

TOO CLOSE



BRADLEY ATCHISON/THE BATTALION
Lt. Gov. Rick Perry talks with reporters in front of the capital in Austin on Tuesday.

“Bush is a people's president. He upholds all of the virtues and qualities American needs.”

— Jarrie Griffin
sophomore general studies major



BRADLEY ATCHISON/THE BATTALION
George W. Bush supporters rally on Congress Avenue in Austin on Tuesday night.

“I'm confident that our efforts have made a difference for the Republican Party.”

— Jonathan Jones
junior political science major



CHAD ADAMS/THE BATTALION
Kay Bailey Hutchison speaks to the public in Austin after being re-elected the Republican Senator of Texas.

“Americans have not only elected a leader, they have elected a president that will do what's right.”

— Rick Perry
Lt. Gov. of Texas

Florida gives last winning votes, recount a possibility

By MARIANO CASTILLO & BETH MILLER
The Battalion

Pending a recount in Florida, Gov. George W. Bush has been elected as the 43rd president of the United States after a narrow victory in one of the tightest presidential races in American history.

Gore did not concede the election as of 3 a.m. because of a recount mandated in Florida, where the two candidates were separated by 224 votes with 5,000 yet to be counted.

The Texas governor received 271 electoral votes — only 22 electoral votes more than the states won by Vice President Al Gore.

Thousands of Bush supporters braved rain and low temperatures outside of the Texas Capitol in Austin Tuesday to hear Bush speak and watched election results as they were released.

Florida was the center of attention since early in the evening. The state clinched the presidency for Bush at 1:20 a.m., but CNN originally predicted a Gore victory at 6:50 p.m. Tuesday.

Other key states that remained undecided until early this morning were Oregon and Wisconsin.

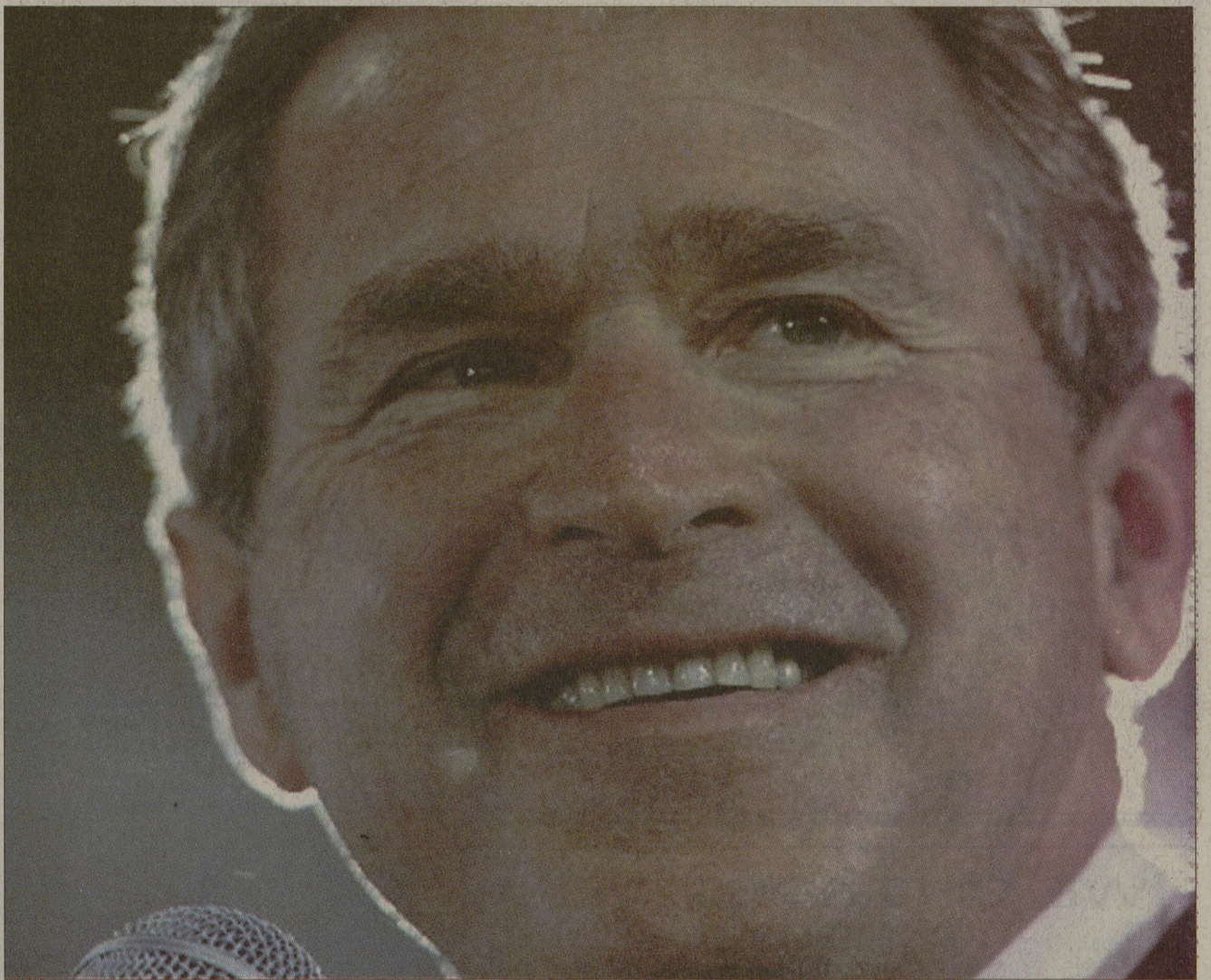
The crowd gathered at the Texas Capitol erupted in cheers at the announcement, a far cry from the “CNN sucks!” chants that filled the air hours earlier when CNN admitted its incorrect presumption.

