

THE BATTALION

A Texas A&M Tradition Since 1893

Volume 110 • Issue 30 • 16 pages

www.thebattalion.net

Thursday, October 9, 2003

Students design Cambodian museum

By Sarah Szuminski
THE BATTALION

Aki Ra, a resident of Cambodia, has cleared over 6,000 land mines that remain from two decades of civil war.

Today, six to 10 million mines — nearly one per inhabitant — are still scattered throughout the country, making Cambodia one of the most heavily land mined and underdeveloped nations in the world.

Wednesday, 38 Texas A&M architecture students presented their proposals for the transformation of Ra's existing land mine museum in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

Ra, who can clear up to 100 mines a day using only simple tools, created the museum to display the recovered mines and help raise awareness and funds for his efforts.

Photojournalist Richard Fitoussi of Toronto,

Canada, discovered Ra and his museum while on assignment in Cambodia in April 2000.

"I was fascinated," Fitoussi said. "The most amazing thing about his work is that he works with no equipment."

Inspired by Ra's efforts, Fitoussi founded the Cambodian Land Mine Museum Relief Fund to raise money for the construction of a new complex in Siem Reap.

"The museum is so rudimentary," he said. "I thought, why not go in with a bigger plan."

Because of the College of Architecture's reputation for "architecture for health" projects, Fitoussi invited A&M students to join the effort by developing proposals for the new museum's design.

Junior architecture major Kim Le said the project took on a greater meaning than a typical assignment.

"All of us took it so personal that we put in 110 percent," Le said. "It's real; it's for a good cause."

Lindsay Gavos, a junior architecture major, said she used a peace sign as the inspiration for her design.

"It's a very emotional project," she said. "I realized this building would be more than a structure. I wanted it to have a subtle symbolic meaning."

Senior Lecturer in the College of Architecture Julie Rogers said students' ideas for the project were well-thought out.

"I've never seen a project that has developed to this extent," she said. "I think it's because the students are so dedicated to the cause."

Fitoussi is working with an architect in Toronto and plans to use the students' designs when developing the final plan for the project.

"One project will be chosen to use as a template," he said, "but they all have elements that can be used."

The new facility will include a museum which



MELISSA GENTRY • THE BATTALION
Sharon Wells, a senior architecture major, works on her museum design.

See Architecture on page 2A

Chicken run



Dressed in a chicken costume, sophomore general studies major Victoria Boreing and other Delta Zeta sorority members on Wednesday attracted participants to sign up for the seventh annual

Delta Zeta Run to the Chicken event. The event, which will be held Saturday, will benefit the Houston Ear Research Foundation and Gallaudet University.

RANDAL FORD • THE BATTALION

Former Ag gets 7 years in manslaughter case

By Lauren Smith
THE BATTALION

A Brazos County jury sentenced a former Texas A&M student convicted of intoxication manslaughter to seven years in prison Wednesday.

Stuart "Clint" Thompson, 22, faced from two years of probation to 20 years in prison in connection with the death of Laina Bagby, 18, who was riding in Thompson's truck when she was killed.

Bagby was killed around 4 a.m. on June 9, 2002 after a night of alleged partying when a truck driven by Thompson flipped three times as he lost control on an off-ramp. Bagby died on the scene, and Thompson and a second passenger, Elijah Garza, were ejected from the car.

In the prosecution's closing arguments, Assistant District Attorney Shane Phelps told the jury that it would be setting the bar in the Brazos Valley for what happens when a drunk driver causes the death of another person.

"We have made progress in this community, and we need your help," Phelps said. "You have a duty in this case."

Phelps asked the jury to consider what kind of message would be sent to the 55,000 students in the community if Thompson walked away with only probation.

Jim James, defense attorney, said

remorse is the most important part of this case, and Thompson was remorseful the night of Bagby's death and has been ever since.

"Treatment works if you work it, and he has been working it for 16 months," James said. "I am sorry that he is an alcoholic and did not get it earlier. It (alcoholism) is a disease, and you have to hit rock bottom before you realize that it is."

Phelps said he doubted Thompson was truly remorseful as he did not seem like a man at rock bottom on the night of the accident. Phelps recounted the prosecution's case against Thompson, saying he talked as much about his truck as he did about Bagby, refused a blood test, told police on the night of the accident that he did not remember what happened and later recalled the night's events of what happened to his doctor.

"Prison is the real rock bottom," Phelps said. "Every day he spends in prison is another that he lives that Laina Bagby is dead."

James stood behind the podium before the jury stand, asking the jury to "give Thompson the opportunity to be a contributing member of society."

"Consider not sending him to the penitentiary," James said to the jury. "He is a hard worker. There has never been an attack on his character throughout the trial."

See Trial on page 2A

Replant 2003 scheduled for Oct. 18, rain or shine

By Rhannon Meyers
THE BATTALION

Cliff Smith said he was not upset at the heavy rain clouds that loomed over Replant sites last October. If anything, he was pleased.

"The rain changes the aspect of Replant," said Smith, Replant director and a senior philosophy major. "The people that are out there in the rain are the ones who really want to be there."

