

Americans await Florida's recount



AP
Vice President Al Gore counts on Florida for the winning votes to become the 43rd President of the United States.

(AP) — The United States was built on two equally solid foundations: a Constitution that turns ideals into laws, and an unswerving sense that healthy competition creates better products.

Rarely in American history have these two principles come together in such a dramatic way.

Even in a political system with a built-in tension that pulls things toward the center — where most people's sympathies lie — a public split this widespread and this narrow is simply extraordinary. In the land that prides itself on majority rule, from the presidential race on down, the majority seems slimmer than ever.

The result? A moment of national limbo, a collective bewilderment — and an unusual opportunity to consider what makes the American system tick.

"Lots of people are reading their Constitutions for the first time in years," said John Hood, president of the John Locke Foundation, a conservative think tank in Raleigh, N.C.

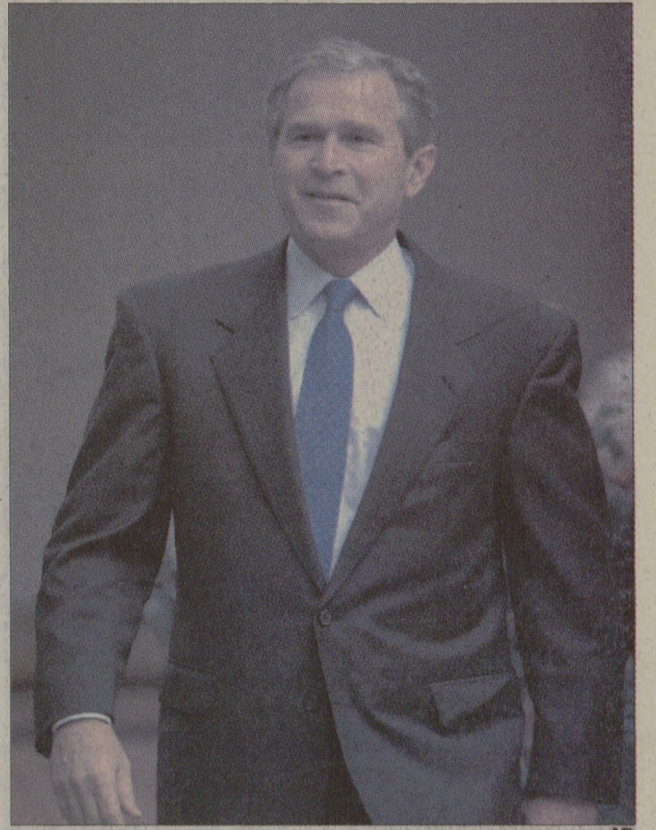
Americans are even split on the split itself. Where some took to the talk shows Wednesday to warn of gridlock, disarray, even a national crisis, others saw a healthy republic filled with principled people — a nation that, after splitting down the middle, is proceeding according to law, policy and civilized institution.

"There's not an insurrection. There's not a riot," said Rebecca Dalton, an antique-mall owner from Sallisaw, Okla. "We're not out fighting in the streets today."

The narrow divisions were not just the problem of George W. Bush and Al Gore. From Michigan to Washington, Senate contests were, for many hours, too tight to call. Governors won by the smallest of margins. When day broke Wednesday, 16 state legislatures were Democratic, 16 Republican and 15 split, with the verdict still out on two more.

"The nation is at partisan parity," said Kevin Mack, head of the Democratic Legislative Campaign Caucus.

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AP
Last night, Governor George W. Bush was predicted the 43rd President, but now the decision relies on a recount.

Yell leaders for OU 'Towel Out'

BY NOEL FREEMAN
The Battalion

When Oklahoma University comes to Aggieland Saturday, it will experience firsthand a manifestation of Texas A&M as Kyle Field's stands become an enormous swirling mass of Twelfth Man towels.

The designated "Towel Out" is intended to revive the tradition of fans twirling Twelfth Man towels at football games, said yell leader Ben Cholick, a senior construction science major.

"In the '80s and '90s, you saw Twelfth Man towel mania," Cholick said. "Our goal is to bring that back."

Cholick said fans still swing Twelfth Man towels, but the numbers have dwindled over the years.

With A&M playing No. 1 Oklahoma, the excitement is already building, said head yell leader Ricky Wood, a senior theater arts major. He added

that the noise generated by a crowd of more than 80,000 fans can sometimes be deafening and create a serious disadvantage for the opposing team.

"With 80,000 towels swinging, the stands actually appear to move," Wood said. "I can't imagine how distracting that can be to the other team."

To promote the Towel Out, Twelfth Man towels are on sale for \$1 at the Memorial Student Center and other locations around campus, a discount from the usual \$4 price.

With the broadcasting of ESPN "Gameday" from Kyle Field beginning at 9 a.m., and with the game being televised nationally on ABC, an estimated 45 percent of the nation's population will see the game.

"A&M has a great opportunity to show the Aggie spirit to a national audience," Wood said. "This is our time to show them what Aggies are all about."



STUART VILLANUEVA/THE BATTALION

Taylor Carmichael, a sophomore business major, Preston Perry, a junior computer science major, and Ben Cognata, a senior mechanical engineering major, call

out to passersby in front of the Academic Building on Wednesday. The trio was selling Twelfth Man Towels for A&M's upcoming football game against Oklahoma.

Local voter registration questioned

BY ELIZABETH RAINES
The Battalion

Tuesday's presidential election proved that every vote does count, but some Texas A&M students expected to have the opportunity to vote, but could not.

"When the College Republican workers came out to the Callaway House on Sept. 18 to register voters for this election, I registered under the assumption that the College Republicans would be responsible enough to turn my application in," said Josh Collins, a sophomore business major. "But when I attempted to vote on Tuesday, I was denied, being told that I had not registered."