Bush started the evening strong, winning in Virginia and leading by 28 to 3 electoral votes at 6 p.m. The candidates progressed steadily throughout the evening, trading leading positions.

Between 6:30 and 7 p.m., Gore picked up Michigan, Illinois and several northeastern states. Bush accumulated Georgia, Texas, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Kansas and North Carolina.

One of the major turning points of the evening came when CNN declared Pennsylvania on the Gore side. In Austin, spectators were reluctant to lose hope but were noticeably nervous.

Bush continued to lead the race until Gore picked up Minnesota — one of the previously undecided states — and pulled ahead, 192 to 185 at 8:30 p.m.



At 3 a.m. Gov. George W. Bush was declared president-elect of the United States with Florida providing the last votes. A margin of 224 votes between Bush and Vice President Al Gore creates a possible recount in Florida.

Austinites celebrate victory

By ROLANDO GARCIA & BRADY CREEL
The Battalion

“We want Bush!” chanted the Austin crowd.

With the final votes rolling in from Florida, Wisconsin and Oregon, supporters of President-elect George W. Bush danced the night away, knowing that their candidate would be the president.

Bush supporters came in throngs to the state capital Tuesday night, braving cloudy skies and cold weather to cheer on their candidate. They got their party.

Despite the weather and Bush's come-and-go domination of the electoral vote throughout the night, the sea of spectators remained steadfast and relentless, hoping to be a part of the action

and watch another page be written in American history.

Even as the night wore on — and the electoral vote closer — more people gathered outside the party's perimeter, which was guarded in part by Texas A&M Corps of Cadets Ross Volunteers.

GOP supporters crowded into a closed-off section of Congress Avenue in front of the Capitol building to watch CNN broadcasts of the election results on Jumbotron screens and listen to live entertainment in a festival-like atmosphere. Beer was plentiful, as were smiles.

The mood of the crowd changed quickly as the roller-coaster election returns trickled in. Cheers greeted the early poll projections, which gave Bush a sizable lead in the electoral college.

