

# Bush unplugged

## Former president gives glimpse into personal life through old letters

BY AMANDA SMITH  
The Battalion

Former U.S. President George Bush shared pieces of his life through letters last night at the Bush Presidential Conference Center. Bush said his early experience in the oil business West Texas prepared him for his later service in a public arena, from his leadership in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to member of Congress to president of the United States.

"[Barbara and I] have lived in 33 houses in 17

cities in our 54 years of marriage," Bush said, noting his years spent in New York, in the oil fields of West Texas, in Washington, D.C. and in his latest relocation to Houston.

The 41st president of the United States, in his address to family, colleagues and students, said he is incorporating the letters into the book he is writing.

"This book will be about what I thought and said at the time I said it," Bush said, noting that the first letters included in the book date back to 1942 when he was 18 years old.

In one of the earliest letters included in his book, Bush writes to a friend in 1948 upon his graduation from Yale University, already married with 2-year-old son George W. Bush.

"Right now, I am bewildered to say the least," Bush said, reading his comments from the letter. "I have thought about teaching, but then that would require more school. Right now, I don't know."

It was then, Bush said, he decided to move to Odessa and begin work for an oil subsidiary.

In a letter written about his early experiences in West Texas, Bush said he felt intrigued by the new opportunity.

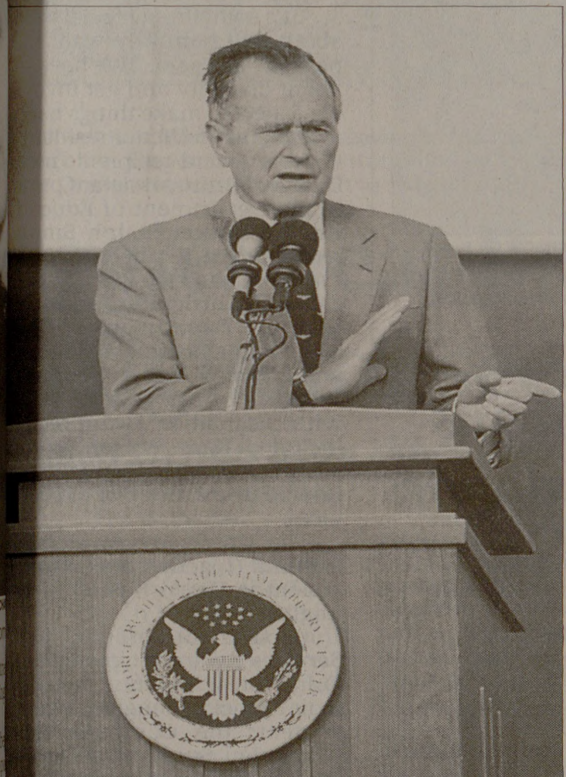
"My job was selling oil field supplies," Bush said. "I spent most of my time on supply trips. We learned to adjust to football fever, which overtakes [West Texas] from September to November. At Odessa, we became Texans and proud of it."

In her introduction of the president, Anne Armstrong, a member of the Texas A&M Board of Regents and former ambassador to Great Britain, said she values Bush's contribution to A&M.

"Texas A&M has made great strides," Armstrong said. "It has done so while building character and intellect. When President Bush decided to put the library at A&M, it was because he said it made him feel at home. How lucky we are these values are instilled here at Texas A&M."

Dr. Roman Popadiuk, executive director at the George Bush Library Foundation and a former ambassador to the Ukraine under the leadership of Bush, opened the speech, the second in the Twanna M. Powell Lecture Series.

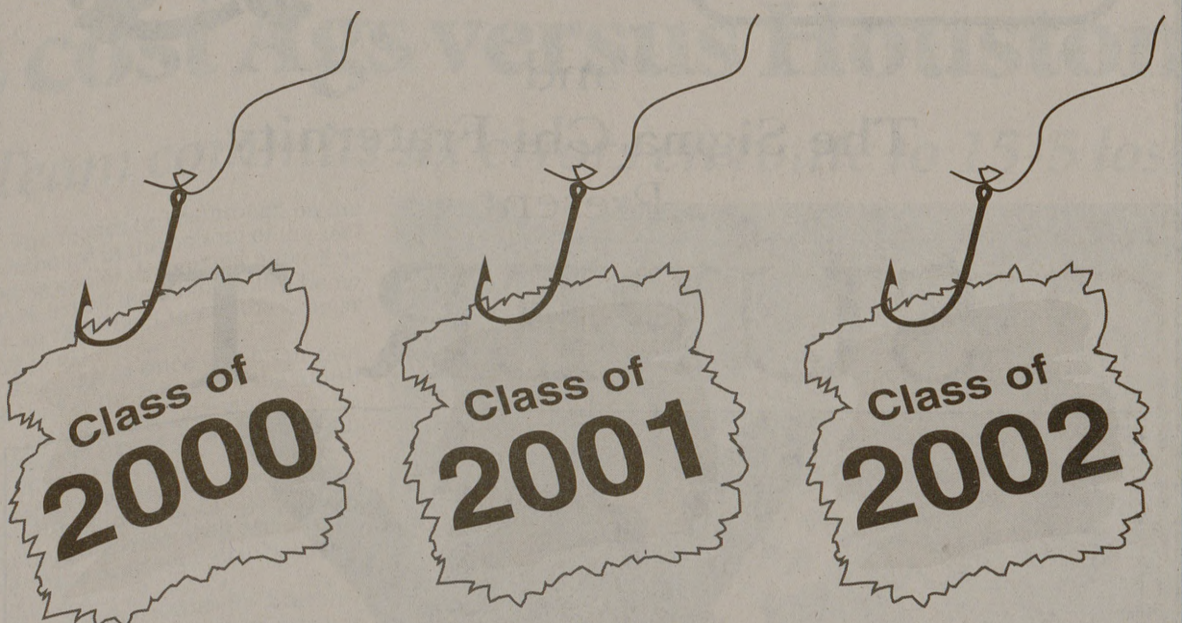
The series, endowed under the auspices of the George Bush Presidential Library Foundation, was established through an endowment of the Donald and Twanna Powell Family. Don Powell currently serves as chair of the Board of Regents.



TERRY ROBERSON/THE BATTALION

Former President George Bush gives the formal presentation of the Vietnam Wall Memorial in front of the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum Tuesday morning.

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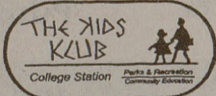
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