

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY COMMERCE

Incident #: 100225009A

Supplement #: 3064

Description: Lt. Jason Bone

Narrative:

On 02/25/2010 at around 0900 I was in the student center. While in a checkout line, I was asked by the cashier if I'd heard about all the papers being stolen. I told her 'no'. She continued on to tell me that she had been told that some football players had stolen them. When I left the store, I looked into the hallway where there is a known East Texan distribution rack and observed that it was empty. I walked back to Henderson Hall where I stopped into several buildings along the way to check for East Texan papers. All distribution racks that I could find were empty. Upon my return to UPD I observed that the distribution rack in our office was also empty. I checked my mailbox in the PD and noticed that there was a new issue in there. The first headline read "Football Players Arrested in Drug Bust". I contacted the editor of the East Texan, Mr. James Bright and told him that I'd had some reports that their papers were stolen and I asked him to confirm for me if that were true. About an hour or so later, I got a return call from Mr. Bright. Mr. Bright confirmed for me that all the East Texans on campus were indeed 'stolen'. I asked Mr. James to come into UPD for a report. When Mr. Bright arrived, I put him with Officer Lance Sharp for the initial report.

I then reviewed camera footage from the lobby of UPD. At 0725, I observed two black males walk into the lobby of UPD. They approached the newspaper stand, which was not directly in view, and raised back up with what appeared to be newspapers. The dispatcher on duty was Melanie Clayton. Later in the day, I spoke with Melanie Clayton and she advised me that she knew the names of the two individuals who took the papers. She stated they were Stephen DeGrate and Dakota Burch.

I then went to the FieldHouse where I spoke with Danny Kambell and asked him for a program containing football player pictures. Mr. Kambell and I then went to the Athletic Director Mr. Carlton Cooper's office to discuss the ongoing situation. I informed Mr. Cooper of the ongoing situation. Mr. Cooper expressed concern since he 'didn't think they were smart enough to do this on their own.' He thanked me for telling him and asked me to keep him informed. He also asked for copies of the video so he could know which players were involved. I told him I would share that information with him as soon as I could.

I then proceeded back to the student center. While in the bookstore, the clerk asked me about people stealing papers. She told me that "the girl at the front desk" saw who took the papers from the building and that they were football players. I then spoke with Connie Mears, a supervisor at the student center. I told of the missing papers and that I had heard that one of her workers on duty knew what happened. Ms. Mears had someone pull the work schedule and said she had a worker named [REDACTED] who was on duty. Ms. Mears then called [REDACTED] and found out from her that there were four football players who took the papers and one of them was London Hamilton. I then looked for footage on the student center video system, but found that the views of the East Texan racks were not visible and any camera views I would have gotten of anyone near the racks were too grainy.

I then received a phone call from James Bright saying he wanted to put out some more papers in the student center. I moved one of the paper racks to a location clearly visible on camera and informed Ms. Mears that I had moved the rack.

On February 26, I was asked by Assistant Chief Vaughn to come to his office. When I entered the office, I saw Coach Guy Morris in the office. I started off by asking him if he'd seen the paper and he said that he "didn't read that crap". I retrieved my copy of the paper and showed him the headline. He shook his head and again repeated that he didn't pay any attention to that crap. Coach Morris wanted clarification as to how a taking a free paper was considered theft. I explained the statement inside the paper that one was free and the rest were \$.25 each. Mr. Morris indicated that he was not in agreement. I explained my role as investigator was to investigate reported crimes and that the prosecutor's office would make that final decision.

Mr. Morris then stated "I'm proud of my players for doing that." He then stated "This was the best team building exercise we have ever done." He then repeated his earlier question about how a free paper could be considered