

Residents continue to vandalize dorms despite renovations

By Sherri Roberts
STAFF WRITER

Although waging B.B. gun wars, instigating water fights and setting trash cans ablaze may be traditional forms of entertainment for many residence hall residents at Texas A&M, these thrills are hardly cheap.

Within the last two years, residents of Walton and Davis-Gary halls have been evicted because of the damage to the halls as a result of horseplay.

Tom Murray, assistant director of Student Affairs, said residents of Davis-Gary caused more than \$1,000 in damage to the hall in Spring 1987, the semester they were evicted. Residents of K-ramp in Walton Hall caused more than \$800 in one year to their ramp, leading to their eviction in Spring 1988.

Murray said residents were evicted not only as a last resort because nothing else would work, but because the safety of other residents was being threatened.

The decision to bill or evict residents is made only after a committee of residence-hall advisors and directors, as well as various representatives from the Department of Student Affairs, has investigated the situation.

Committee members try to determine patterns of vandalism, those responsible, and the action that should be taken, Murray said.

Administrators use revenues from the Coke Fund — money generated from campus vending machine receipts — to pay for hall damages. However, if the fund is depleted and there is a pattern of vandalism within the hall, residents may be forced to divide and pay the cost of damages.

Residents suspected of vandalism are given a series of warnings informing them of the possibility they will be billed or evicted unless the acts cease or the individu-

als responsible come forward, Murray said.

Dan Mizer, student development specialist in Student Affairs, said before residents of Walton Hall's K-ramp were evicted, residents were given five warnings informing them of the actions which would be taken unless the vandalism ceased.

In many cases it is difficult to determine who is responsible for damage and whether or not it was intentional.

"The unfortunate thing with eviction and group billing is you're punishing the innocent because you can't find the guilty," Murray said.

He speculated that alcohol is a primary factor in the vandalization of halls.

A former resident of E-ramp in Walton Hall, who asked to remain anonymous, said alcohol was a major factor affecting the behavior of hall vandals. Residents of the ramp were evicted in Spring 1987, after repeatedly vandalizing the ramp.

"The only factor causing it was getting drunk," he said. "People tend to get more wild. I never saw anybody do anything when they weren't drunk."

Murray said that although vandalism is not concentrated in one particular hall, a majority of it occurs in men's halls.

Moore and Crocker halls, two newly renovated dorms which reopened in Spring 1989, already have been vandalized. Murray said renovations, which include new lighting, paint and floor coverings, cost more than \$1 million for each dorm.

Mizer said that within the first week the halls were reopened, a \$400 marble partition was broken. In addition, floor tiles have been melted and windows broken within the halls.

Murray said Student Affairs' Damage Assessment Committee would like to work with hall councils to find possible causes.

Soviet technology, U.S. marketing Texas company signs agreement to market Soviet space program

AUSTIN (AP) — A fledgling Houston company, whose founder and half of its stockholders live in the Texas Hill Country, has signed a landmark agreement to market virtually all civilian and scientific services, hardware and data from the Soviet Union's space program.

"This is a red-letter day for Texas," said Bill Rubey of Wimberley. "We convinced them the future is here in Texas."

Rubey, heir to the Maxwell House Coffee fortune, is the founder of Space Commerce Corp. of Houston. A handful of wealthy, old-line Texans own stock in the company, including Jeff Bronfman, also of Wimberley, and heir to the House of Seagram Inc. fortune.

Space Commerce executives include Houston lawyers Art Dula and Merrill Shields. Dula is the year-old firm's president.

Rubey said the joint-venture agreement, which could be worth millions of dollars, was signed in late 1988 by Dula and Alexander Dynayev, who heads Glavcosmos, the Soviet civilian space agency. Rubey said the agreement gives the Texas company exclusive worldwide marketing rights, except Western Europe.

"So all the stockholders are going to get filthy rich," Rubey said.

The Soviets hope the venture will make them competitive with U.S. and European commercial space endeavors, according to Aviation Week & Space Technology magazine.

Rubey said the Soviet decision to contract with the Texas firm was based on a variety of factors including the participation of astronomer Harlan Smith in the Menafee Foundation, which promotes joint space ventures between the United States and the Soviet Union. Rubey is chairman of the foundation, which owns his stock in Space Commerce.