About 1,000 volunteers participated in Replant last year despite the bad weather. The volunteers worked diligently in a downpour that drenched clothes but did not dampen spirits.

"It went incredibly well," Smith said. "We had to stop people from planting trees because the second shift wouldn't have had anything to plant."

Casey Deen, Replant's financial director and a senior business major, was on staff for last year's event.

"I handed out shovels to people who were soaked already," Deen said. "It was neat to see everyone in the rain planting trees."

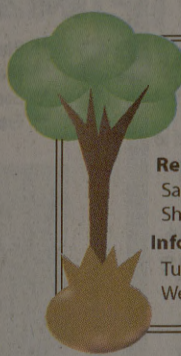
This fall's Replant is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 18.

Replant, a recognized Texas A&M tradition that takes place annually, began in 1990 and was created by Scott Hantman in conjunction with the tradition of Aggie Bonfire by planting trees on old Bonfire cut sites, Deen said. According to replant.tamu.edu, the organization originally planted young seedlings in the spring at sites in Carlos, Texas, and later at Lake Somerville in Somerville, Texas.

Today, Replant is no longer affiliated with Bonfire, but it continues as a tradition of its own. In an effort to give the trees a better chance of survival, Replant was moved to the fall and the trees planted are now larger and older. Also, Replant sites have also moved to the Bryan-College Station area, Smith said.

This year, Replant committees will plant 100 trees on three sites in College Station and one site in Bryan. An estimated 1,000 volunteers are needed for the upcoming Replant. Anyone can volunteer and large groups are encouraged, Deen said.

"It's something you can see being done," said Vince Nieto, a member of the Replant publicity team and a sophomore microbiology major. "I volunteered last year with Hobby Hall on



Replant 2003

Applications to volunteer for this year's event are due Oct. 10.

Replant:

Saturday, Oct. 18
Shifts begin at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Informational Meetings:

Tuesday, Oct. 14 at 8:15 p.m. in MSC 231
Wednesday, Oct. 15 at 7 p.m. in MSC 231

SETH FREEMAN • THE BATTALION
SOURCE • REPLANT.TAMU.EDU

Northside and it was a really fun experience. Everyone was standing in the rain ready to help out. It was really cool to see everyone there planting a tree."

Replant consists of two shifts of volunteers, one that begins at 8 a.m. and another at 11 a.m. Volunteers meet on campus first for Replant Kickoff at Academic Plaza to fill out release forms, purchase T-shirts and listen to guest speakers.

This year's speakers include A&M Student Body President Matt Josefy and A&M SGA Adviser Bobby Tucker. Following the kickoff, volunteers move to the designated sites to plant trees. Volunteers work in groups of four to five per tree, and each shift lasts about three hours.

Colleen Dominick, a first year graduate

See Replant on page 2A

Universal design promotes access

By Dan Orth
THE BATTALION

Students should learn about the challenges people with disabilities face and what is done to cope with those challenges to understand what they go through each day, said Anne Reber, assistant director of Services for Students with Disabilities.

Universal Design Day, formerly known as Disability Awareness Day, was held Wednesday promoting access in buildings, teaching and services for all students, not just students with disabilities.

Reber said there has been a change of focus in disability awareness from understanding by doing to understanding by learning.

Reber said students should learn about the challenges people with disabilities face and about what is done to cope with those challenges in order to understand what they go through.

The College of Architecture, Instructional Technology Services and Student Financial Services were on hand to show how they help adapt the University's campus to all

students, including disabled ones.

College of Architecture graduate students are taught to be aware of accommodating people with disabilities in designs and to consider accessibility when designing.

Min-Young Seo, a graduate architecture student, said she works to incorporate all people's needs into her work. Seo said she strives to envision a way to help with a disability when designing.

Instructional Technology Services works with professors to help them incorporate technology into their curriculum and in the process, make teaching materials more available to students with disabilities.

Rhonda Blackburn, the lead instructional technology consultant with ITS, said her group promotes universal design for all when helping professors by giving suggestions that benefit all student needs.

One way professors make teaching materials available for all is by using HTML formatting on all documents. Blackburn said this formatting can be

See Day on page 9A

Young Conservatives protest Coming Out Week

By Sarah Szuminski
THE BATTALION

The Young Conservatives of Texas paraded banner-clad trucks around the Texas A&M campus Wednesday as part of Traditional Family Values Week, which opposes University promotion of homosexual lifestyles through

Coming Out Week.

The event was intended to express the YCT's views supporting one-man, one-woman relationships, said Communications Director Mark McCaig.

"Traditional Family Values Week is not to protest people or personal choices," he said, "but to protest the use of student fees to

promote lifestyles we are opposed to."

YCT Chairperson Lucas Kramm said the goal of this week's events is to raise awareness that Coming Out Week is sponsored by the University.

"We view (homosexuality) as a lifestyle that is dangerous and immoral," Kramm said.

Kramm said the YCT was selective of which slogans would be used in the demonstration, and some of the banners originally created were not displayed.

"There was nothing hate-filled, nothing bigoted," McCaig said.

Trucks circling campus bore

See Protest on page 9A