

THE BATTALION

106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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Guests quiz Thomas, Bush at informal talk

BY MATT LOFTIS
The Battalion

Former President George Bush invited Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas to College Station Friday for a visit and to deliver an informal question-and-answer session. Officials with the Bush Conference Center and public relations were unaware of the topic or nature of the discussion prior to the event and did not know of any other reasons behind Thomas' visit.

Jean Becker, a spokesperson for Bush, said guests were welcomed to ask Thomas questions about his time and service with the Supreme Court.

"My time on the court has been much more than anything I've ever expected," Thomas said. "It has been a delightful, enlightening experience."

Thomas said he began his court experience with no mentor and a limited time to prepare for the shift.

"Everyone is very warm and offers to help you, telling you what they need if you need anything, but the reality is you don't call them," Thomas said. "You are an Article III judge and you are expected to do your own work."

Thomas explained his beliefs in personal liberties and the

rights of individuals as it pertained to his job. He also explained the scope of his position as Supreme Court Justice, saying justices analytically interpret the law and do not cure all social ills.

Affirmative action, Thomas said, was a program better suited to deal with socioeconomic backgrounds and hardships than race alone. He also said many backers of the prayer-in-school policy pointed to the separation of church and state as justification. The wall of separation between church and state, Thomas said, is a common metaphor, but is not constitutionally supported.

He said the only provision made for the separation of church from government was the clause prohibiting the state from establishing a mandatory religion.

Thomas said he could not comment on certain issues because of pending court cases.

"I think the issues that were the imponderable a few years back will be the issues that take us into the next century," he said. "Genetic altering and cloning are going to make abortion look like a simple issue."

When asked about his background and upbringing, Thomas gladly shared about his schooling, time in seminary, and family. Thomas said his greatest role models are his grandparents.



Former President George Bush and Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas field questions from the audience at an informal discussion Friday.

Northgate police office helps area, officials say

BY AMANDA SMITH
The Battalion

Local officials conclude that having police presence at Northgate has had continued success in keeping violence, parking violation and theft incidents down.

The community police station opened last spring in Northgate, located at 105 College Main just off University Drive.

Mayor Lynn McIlhaney of College Station said the community police station has been well received by residents, retailers and visitors to the Northgate area.

"I spoke with a couple of police officers patrolling the area, having an opportunity to meet with some visitors and residents in Northgate," McIlhaney said. "The feedback I have gotten so far has been very positive."

Liza Phillips, an officer with the College Station Police Department, said the Northgate area traditionally has many cars, pedestrians and bicyclists.

"There is a lot of traffic in the Northgate area," Phillips said. "We are so much more approachable than we are in our patrol cars."

Phillips said many students have come by and filed reports, mainly concerning bicycle thefts, since the police station opened.

"We have everything here [in the station] to file a report," Phillips said. "We also like people to come in here and ask questions about anything, about parking tickets or about bicycle registration."