Smith, the director of the McDonald Observatory of the University of Texas, is a foundation adviser. "My role is not as a stockholder (in Space Commerce)," Smith said, "but as a catalyst to bring the people together at the right time. If this works out it will be very important."

Rubey said the Soviets apparently also were influenced by President-elect George Bush's ties to Texas. Rubey said Payload Systems Inc. of

Boston, Mass., was Space Commerce's main competitor for the marketing contract.

"If (Gov. Michael) Dukakis had been elected," Rubey said, "the Soviets would have anointed the Boston company. They selected us because they wanted ties into the Texas establishment and the state where the next president is from."

That may be so, Smith indicated, because there still is some question whether the U.S. State Department will give the approval required for American companies to launch satellites on Soviet rockets.

Space Commerce officials, however, were invited to the State Department shortly after the presidential election to brief them on why they should let U.S. satellites fly on the Soviet agreement with the Houston firm still gives Space Commerce the ability to market Soviet hardware and software elsewhere, notably to

the developing world.

Rubey said Space Commerce recently began marketing in Mexico, where impending de-nationalization of the fishing industry has prompted Mexican officials to seek current information on offshore fishing grounds from remote-sensing satellites. The Soviets have such data for sale, Rubey said.

"We're not sure yet what all it means we can do," he said. "Dula says it's better than having the MacDonald's franchise for the whole world. Apparently, we even have rights to sell scale models of the Mir and to take tourists to Baikonur." The Baikonur Cosmodrome is the Soviet equivalent of the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Rubey said the agreement apparently gives the Houston firm broad

ability to market even items only peripherally related to the Soviet space program.

If all goes well, Rubey said, some of the Menafee Foundation's profits from the venture will be turned over to the University of Texas at Austin.

"The foundation will be devoting one third of the income we receive from Space Commerce to UT-Austin through Harlan Smith," Rubey said.

"We'll also be applying to the State Department for a license this spring for a Proton launch," Rubey said. "But we don't need a license to get (experiments) on the Mir." The Proton is the Soviet's chief expendable rocket for putting satellites into Earth orbit. Mir is the name of the Soviet space station.

Dallas lawyers petition court to pull Hampton from bench

DALLAS (AP) — Thirteen lawyers have signed a petition to the Texas Supreme Court that calls for the removal of a state district judge who said he gave a killer a lighter sentence in part because the victims were "queers."

The petition for impeachment of District Judge Jack Hampton was filed Thursday with District Judge Ron Chapman, who also serves as the state's presiding judge of the First Administrative Judicial Region.

Hampton came under fire following an article in December in the Dallas Times Herald in which he said: "I put prostitutes and gays at about the same level. If these boys had picked up two prostitutes and taken them to the woods and killed them, I'd consider that a similar case." Hampton also called the two homosexual victims "queers" and said voters would forget about his comments by the time he is up for re-election in 1990.

"Completing this action today represents a bold and courageous step on the part of these participants — many of whom earn their living by practicing law in Judge Hampton's courtroom," said William Waybourn, president of the Dallas Gay Alliance, who is a lawyer himself.

"Rightful-thinking people everywhere must do everything in their power to prevent something like this from every happening again," Waybourn said at a news conference. "We cannot allow any more Judge Hamp-

tons. We must make it as difficult as possible for him to remain in office."

Judge Hampton could not be reached for comment when called by The Associated Press. His court clerk, who would identify herself only as Marcia, said, "He is in a jury trial."

Waybourn said members of the Dallas Gay Alliance and others feel Hampton's continued service on the bench would only serve to "further the ignorance, prejudice and violence that accompanied Richard Bednarski on his trip to Oak Lawn that night, when he murdered Tommy Lee Trimble and John Lloyd Griffin."

According to the state constitution, impeachment proceedings may be begun by submission of a petition from 10 lawyers who practice in the court of the targeted judge. The impeachment article stipulates that "Causes of this kind shall have precedence and be tried as soon as practicable."

Hampton issued an apology about the newspaper article, but Waybourn said it wasn't a direct apology to those his comments addressed.

"Judge Hampton did not apologize to the gay community," he said. "He only apologized to eight ministers in the Oak Lawn area. And he only apologized for a poor choice of words."



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