College Republicans, hoping to draw in more voters, embarked on a campaign to register A&M students. Among their stops, the volunteer deputy registrars within the College Republicans registered students at the Callaway House. Collins said the students filled out voter registration applications and the deputy registrars gave them receipts.

Come election day, students from the Callaway House discovered that they could not vote because they were not registered.

Buddy Winn, the Brazos County tax assessor-collector and voter registrar, said about 45 other students experienced the same situation when they tried to vote.

"We had about 15 students come to our office Tuesday with complaints that they had been turned away because they were told that they had not registered to vote," Winn said. "Luckily a few of them had kept their receipts from when they filled out the voter registration card, so they were able to go on and vote. We told the others who came to the office without a receipt that they could vote via a challenged voter affidavit. It is sad, though, for the ones who were so discouraged at the voter's booth and just went home."

Winn said he understands the importance of voting because he defeated Republican candidate Art King for the County Tax Assessor-Collector position by a 2 percent margin Tuesday.

Winn said he did not receive applications for those who had receipts but were not registered to vote. Winn said he thinks the voter registration applications were lost somewhere during a break when they were transferred from the volunteer deputy registrar to Jack Long, president of Texas A&M College Republicans and a junior political science major.

To be able to vote, one must be registered in that area 30 days before an election. Most students have left

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Revisions to smoking ordinance discussed

BY JOSEPH PLEASANT
The Battalion

Smokers in the Bryan-College Station area may have to put out their cigarettes when eating out if proposed revisions to the cities' smoking ordinances are passed by the Bryan and College Station city councils. The councils are considering revising the current smoking ordinances, possibly banning smoking in public areas.

Currently, area restaurants permit smoking in designated areas.

The councils are considering different

alternatives to the current policy, some of which would completely prohibit smoking in public areas, change the building requirements for restaurants or add more regulations for restaurants.

A joint meeting between the city councils and the Brazos County Commissioners Court was held last Thursday night at the Brazos Center.

Harvey Cargill, city attorney for College Station, addressed the issue of enforcing the smoking ordinance.

"Currently it is \$100 to \$500 fine for smoking in a nonsmoking area," Cargill

said. "Enforcement could fall under the health department, the fire marshal's office or even the building inspector's office, if the council changes requirements on the actual structure."

Enforcement of the ordinance will be a concern of the city councils when making their decision.

"There is no safe level of exposure to cigarette smoke," said Dr. Dallas Coate of the Brazos County Health Authority. "Even if the smoke cannot be smelled, carcinogens are still being inhaled."

Citing a California study, Coate

added that waiters and waitresses working in the smoking sections of restaurants tend to have higher chances of developing lung cancer.

Many B-CS residents, as well as local restaurant owners, attended the meeting to voice their opinions about the proposed revisions.

"Being in the presence of smoke is a physical assault," said Howard Fredrics, a College Station resident and a Texas A&M music professor.

John Greer, a College Station resident, See TOBACCO on Page 2A.

U.S. Senate appoints A&M prof to OASI

Saving to serve as public member on Medicare board of trustees

BY ELIZABETH RAINES
The Battalion

The U.S. Senate recently approved the nomination of Texas A&M economics professor Thomas R. Saving to the board of trustees of the federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund and the federal Disability Insurance (DI) Trust Fund.

The OASI and DI trust funds finance retirement, disability and survivors benefits under social security. Clinton nominated Saving Sept. 27. He will serve a four-year term with a one-year grace period.

Saving will serve as one of two public members on the board of trustees. The board consists of six members: Saving, the secretary of treasury, the secretary of labor, the secretary of health and human services, the commissioner of Social Security and another public mem-

ber nominated by the president. The board will produce an annual report to Congress on the financial status of the OASI, the federal Hospital Insurance (HI) and the federal Supplementary Medical Insurance (SMI) trust funds.

"I have spent the last few years working extensively on the problems of Social Security and Medicare."

— Thomas R. Saving
OASI appointee and A&M economics professor

"I am very excited to serve on this board," Saving said. "I have spent the last few years working extensively on the problems of Social Security and Medicare, and what we say as a board will help to forecast the future of Social Security."

He will also serve as a public member on the board of trustees of two Medicare funds: the HI and the SMI. HI and SMI finance Medicare.

Saving will meet with the board biannually. The first meeting will be Nov. 30 and the second will occur sometime in March 2001.

Saving has spent much time working with the federal government on economic issues, specifically the topics of Medicare and Social Security.

"Saving is a noted authority on Medicare and Social Security," said See PROFESSOR on Page 6A.

Game Day Info
#24 Texas A&M vs #1 Oklahoma

- Gates open at 9a.m. for ticket holders
- First 2,000 fans with signs gain admission to south end zone temporary bleachers
- Yell leaders will conduct yells throughout "Gameday"
- Fans are encouraged to wear maroon and bring 12th Man towels

SELSO GARCIA/THE BATTALION

WWII hero's lost Aggie Ring found

COLLEGE STATION — Braving the pounding gunfire and chaos of a World War II battle, Texas A&M graduate Turney W. Leonard became a hero. But Leonard and his beloved Aggie class ring never came home.

Leonard, a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army, died near Komerscheidt, Germany, in 1944. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his bravery during battle. Although his body was recovered in 1950, his family never received the ring. They believed it was lost forever.

This week, Leonard's niece learned the ring has resurfaced. A German military officer, whose name is not yet known, reportedly has the ring and wishes to return it to Leonard's native Texas.

"His ring was his most prized possession," said Karen Kershaw, who lives in Duncanville, Texas. "That's the only thing that we will have, other than his remains that were

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