



## Controversy builds over Corps dorm vandalism

By Brian D. Cain  
THE BATTALION

Corps of Cadets Dorm 8 residents are upset that they may get fined for the February vandalism in the second and third floor bathrooms. Lt. Col. Jim Harrison, director of logistics for the Office of the Commandant, said that billing done for damages to common areas in residence halls is a University policy.

However, cadets are upset over the circumstances that were taking place the weekend the dorm was damaged and the way the investigation has been handled.

"That weekend was Military Weekend. We had JROTC high school kids and JCAP cadets, who are also not Aggies, living in this dorm the weekend that this vandalism occurred," said Justin Rudolph, a senior kinesiology major and member of Squadron 3. "When I told my parents about this, my dad said, 'You're not going to pay that.'"

Dorm 8 is also different from other Corps dorms in that a larger number of cadets have access to it. The dorm houses an Army company and an Air Force squadron and Parsons Mounted Cavalry.

"I don't think (the University) should charge the people who live in this dorm for this because, excluding the Aggie Band, almost the entire Corps has access to this dorm," said Joseph Ferguson, a senior international studies major and resident of Dorm 8.

Some cadets also feel that the investigation was

mismanaged.

"Basically, (Assistant Coordinator for Corps of Cadets Housing Buzz Refugio) told us that when it first happened, commanders conducted an investigation, and when that came up empty they involved the University Police. If I'm going to be fined for something of this magnitude, I want to know why they didn't go to the police first? They asked RAs to

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## Love others, evangelist says

By Aerin Toussaint  
THE BATTALION

Tom Short, a nationally known open-air evangelist who travels to college campuses around the United States, spoke to Texas A&M students this week about the Christian responsibility to love others and change those who are in danger of committing sins.

About 75 students gathered in the shade on Thursday afternoon as Short spoke about the death of Jesus Christ and the differences between Christianity and other religions. Short spent much of the time discussing issues with a few students willing to voice their opinions, some of whom claimed to be atheist or wanted to discuss doctrinal issues with Short. Short is invited to A&M each semester by A&M Christian Fellowship, a non-denominational Christian student organization.

"We don't believe in imposing Christianity on oth-

ers by force," Short said.

Wayne Buchanan, a graduate student in education and a member of A&M Christian Fellowship, said that the organization brings Short to A&M every year to give people something to think about.

"It's a good way to get people to think about spiritual things, and God, and what the truth is," Buchanan said. "Tom's not afraid of butting heads or people showing an angry side. If people don't see a reason to come to Jesus, then they won't do it. He is showing them a need that they have."

Lauren Lust, a freshman communication major, said she felt that Short was trying to defend himself more than Christianity.

"I just felt that as a Christian, he wasn't representing the body of Christ very well," Lust said. "I don't feel as Christians our mission is to make people change and i

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## High levels of mercury found in seafood cause concerns

By Amelia Williamson  
THE BATTALION

The United States Environmental Protection Agency has expressed growing concerns about high levels of mercury in seafood, but some Texas A&M University System professors said mercury levels haven't changed significantly over the years.

Gary Gill, a marine sciences and oceanography professor at Texas A&M University at Galveston, said he believes that the mercury levels in fish have not changed much over time and that the recent concern has led to increased research on the issue.

"What I believe has happened is that with continued concern over mercury, there has been an ever increasing effort to monitor for mercury in fish in places where no data previously existed," Gill said. "Because of all this, we are now aware of more areas where mercury levels in fish exceed safe consumption guidelines."

Gill also believes that the recently tightened guidelines for mercury levels in fish stemmed from studies on the effects of mercury on humans.

"There have been recent ... studies of mercury in humans that have suggested that the exposure level of concern is lower than we previously thought," Gill said. The result here is that more fish are now considered of concern than was the case previously."

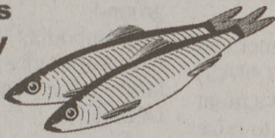
Bob Presley, an oceanography professor at A&M, said that fish acquire high levels of mercury from the organisms they eat. Small organisms take in mercury from the water and pass it on to larger organisms through the food chain and eventually up to people who eat fish and other seafood.

"Long-lived, large fish have more mercury, especially swordfish, king mackerel, tile fish and shark, but bass

### Something is fishy here

People should exercise caution when dealing with mercury in food and the environment.

