

# THE BATTALION

106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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## Bush shares *Best*

Former president shares letters, passages from new autobiography

BY ROLANDO GARCIA  
The Battalion

Ranging from the poignant to the personal and on to the historical, the letters former President George Bush read to a dining-room only audience last night, shared many of the personal and professional highlights of his life.

The crowd of the 600-seat auditorium gathered to hear Bush discuss his latest book, *All the Best*, a collection of some of his old letters and diary entries Bush said would serve as his autobiography.

The first letters he read were addressed to his mother when he was serving as one of the longest aviators in the Navy during World War II at age 18. He wrote that he was not afraid of death, only the sorrow it would bring others.

"In this war, everyone was united, and that kind of expression was typical of kids who wanted to serve," Bush said.

Bush's voice wavered as he read a letter he wrote in 1944 to the mother of a Navy comrade who has been missing in action.

"We learned what it was like to lose friends," he said.

Other letters he read spoke of his love for then Barbara Pierce, his wife, and of his decision to move his young family to Texas and try his luck in the oil industry.

Some letters were deeply personal, like one he wrote to a friend not long after his young daughter had died of leukemia.

"We still miss our Robyn," Bush said. "Bar and I still remember the beauty and charm of our little girl."

Bush also touched on his extensive political career that began in Congress and culminated to the White House. In particular, Bush spoke of the difficult time during the Watergate scandal when he was chairman of the Republican Party.

"Bob Strausse [Democratic chairman] said my job was like making love to a guerrilla; you don't stop until the guerrilla wants to," Bush said. "That's how I felt."

The letters he read from his time as chair revealed both an admiration and a growing disillusionment with President Richard Nixon.



KIMBER HUFF/THE BATTALION

Former president **George Bush** reads letters and passages from his new autobiography, *All the Best*.

Bush capped his hour long speech with some letters he wrote during the most difficult time of his presidency, including one he wrote to Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping following the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.

Bush said relations between the two countries were tense and he had been unable to talk to Deng by telephone, so he wrote his old friend a letter that dealt both with China's harsh crackdown against protesters and of the need to maintain U.S.-China relations. Deng, who had known Bush since his days as ambassador to China, responded immediately and secret diplomatic contacts resumed.

"Personal diplomacy is important, because you're less apt to have two ships pass in the night through lack of understanding if you know each other," Bush said.

## Bus Ops debriefs drivers on crisis

BY BROOKE HODGES  
The Battalion

Monday's fatal accident in which a Texas A&M shuttle bus collided into the driver's side of an automobile at the intersection of George Bush Drive and Wellborn Road is the first causality in Bus Operations' 17-year history.

Gary Jackson, manager of Bus Operations, said the service averages less than five accidents for every 100,000 miles. From the accidents that do occur, many people involved in the accident leave the scene without injury.

"We had a guy run his car underneath a bus, and he walked away without a scratch," he said. "We have never had anyone that is riding the bus get injured in an accident."

Jackson said students who serve as drivers might experience psychological difficulties because of the accident that occurred early Monday morning.

Jackson said a crisis debriefing aimed at providing assistance to those drivers was held last night by Student Counseling Service.

Jackson said the debriefing was held because of concerns expressed by some drivers suffering from what is known as "it could have been me" syndrome.

Trent Nichols, a bus driver and a junior management major, said he drove a bus Monday afternoon, and many of his passengers were frightened because they had heard about the accident.

"They kept asking me about the accident," he said. "I didn't really know any details, just that it happened that morning. One girl even told them to stop talking to me because I had to concentrate."

Nichols said Bus Operations does a good job of training drivers to be more alert and aware of their surroundings along with other drivers.

"They teach you to drive defensively, and that intersection [of George Bush Drive and Wellborn Road] is bad," he said. "Those buses are hard to stop."

Nichols said he knows the driver who was involved in the accident and she seems to be doing well.

"She is doing OK; she realizes it wasn't her fault," he said, "[but] she is having a hard time dealing with it."