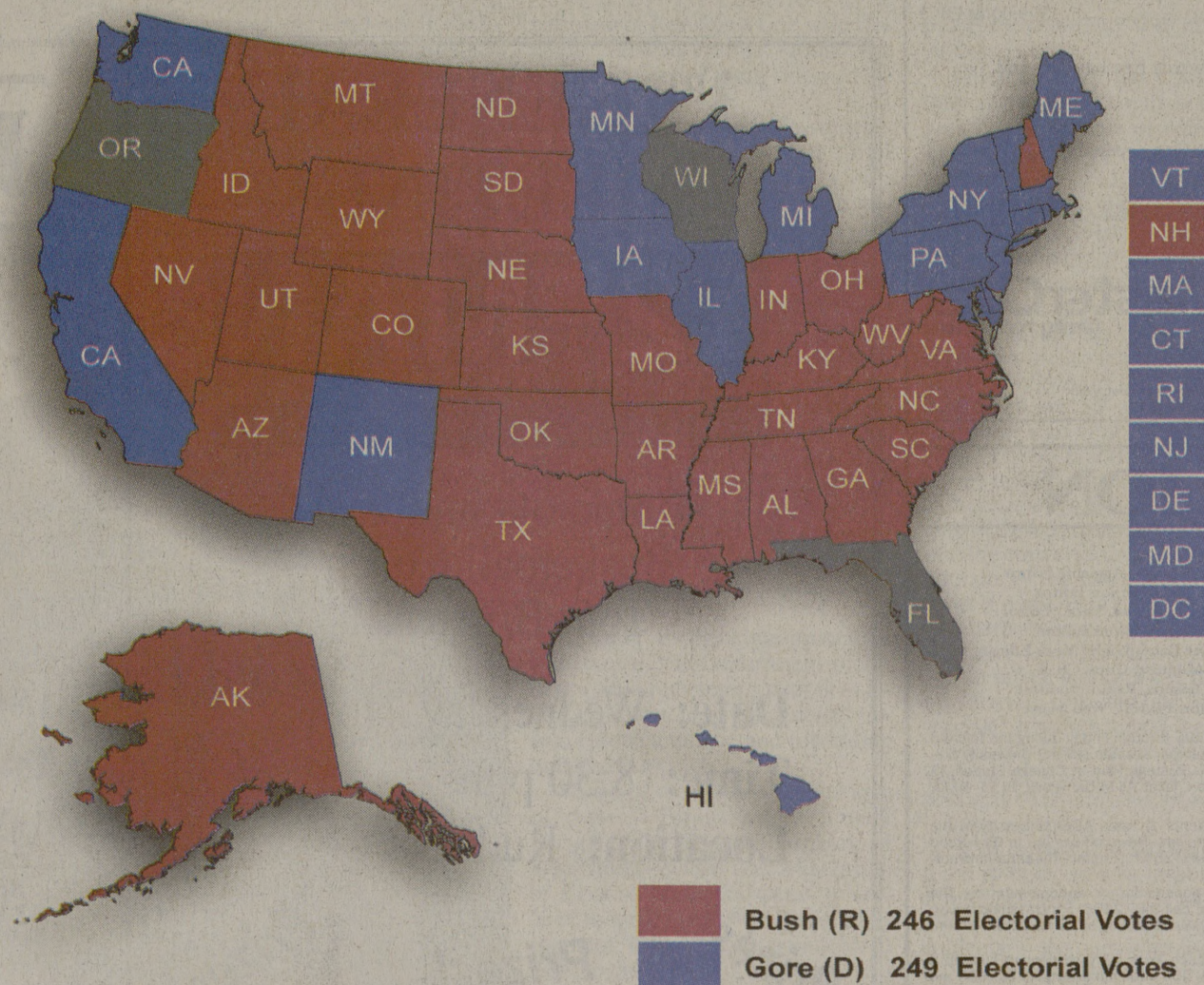
But the mood turned more somber, if still cautiously optimistic, as a group of key states went to Vice President Al Gore.

“We're definitely concerned. We're still hoping, but now he has to win all of the smaller states,” said Doris Light, a resident of Bryan who came with her family to the Austin election-night rally. “I can't believe the American public would vote Gore in.”

“However it turns out, it's history in the making, and this is a great opportunity for our children to see it,” Light said.

The crowd reacted positively as television networks put several more states in the Bush column, vocalizing approval

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Republicans dominate Texas ballot

DALLAS (AP) — Gov. George W. Bush, anchoring the top of the ticket for the GOP, easily claimed his home state's presidential nod on Tuesday while fellow Republicans flexed their might in down-ballot races.

The lopsided margin of 1.3 million votes fueled Bush's apparent win in the national popular vote. Although Bush wrapped up Texas' 32 electoral votes at poll close, his apparent victory over Democratic Vice President Al Gore came down to a razor-thin margin in Florida.

Assuming the margin stood, Bush would become the second president of the United States elected from Texas and Lt. Gov. Rick Perry would assume the governor's office.

In other races, the GOP maintained its advantage in the Texas Senate, key to the major redistricting battle next year. In the race that confirmed that the Republicans would maintain control of that legislative chamber, Todd Staples, a former House member from Palestine, defeated Democrat David Fisher, a lawyer from Silsbee. Staples led, 61 to 39 percent, with

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BRANDON HENDERSON/THE BATTALION

As of 3:40 a.m. 43 electoral votes are undecided