- Burning of fossil fuels can introduce mercury into the atmosphere
- Larger, older fish tend to have more mercury in them
- High levels of mercury can harm a fetus
- Mercury can cause neurological damage



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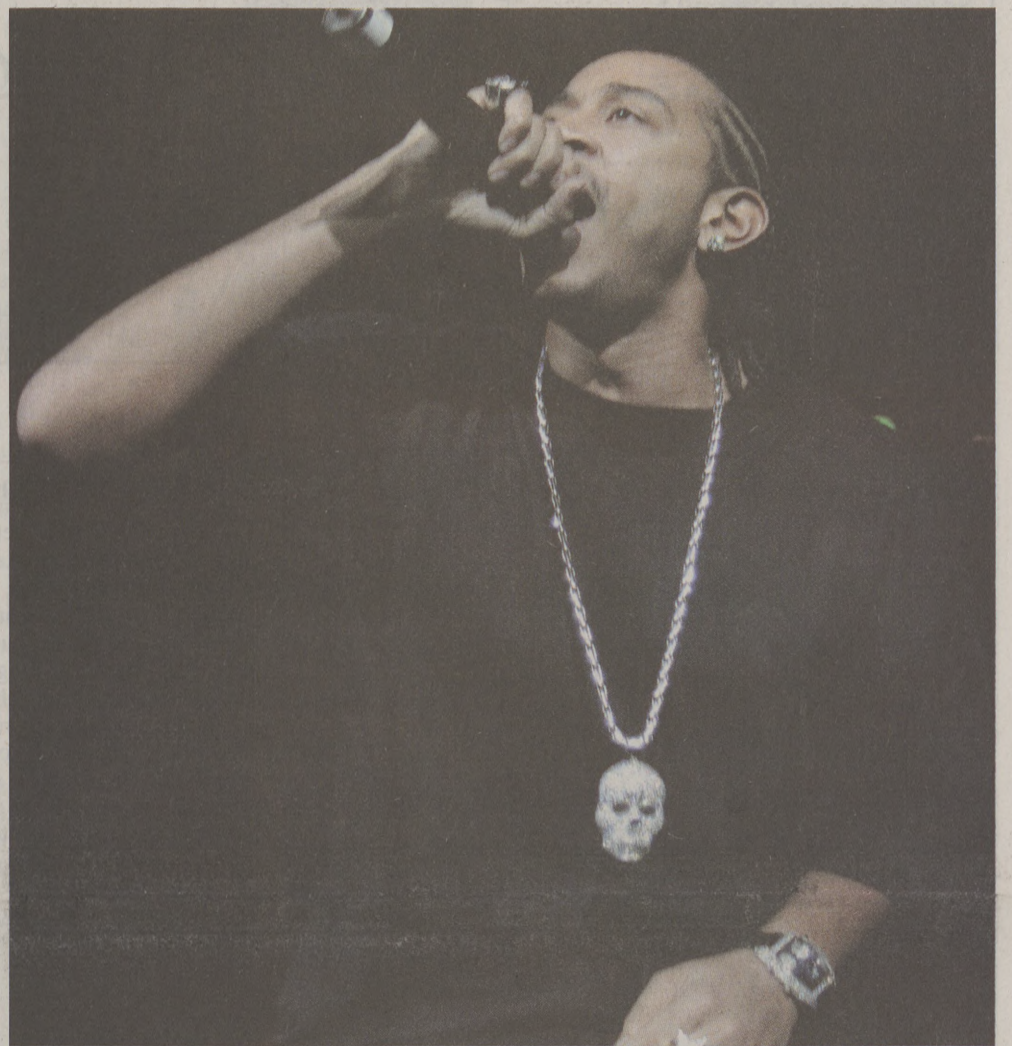
SOURCE: TEXAS A&M OCEANOGRAPHY PROFESSORS

from some fresh water lakes are also high," Presley said. "Oysters and crabs can be high (can have high levels of mercury) if they were collected near a mercury source such as an industrial outfall."

The intake of high levels of mercury is very harmful to humans and can cause serious neurological damage, Presley said.

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## 'Act a fool'



EVAN O'CONNELL • THE BATTALION

Ludacris performs at Reed Arena Thursday night. Ludacris is currently on tour promoting his "Chicken & Beer" album which was released by Def Jam late last year.

## Gay awareness week ends with 'gayla' Friday

By Elizabeth Knapp  
THE BATTALION

campus for more than a few years to observe the diversity that encompasses A&M students, faculty and staff.