## Organization to host conference for Latinas

BY KENNETH MACDONALD  
The Battalion

Omega Delta Phi, an A&M Hispanic service and social organization, will hold its second annual Latina Conference in the J. Wayne Stark Center and Rudder Tower Complex this weekend.

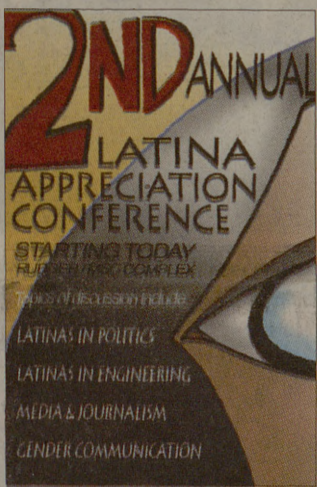
Albert Mares, co-director of the Latina Conference, president-elect of Omega Delta Phi, and senior environmental design major, will lead the conference, which will focus on the accomplishment of Latinas, will feature two keynote speakers and several workshops on continuing Hispanic leadership.

"The idea is to put the spotlight on latina achievement and let them know that they are appreciated, and there is a future [for them]," he said.

Mares said the conference began in September 1997 as an appreciation day and workshop for mothers of Omega Delta Phi. It was strengthened to a two-day convention last October.

"There was so much positive feedback that we decided to invite all Latinas and extend the conference," he said.

Two hundred participants from 25 area universities participated in last year's function with approximately the same number expected this year. Organizers said some people



JEFF SMITH/THE BATTALION

will be coming from as far away as California.

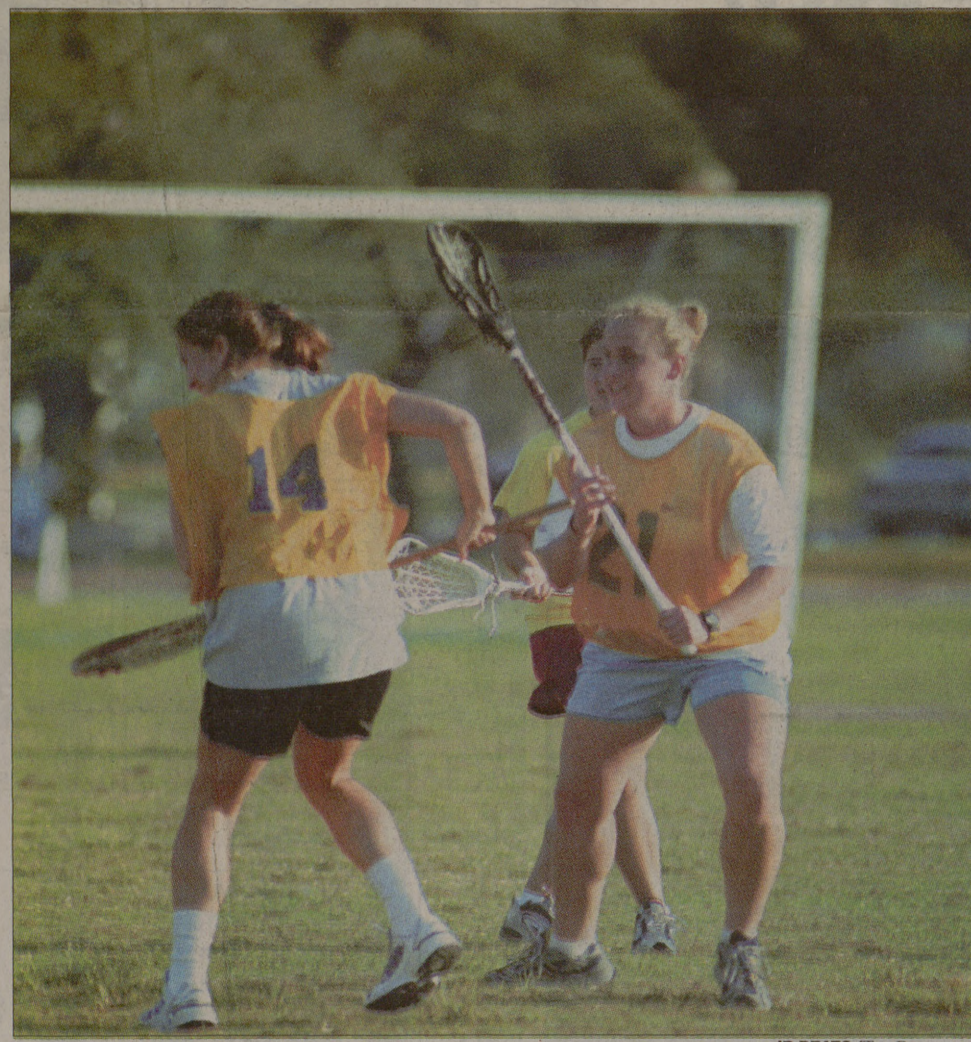
Mares said 75 percent of the participants are female.