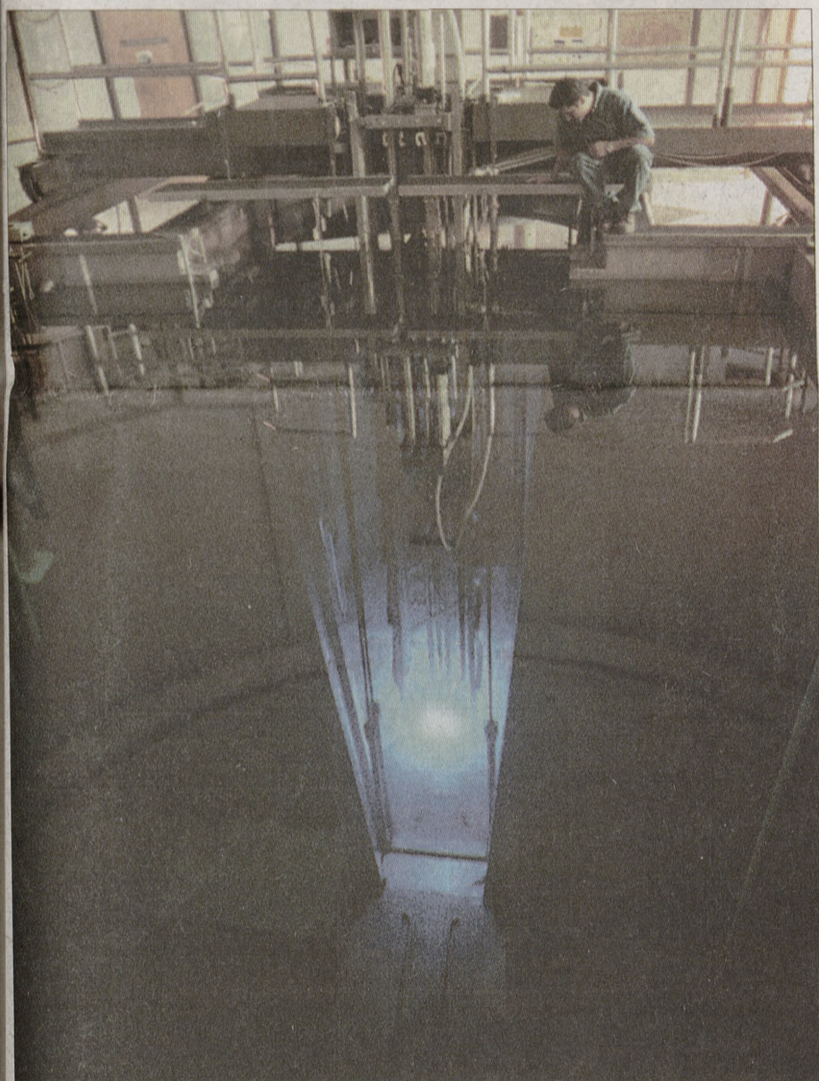
Phillips said she encourages students to register their bicycles in order to increase the likelihood of recovery, in case of theft. The community police station in Northgate is equipped with materials for engraving the bicycles, including specific parts like tire rims which are sometimes stolen.

Phillips said emergency blue phones similar to those on campus, will be erected soon but they are still in the planning stages.

The community police station in Northgate additionally provides information on alcohol and drug use, family violence and home security.

In the first few months of operation, the community police station sent out an officer on bike to

Conditioned reaction



Alfred Sanchez, senior reactor operator, at the Nuclear Science Research Center, watches over the reactor during a "pulse." The reactor was pulsed from 300 to 500 million watts, enough watts to power the city of Austin.

Decision making, war subject of discussion

Former President speaks on being a military leader

BY ROLANDO GARCIA
The Battalion

The presidency is not the "loneliest job in the world," former President George Bush said, but when confronted with issues of war and peace, the decision-making burden rests squarely on the commander-in-chief.

"The toughest decision a president makes is when he decides to send somebody else's son or daughter into harm's way," Bush said.

The former president spoke at the conference on presidential decision-making and U.S. military intervention at the Presidential Conference Center Saturday. During his speech, Bush discussed the three major military deployments he undertook during his administration in Panama, Kuwait and Somalia.

America's vital national interests are key in deciding when to use military force, and the most important national interest is the protection of American lives, he said.

In 1989, American forces invaded Panama and captured dictator Manuel Noriega to protect United States servicemen in Panama, install a democ-

atically elected government, and to bring Noriega, a convicted drug trafficker, to justice.

"The overriding concern was the moral righteousness of our cause," he said.

In the weeks and months following Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, there was a vigorous debate over if and when America should use force against Saddam Hussein. But Bush said that in addition to the national interests at stake, he found the moral case for intervention overwhelming.

"I look at today's crisis as one of good versus evil," Bush said. "Yes, it is that clear," reading aloud from a letter he wrote to his children 16 days before the start of Operation Desert Storm.

He added that economic sanctions were given plenty of time to work, but Hussein's stubbornness made military force the only option.

"I have a clear conscience, we did give peace a chance," he said. "But I don't think Saddam thought we would actually use force. He mistook vigorous debate in a free society for lack of resolve."

Somalia, unlike previous United States' military interventions, had a more humanitarian than

"I have a clear conscience, we did give peace a chance."

— George Bush
Former U.S. president

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SEE POLICE ON PAGE 2.