Stephen Schmidt, a member of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transexual Aggies (GLBTA), said that when he first came to Texas A&M, he was grateful to find on-campus organizations that supported people like him.

"A&M is historically a conservative campus," Schmidt said. "Having a liberal voice is always helpful."

Gay Awareness Week kicked off last Monday and has been celebrated on A&M's

The week presented different items of interest including resource tables, panel discussions and a "gayla" to finish up the week that will be held at the downtown Bryan night club, Halo. People are encouraged to attend the events to learn more about homosexuality.

"I know that having information available for anyone can help open eyes to

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### STUDENT BODY ELECTIONS 2004

#### STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT RESULTS

- Will McAdams **RUN-OFF**
- Jack Hildebrand **RUN-OFF**
- Narietha Carter
- Royd Hernandez
- Andy Herreth
- Mark McCaig

#### SENIOR YELL RESULTS

- Houston Haley **WINNER**
- Ryan Bishop **WINNER**
- Paul Terrell **WINNER**
- Taylor Baumgartner

#### JUNIOR YELL RESULTS

- Keaton Askew **WINNER**
- Patrick Hebert **WINNER**
- Jacob Scher

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## A&M students design Cambodian museum

By Natalie Younts  
THE BATTALION

Decades of brutal civil war in the Southeast Asian country Cambodia have left the country with more land mines than children.

Aki Ra was forced to fight in the armies of brutal regimes, including the Khmer Rouge, in Cambodia when he was 5 years old. After the army murdered his parents, it forced him to lay land mines, which remain dangerous for up to 50 years.

The Cambodia Land Mine Museum in Siem Reap, Cambodia, which Ra founded, will soon be extended with designs by Texas A&M architecture students.

The extension will include a school for 30 children who have lost limbs from land mines, a prosthetic limb clinic and a unit for educating people on land mines, said Julie Rogers, a senior lecturer of architecture.

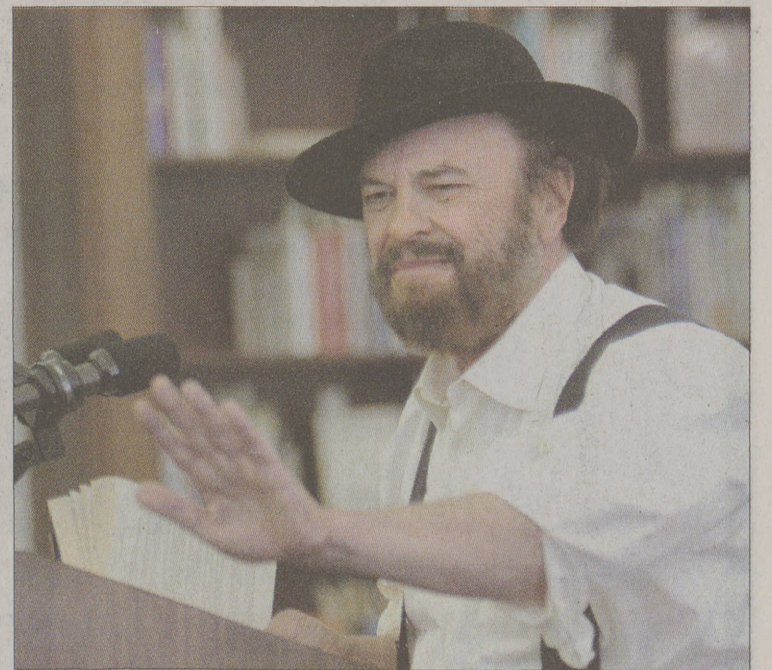
Students from A&M became involved in the cause when Fitoussi contacted the College of Architecture in September 2003 and requested design proposals for the center. Students in environmental design major 205 began working on preliminary designs immediately afterward.

The students said they enjoyed working on the designs, but more importantly, when they learned of the Cambodian crisis they resolved to help.

In Cambodia, one out of every 245 people is an amputee, about 100 people are reported injured every month from land mines and many more injuries are not reported, said Richard Fitoussi, CEO and director of the

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## 'Leaves of Grass'



EVAN O'CONNELL • THE BATTALION

Actor and former student Rip Torn, Class of 1952, reads from "Leaves of Grass" by Walt Whitman Thursday at the Cushing Memorial Library and Archives. A first edition of Whitman's book was donated by Sarah and John H. Lindsey to the University library marking the library's three millionth acquisition.