

THE BATTALION

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Coalition charged with illegally aiding GOP candidates

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a lawsuit raising questions about the mixing of religion and politics, the government on Tuesday charged the Christian Coalition with improperly aiding Republican candidates through its voter guides and other activities.

The group spent thousands of dollars to promote the candidacies of figures such as former President Bush, Sen. Jesse Helms, Senate candidate Oliver North and House Speaker Newt Gingrich, the Federal Election Commission charged in a civil suit filed in U.S. District Court.

Any action on the lawsuit likely will come too late to directly affect this year's elections. But some coalition critics said the

government's action could discourage churches from distributing the group's voter guides in November. Churches can lose their tax exemption if they engage in partisan activity.

"The evidence shows everyone that this group is a hardball political operation that has been cloaking itself in religion," said Barry Lynn, director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State. "Now the cloak is starting to unravel."

Coalition Executive Director Ralph Reed called the suit "totally baseless" and said he was confident the courts "will affirm that people of faith have every right to

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Olympic bomb investigation focuses on security guard

ATLANTA (AP) — A security guard who was hailed as a hero for finding the bomb in Centennial Olympic Park before it exploded has become a focus of the investigation, a federal law enforcement source said Tuesday.

FBI agents are studying hours of professional and home video to see if Richard Jewell, 33, can be spotted placing the knapsack containing the bomb, and investigators are checking to see if his voice matches that of the 911 caller who warned of the attack, according to The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, which first reported that Jewell had emerged as a suspect.

The bomb killed one person and injured more than 100 people at a rock concert early Saturday as security officers were clearing away bystanders from around the suspicious-looking knapsack near a sound and light tower.

Jewell was working for a Los Angeles firm that was hired by AT&T to provide security at its pavilion in the park. He claimed to have spotted the knapsack after a rowdy crowd of people left the area.

As a result of interviews Tuesday, inves-

tigators have put Jewell at the top of their list of suspects and potential suspects, the law enforcement official in Washington said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"He looks good now, but there have been no arrests and the investigation is still continuing," the official said. "Now that his name is out, let's hope he's not like the Jordanian man initially identified in the Oklahoma City bombing who turned out to have nothing to do with it."

The official said investigators are still interested in two men with no obvious affiliation to any group and no connection to Jewell.

Jewell became a celebrity after the bombing, appearing on the "Today" show Tuesday and giving numerous interviews. The Journal-Constitution said he contacted the newspaper, seeking publicity for his actions.

In an interview with the Journal-Constitution on Monday, Jewell said:

"I'm feeling bad about the victims that did occur. If I had one wish, it would be that all the people who were victims were not victims."

"I've got a pit in my stomach because after

everything law enforcement, ACOG and private security did to protect people, someone did this, not knowing how many would be hurt," he told the newspaper. "It's like heartburn. It will be there until that person's caught."

Jewell had received bomb training while working as a deputy sheriff in northeastern Georgia, The Constitution-Journal reported. He resigned that job recently and until May 21 had worked as an officer at Piedmont College in Demorest, Ga.

The Constitution-Journal said three undercover law enforcement cars were parked outside Jewell's mother's apartment this afternoon.

This morning, thousands flocked to a reopened Centennial Olympic Park, reclaiming the festive heart of the Summer Games even as the FBI pressed ahead with its hunt for the bomber.

With a burst of water from a five-ringed Olympic fountain, the crowd cheered as dignitaries rededicated the 21-acre park that was closed after the attack. Security was tight, and some visitors' packages were searched.

POLITICS on-line

Students find quick access to campaign information

By Tauma Wiggins
THE BATTALION

Did you know finding out a presidential candidate's political standpoint on any issue is as easy as a click of a mouse?

Quick! Even if you're not a computer whiz, hurry to your nearest on-campus computer lab and find out, because the November first elections are just around the corner!

With the free Internet service readily available at Texas A&M computer labs, students have access to a wealth of political information just waiting to be tapped into.

Here's an example of what to do. Simply click on to Netscape from any on-campus computer, then click on Get Search, and type the name of the candidate you wish to read about.

Students clicking on to the "Republican Home Page: Dole," will first see an auto-phased picture of a smiling Dole, flanked by a sea of waving American flags.

From this point students can click on helpful information about anything from Dole's stance on abortion, to his views on welfare, to related sites like "Clinton, 96" where they can obtain the White House's address, phone, and fax number, as well as finance information from Clinton's '92 campaign.

Similarly, students can access "Clinton, Yes," or the "Clinton-Gore Official '96 Site," where they will first view a colorful graphic of Clinton and Gore, side by side, looking proudly towards a waving red, white and blue American flag.

A few clicks later, students can access information to the president's history, or links to "Making Mountains out of Molehills," containing articles with titles like "Is Hillary Really Communing With Ghosts and Holding Seances?" or "Is Big Government Really the Problem?"

Both Republican and Democratic party web pages offer "virtual" elections in which students can "vote" and view a non-official total of the presidential race thus far.