Topics of discussion in the various workshops will include Latinas in politics, engineering, gender communications, bilingual education, media and journalism.

The final keynote speaker will be Regina Montoya Coggins, the national president of Girls Inc., formerly the Girls Club of America. Mares said Coggins plans to run for a congressional position in 2000, representing the fifth congressional district in Dallas. She will speak at the conference Saturday night.

In addition to the speaker, a local high school latina will be presented with a \$500 scholarship at the banquet.

## Sticks and stones



JP BEATO/THE BATTALION

**Stacey Barnett**, a senior international marketing major, plays cover point, a defensive position, for the Women's Lacrosse Club Team Thursday. The team has been practicing everyday on O.R. Simpson Drill Field in preparation for the Fall Classic Tournament, Nov. 13 and 14.

## Glass, artifacts mark galleries' anniversary

BY STASIA RAINES  
The Battalion

The MSC Forsyth Center Galleries is celebrating its 10th anniversary by having glass works and other artifacts on display in the MSC today and tomorrow.

To commemorate the event, the galleries will also be hosting several programs beginning with a presentation of artist Benito Huerta's work today at 5 p.m. The events will continue with an informal presentation of the glass art exhibit in the J. Wayne Stark University Center Galleries.

Tim Novak, director of the Forsyth Galleries, said the celebration offers an opportunity to see a glass exhibit.

"Texas A&M has one of the finest examples of glass work in the country," he said. "This really put A&M on the map in the area of art."

Novak said he is looking forward to the "The Portland Vase, Re-interpreted," lecture tomorrow by David Whitehouse. Whitehouse is the director of the Coming Museum in New York.

"If nothing else, I would really encourage people to come and hear Mr. Whitehouse's talk at 2 [p.m.]," Novak said. "He is a world-renowned expert in antique glass and an excellent speaker."

Donny Hamilton, director of the Conservation Research Laboratory at A&M, will host a tour of the Nautical Archaeology exhibit featuring artifacts recovered from Port Royale, Jamaica, and the La Salle ship. Hamilton said he hopes the tour will better educate people about precious artifacts.

"I hope people will develop a greater appreciation for artifacts and learn how to preserve them in the future," he said.

Novak said the celebration is an opportunity to reflect on the improvement of the art and its value showcased on the A&M campus during the last 10 years.

"Eleven years ago, there were no art museums on campus," he said. "I think that the progress of art on campus is well aligned with the Vision 2020 plan of A&M."

Nathan Cray, executive vice president of MSC programs and a senior mechanical engineer, said the galleries serve as an essential part of getting a well-rounded education.

"It is incredible that we have these galleries on campus," he said. "Broadening your horizons through art appreciation is a critical part of the business world."

## Sudanese student tells of flight from war-torn African country

BY STUART HUTSON  
The Battalion

In 1983, 11-year-old Justin Maker's village in Southern Sudan was burned while members of his family were either killed or raped; Maker escaped with only his life and his story of a battle between two cultures which has led to the deaths of two million people at the hands of starvation and war.

