

CAMPUS NEWS

Alternative Spring Break

Continued from front page.

sent to multiple sites. Groups performed a variety of tasks: some installed flooring, others painted a home, while others patched drywall or tore down and rebuilt a deck.

However, many students on the trip expressed disappointment in the work that they were given.

"I didn't feel that peoples' skills were utilized fully," explains Tanya Mora, a freshman accounting major at Behrend. Mora, who was in a group that spent the week painting the outside of a home, said that the area wasn't still in need of much repair. "I would recommend the trip to anyone," she says. "but only if it was in a more needed place. I had a great time, but I wouldn't recommend anyone going to the same place."

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance had announced to the students the first day that most of the work they would be doing was "finishing work," like painting walls or laying floors. Still, many students felt that the work that they were doing was insignificant.

Jena Ferguson, a Behrend senior, recalls some of her experience as being almost unnecessary. "For one of our jobs, we were sent to patch holes in drywall. When we got there, we saw that the homeowners had made the holes themselves, by slamming the doorknobs into the walls. Some of the work made you wonder why the homeowner couldn't repair it themselves."

Julie Baltus, a Behrend sophomore, had traveled to the area two years ago, and described the area as less devastated than it was on her previous trip. "Two summers ago, there was a FEMA trailer right next to almost every house," she said. "It was cool to go back; there were some people living in trailers, but not as many. Now, it's more work that is wrapping up the construction. It was good that we went, but maybe next year they should head somewhere else."

Next year, Penn State Behrend's alternative spring break will almost certainly be headed to a different area. Helpers at the camp mentioned the extreme need still



CONOR SATTELY The Behrend Beacon
 ABOVE: The relief workers' camp consisted of rows upon rows of plastic "pods." RIGHT: Students were sent to work sites with a variety of duties, such as installing storm-resistant windows.

present in some parts of Texas next to the Gulf of Mexico; areas there had been hit by multiple storms within a small span of time, and still require volunteers.

Regardless of what the students thought of the work, the vast majority of participants walked away from the trip completely satisfied with their spring break. "I had a great advisor," said Ferguson, "who let us go to New Orleans one night and walk through the city. As a business-minded student, I always wondered why they would rebuild down there below the sea level. After seeing the city, and the incredible culture and life there, I understand."

Three advisors took their groups to see the city, and those that went got to sample local cuisine, walk down Bourbon street, and visit one of the world's most famous cafés, Café du Monde. The students that made the hour and a half drive recalled seeing the city as the highlight of the trip.

Other students also got to visit the Gulf Coast campus of the University of Southern Mississippi, which was less than two hundred yards from the coast. In almost every building facing the water, at least the first floor had been completely gutted by the



storm. The water had hit the buildings so hard that it knocked out windows facing the shore and continued through the building with enough force to knock out windows on the other side, leaving pure destruction in its wake.

Though the campus was still bustling with activity, having built several new buildings, the basically abandoned administrative buildings and academic centers still stood as a stark reminder of the area's past.

Other students were able to visit the beach, a Hard Rock Café, and other locations around Gulfport. One night, the entire Behrend portion of the camp was taken out to dinner at a local restaurant. Students were able to interact with some local residents there, as well as sample many local delicacies.

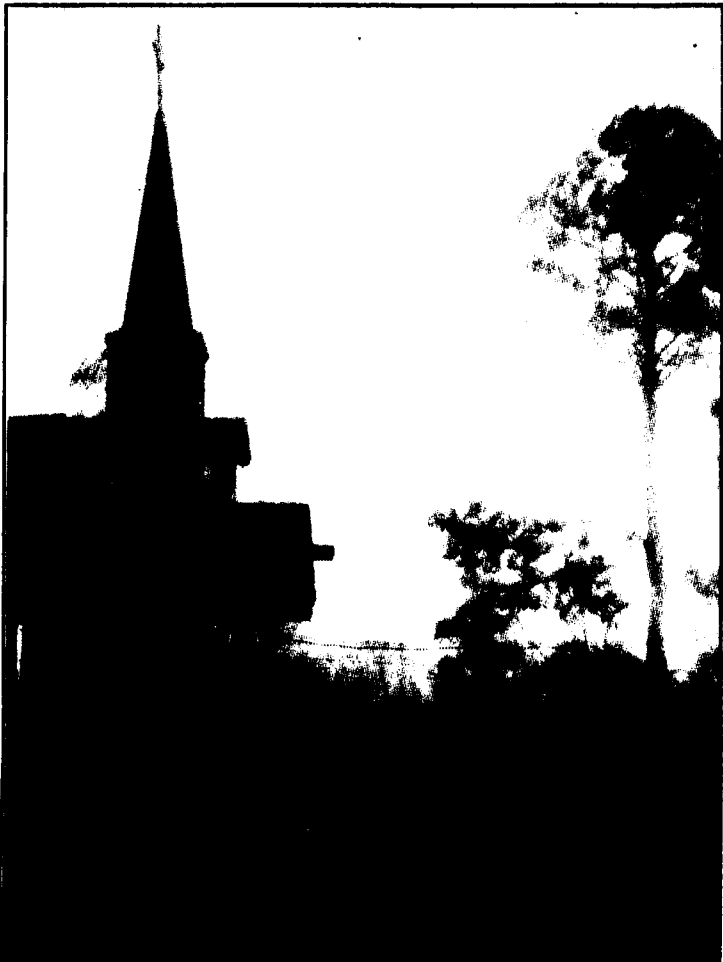
Every morning regardless of the events of the night before the students would wake at 6:00 a.m. and depart to go do another eight hours of construction work. For many, sim-