Lesley Balido, a senior political science major, said she finds the Internet extremely helpful, particularly in light of the upcoming national election.

She said she has been using the Internet to learn about political facts and figures since her sophomore year.

"It's really neat — they (politicians) each have their own home page," she said. "You can look into what they stand for, biographical information, or pictures."

Balido said the Internet offers updat-



ed information on House and Senate issues, and how each legislature voted.

"It's helpful to find out how your senator has voted on an issue," she said. "You just type in the name of the senator and it will tell you how they voted."

But while some students said they find it rewarding to surf the Net for political information, an A&M professor said he views political web pages as just one more political advertisement.

Gary Halter, a political science professor, said he does find political information on the Internet beneficial, excluding web pages promoting political parties.

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Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

TRY ONE ON FOR SIZE

Tricia Kapavik, a senior food science and technology major, tries on ring sizes while ordering her senior ring Tuesday.

Officials hope to increase college voter turnout

By Brandon Hausenfluck
THE BATTALION

Although getting involved with the community is encouraged at Texas A&M, low student turnout is the norm in local elections.

Less than one percent of students registered to vote in Brazos County actually participate in government elections. In 1995, for example, approximately 28,000 people in College Station voted and only 20 were students.

Many students do not vote in local elections because they think their vote will not matter.

Dr. Gary Halter, a professor of political science, said inconvenient times contribute to low student turnout.

"There are only three dates provided for elections to be held in Texas, and these dates are not good for students," he said. "May elections are held during finals, August elections are between the second summer session and the beginning of the fall (semester), and January elections are held when we're not even in school."

Halter also said students do not think it is important to vote because they feel they do not have a stake in the system.

"Students living on campus are less impacted (by the city elections)," he

said. "Off-campus students are more involved, but their perception is they don't have a say so in the elections."

Connie Hooks, College Station city secretary, said voter turnout remains low despite efforts made by the city of College Station to increase it.

"I don't know if they (students) understand they are able to vote," she said. "We (city of College Station) have actually paid people to sit in the MSC to try to get student votes."

Hooks said the city of College Station has also used the A&M Methodist Church and other places around campus as polling places.

Jeff Livingston, president of the Texas A&M College Republicans and a senior electrical engineering major, said students should become more active in local elections because they are a large part of the community.

"The city council elections have a lower turnout because there is a huge disincentive for students to be involved," he said. "We (students) are seriously under represented because we make up a large percentage of the population yet hardly any students vote."

Livingston said the solution is simple. "Students need to become more active," he said.

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A&M expands classrooms through distance learning

By Amy Protas
THE BATTALION

The future in education has arrived at Texas A&M. Through distance learning, students from around the state can take classes at A&M without having to set foot in College Station.

The Trans-Texas Video Network (TTVN) was started in the late '80s, enabling Texas students to benefit from an A&M education.

Kim Dooley, distance education coordinator for the agricultural program, said the program has expanded in the past few years.

"We're going to have 64 sites across the state," Dooley said. "One is located in Mexico City. It was originally designed so administrators wouldn't have to travel all over the state. A lot of people decided it would be a good way to teach classes and hold programs."

TTVN is done through compressed video with several telephone lines allowing video, audio and data to be transferred through the telephone lines. The classes are held at the KAMU television station.

The video allows students and lecturers to interact with one another.

Dwayne Suter, a professor of agricultural engineering and food science technology who taught a distance learning

class, said the class was an adjustment from the normal learning environment.

"It was certainly different than having everyone in the classroom with me," Suter said. "I could see the students and they could see me and we can talk to each other. The materials have to be very well-prepared because people at the distance site can turn off the program anytime they want."


By extending the A&M classroom around the state, students can take popular classes that traditionally would not have been available.

"I think we'll be doing more and more of this type of education because of enrollment at A&M," Dooley said. "We will be able to reach students at other System schools. Profs could teach courses that are really hard to get into and students could take them at home."

Students taking distance classes have to register at the System school where the course is offered. J. Benton Storey, a professor of horticulture who teaches a distance class, said this is one of the problems in attracting students to distance courses.

"This is one of the holdbacks in getting students to register for the classes," Storey said. "The people in the registrar's office are doing the best they

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1996 OLYMPIC
TELEVISION
SCHEDULE

**WEDNESDAY
JULY 31**

09 a.m. — noon

- Track & Field
- Dividing—Women's springboard semifinal
- Canoeing

6:30 p.m. — 11:00 p.m.

- Track & Field—Finals, including:
 - Men's 800m
 - Women's 100m hurdles
 - Decathlon, day 1
- Dividing—Women's springboard final
- Cycling—Men's road race
- Volleyball—Men's quarterfinal
- Wrestling—Freestyle finals

11:41 a.m. — 1:11 a.m.

- Volleyball—Men's quarterfinal
- Boxing—quarterfinals
- Basketball—Women's quarterfinal