Maker, one of nearly 300,000 Southern Sudanese refugees, told the tale of his flight from the war in Sudan, the largest country in Africa, to America at a lecture by Students for Peace, a social-justice issue group at Texas A&M last night.

Cesar Ricci, the conference speaker, a member of Students for Peace and a junior plant and soil science major, said the battle in Sudan between the northern-controlled Islamic govern-

ment and the rebel tribes of Southern Sudan began after the British evacuated the country in the '50s. Britain, who had controlled Sudan since the 1700's, left an unresolved conflict between the educated and advanced Arab population and the poor and uneducated African population.

"The civil war then really began in 1983," Ricci said. "Since then it has really been a one-sided war with the bulk of the people dying, being civilians from Southern Sudan."

Ricci said the war has been an attempt on the part of the government in Northern Sudan to control the oil-rich land in the South by means of ethnic cleansing, starvation and slavery.

"The North has been trying to replace the tribal culture of the South with their own Islamic culture by starving and enslaving the southern civilians," Ricci said.

Mohamed Ibrahim

Mostafa, president of the Muslim Student Association and a graduate student in electrical engineering, said the Islamic belief supports freedom of religion and peace among individuals.

"Everybody has the right to live in peace under the protection of the umbrella of Islam," Ibrahim Mostafa said.

Ricci presented several photographs of the starving Sudanese in conditions of extreme poverty and famine.

"This is not a starvation induced by the acts of God," Ricci said.

Ibrahim Mostafa said much of the starvation comes from southern tribal militias who use the tribe's food to support their attacks against the Northern government.

"The starvation does not all come from the acts of the Muslim government," he said. "That is something the Western media tends to portray."

## A&M language program commemorates 25th year

BY MATT LOFTIS  
The Battalion

The English Language Institution of Texas A&M (ELI) is celebrating its Silver Anniversary today in commemoration of 25 years of operation. The ceremonies include a luncheon, lectures, dinner and entertainment.

Patricia Harris, acting assistant director of ELI, said the institute's focus is the intensive English language classes and cultural studies.

She said the program accepts students from around the world and prepares them to communicate and learn in English.

Harris said only 100 students were enrolled in the program when it began but now has 500.

"We have at least 200 students every semester from 40 different countries and about 90 percent are already Aggies or planning to enter A&M," she said.

Harris said international students learn the English language through up to three levels of proficiency. Included in the program are cultural outings, which include at least one trip out of town, conversation partners from the A&M student body, usage of language labs and

cross-cultural seminars to learn about the culture of their peers.

"We definitely contribute to diversity," she said. "About a third of our population come from Asia, another third from Latin American countries and a substantial part of the other third come from Muslim countries."

The anniversary celebration will begin today at 9:30 a.m. with registration at the Bush Presidential Conference Center. Seminars will commence at 10 a.m. and entertainment will be provided by the Aggie Wranglers Dance Team.

Harris said the general public is invited to come and take part in the lectures.

Lectures will be held in the afternoon. Harris said speakers included such notables as Norman Borlaug, distinguished professor of international agriculture, soil and crop sciences and Nobel laureate; Albert Cotton, distinguished professor of chemistry; and William Perry, executive provost of academic affairs. Harris said the keynote speaker for the evening will be Pablo Marvin of Mexico City, associated with the ELI distance learning program.

The event will end with a reception at 7 p.m. in the MSC, followed by dinner at 7:30.

**INSIDE**  
Aggielife  
•Schlocktoberfest  
Film festival to showcase the best of the worst in student films.  
Page 3

**Sports**  
•Ags head to Norman to take on Sooners  
Aggies battle Big 12 rivals, Oklahoma, Saturday.  
Page 7

**Opinion**  
•Making rulers measure up  
Columnist names reasons why the U.S. should use the metric system.  
Page 9

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Listen to KAMU-FM 90.9 at 1:57 p.m. for community news.