Get with the program

MSC Conversations to focus on teaching Aggies about international current events

BY ERIKA DOERR
The Battalion

Intellectual stimulation, discussions on current events, free food, professors, students and a relaxed setting are the key ingredients to the MSC Conversations student program.

Bill Anderson, MSC president and a senior mechanical engineering major, said the MSC Conversations student program helps stimulate and improve the intellectual climate at Texas A&M through small group discussions. It also will develop students' awareness of national issues.

"The MSC Conversations program offers students and professors the opportunity to gain intellectual development through discussions over social, cultural and international topics in a relaxed setting," he said. "Academically, socially and through student involvement, Texas A&M has excelled, yet the other piece of this puzzle is lacking, that of intellectual development."

Seth Horne, chair of MSC Conversations student pro-

gram and a senior chemistry major, said each of the groups will be composed of six students and one professor.

"Students must be committed to these discussions," he said. "There will be an orientation meeting on Nov. 4. The first discussion meeting will be on Sunday, Nov. 14 and will include a free dinner. The second will be on Sunday, Dec. 5 and will include free snacks."

Horne said students will attend two small group discussions held at a professor's home during the semester.

"The committee officially started this semester," Horne said. "MSC Conversations is a way for students and professors to engage in intellectual and entertaining discussions on chosen topics."

He said each mandatory meeting will begin around 6:30

University Teaching Academy strives to improve professor, student relations

BY STASIA RAINES
The Battalion

The University Teaching Academy aims to reduce students' feeling of anonymity in large classes by offering the "Take Your Professor to Lunch Challenge," which is an opportunity for a group of five students to invite their professor to lunch.

Amy Knorr, a student member of the University Teaching Academy and a senior English major, said the purpose of the challenge is to make large classes seem smaller by introducing students to their peers and the professor.

"It is not uncommon for first and second year students to have classes with a hundred students or more," she said. "Because of this, interaction between the student and professor is limited."

Knorr said the lunch provides an opportunity for professors and students to learn and share their hopes, fears and expectations about the course.

Nancy Simpson, director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, said improving the connection between teacher and student is crucial.

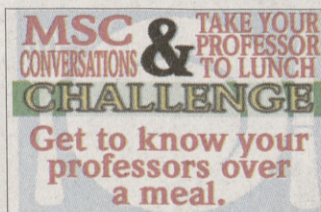
"Teaching and learning are essentially based on relationships, and this is often disconnected in large classrooms," she said.

Marty Gunn, a member of the University Teaching Academy and a biochemistry professor, said the project is concerned with improving the quality of learning in the classrooms.

"We want to look at professors who are really good at teaching large classes and see what they do to motivate students to learn," Gunn said.

Knorr said the ultimate goal of the University Teaching Academy is to recognize students as individuals.

"Our biggest goal is that students will not just be a number in their classes," she said. "The 'Take Your Teacher to Lunch Challenge' should help further that goal."



GABRIEL RUENES/THE BATTALION

SEE MSC ON PAGE 2.

Representatives visit Galveston

BY DIANE XAVIER
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Student Government Association teamed up with officers from the student senate at Texas A&M at Galveston this weekend in Galveston to exchange ideas and offer advice for each other's campuses.

This was the first exchange program between both A&M and A&M-Galveston — a school which focuses on maritime studies.

Erin Blaney, director of public relations for the Texas A&M Student Government Association and a junior political science major, said their Student Senate offered advice to A&M-Galveston's in improving student involvement with campus events.

"The main problem they have is that the same people are involved in everything there," Blaney said. "It's hard for them to get more people involved and we offered them some suggestions and ideas to help with this problem."

A&M-Galveston gave a tour of their campus to Texas A&M's Student Government Association and both schools had a round table discussion on various issues.

Blaney said both schools hope to spend more time with each other and have more contacts.

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INSIDE Aggylife

- A&M history on display
Cushing Library houses priceless pieces of A&M's history.
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- Defense leads volleyball team to four-game win over Colorado
Team now tied with Nebraska for third in Big 12 Conference.
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- Opinion
• Rewriting the drug laws
Legalizing drugs allows for a more regulated, safer system.
Page 11
- Batt Radio
Listen to KAMU-FM 90.9 at 1:57 p.m. for details on a report of a sexual assault on a child.

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But Democrats declined
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