organized by the Atlanta Regional Division of the US Census Bureau, the conference sought to inform student leaders across the Southeast about the importance of the upcoming 2010 Census and to promote outreach that would result in increased participation in the Census by traditionally undercounted populations, including African-Americans, Hispanics and college students.

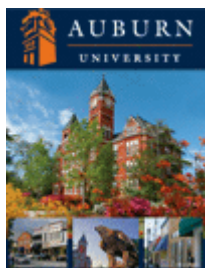
“As a land-grant institution, Auburn University has a unique mission to serve the people of the state of Alabama,” says Dr. Alexander. “By partnering with the Census Bureau to educate its community about the importance, ease and confidentiality of the Census, we can aid in strengthening the financial standing of the

University, city and state, as well as ensure our political voice in Congress.”

Upon returning to campus, the Auburn representatives drafted a summary and recommended action report from the summit for Provost Mary Ellen Mazey.

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College Town Profile



Get the latest information from the Plains!

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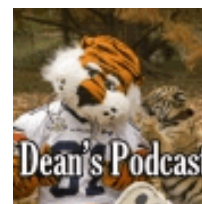
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[Episode 27: Dr. Mary Mendonca, alumni professor and Leischuck Award Recipient](#)

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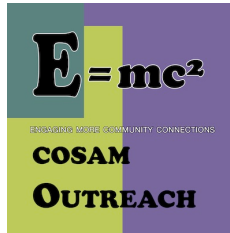
[COSAM Limitless Learning](#)

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