ply being able to interact with those in their groups was the highlight of the trip. "I was truly astonished as to how well everyone in my group worked together and helped each other out," said Danielle Zarnick, a sophomore at Behrend. "The experience was eye opening... it was a humbling experience, and something that everyone should dedicate themselves to doing at some point in their lives."

Throughout the trip, groups would gather to reflect on the experiences they gained that day, and many cited teamwork and problem-solving abilities as the greatest function of the trip.

Dr. Troester, who was one of the advisors that took his group to New Orleans (including Jena Ferguson), was similarly impressed by those he spent his week with. "I don't know what inspired the 32 students and eight faculty/staff from Behrend to commit their Spring Break to the Gulfport trip," he says, "but I admire and respect them all."

Photos by CONOR SATTELY The Behrend Beacon
 Bottom Left: The University of Southern Mississippi, and many residential areas along the coast, were completely destroyed or abandoned. Below Right: The sun rises over the camp as Penn State students prepare to head home after a long week of work.



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What's Inside:

Women's cross country team receives All-Academic Team Award



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The women's cross country team not only succeeded in the 2008 season by placing third at the AMCC Championships, but they also succeeded as a team through their academics.

The team's academic accomplishment was recognized when they were selected as United States Track & Field Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCA) Division III All-Academic Team.

"Finding out that our women's cross country team was given such a notable award was very exciting for all of us," said freshman runner Jenna Fatica. "It is a great feeling knowing we had such a successful season both athletically and academically. Hopefully we can continue to fulfill these accomplishments in the following seasons."

According to head coach Greg Cooper, the academic award is given to teams who have an average cumulative grade point average of 3.10 and who ran as a team at the NCAA Regional Championships.

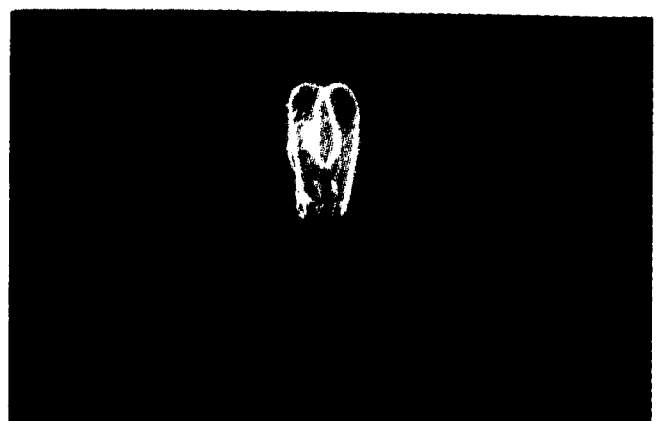
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Metric's new album Fantasies leaked

Usually when a mildly popular and successful indie band has a highly anticipated release, there are people all over the internet checking pages for the next track to be "leaked." This is the case for the Canadian band Metric's new album *Fantasies*. At first the band controlled singles being posted on their Myspace page. The first song from the album, "Help I'm Alive," was posted back in Dec. 2008, and it was a catchy pop tune about the fears of performing. It's definitely replay worthy, with a contagious guitar riff and lyrics that you'll learn after two listens.

Through some means, the album was "leaked" on the internet. A typical leak is when someone starts sharing the album over the internet and, with a critically acclaimed band like Metric, it spreads like wildfire. The day after the leak on March 9, the band uploaded the entire album to their Myspace page for fans to listen to.

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