

10 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

## THE WAIT CONTINUES

Recount may not be official until Tuesday

"Nobody ever said that democracy was simple or efficient. But this is democracy in action."

— Bob Crawford  
Agriculture Commissioner

"Our vote was stolen. Three thousand Buchanan supporters in the county full of Jewish condo residents? I don't think so."

— Don Liftman  
Gore supporter

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Gov. George W. Bush's lead over Vice President Al Gore in crucial Florida shrank to fewer than 300 votes by unofficial count Thursday with allegations of irregularities swirling and ballots from overseas residents still to be counted.

Recount results from 66 of the state's 67 counties gave Republican Bush a lead of 229 votes out of nearly 6 million cast, according to an unofficial tally by the Associated Press. The original "final" margin had been reported at 1,784.

AP called each county election official to get the final recount total for each candidate in the county.

The official recount lagged behind, and Secretary of State Katherine Harris told an early evening news conference that it could be as late as next Tuesday — a week after the election — before the state has certified ballot results from all 67 counties. She also pointed out that it would take even longer — at least until Nov. 17 — to tabulate ballots cast by thousands of Floridians overseas and postmarked by Election Day.

Bush had 2,909,814 votes to 2,909,585 for Gore, a difference of 229. One election board member, Agriculture Commissioner Bob Crawford, defended the pace of the recount.

"Nobody ever said that democracy was simple or efficient," he said. "But this is democracy in action."

Crawford said anyone wanting simplicity should look to the south, to Cuba, a reference to the dictatorship of Fidel Castro.

The Gore campaign criticized the ballots in use in Palm Beach County as

confusing, and asked for a hand count of votes cast there and in three other counties. Palm Beach County agreed to hand-count ballots in three precincts on Saturday.

In the meantime, a circuit judge issued a preliminary injunction barring the canvassing commission in the county from certifying the final recount results until a hearing is held Tuesday.

That was in response to a legal challenge filed with the support of Democrats who say a poor ballot design in the county led some Gore supporters to inadvertently mark their ballots for Pat Buchanan.

The court order said the ballot was designed and printed in such a way that voters were deprived of their right to freely express their will.

"We expect legal challenges," said Clay Roberts of the Department of Elections, refusing to comment further.

Thus far, 66 of Florida's 67 counties have forwarded recount materials to the state.

Harris said the board count was behind the AP tally because the board is only reporting "those that are unofficially certified."

It was unclear how many ballots from Floridians living overseas were still uncounted — in fact still unreceived. An informal survey of 28 of the 67 election supervisors found that they had mailed more than 7,000, that a little less than half had been returned and no information was available on how many had been counted. That tally did not include some of the state's largest counties, including Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach.

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Recount Vote Totals for Florida (from AP as of 9:30 p.m. absentee ballots outstanding)



**Bush**  
2,909,814 votes



**Gore**  
2,909,585 votes

BRANDON HENDERSON/THE BATTALION

## House investigates network calls

WASHINGTON (AP) — A House telecommunications panel launched an investigation Thursday into what led news organizations to prematurely call Vice President Al Gore the winner in Florida and whether that depressed voter turnout elsewhere in the country.

The panel's chairman, Republican Rep. Billy Tauzin of Louisiana, told reporters that the call for Gore, which was reversed a few hours later, happened before all polls in Florida had closed and may have deterred Republican voters in states where polls were open much later. Tauzin said that calling Florida for Gore "may have sent a signal out to Americans that this election was being decided in a way that was not accurate. When they're being told by the networks that it's already over, that's akin to disenfranchising them."

Between 7:49 p.m. and 8 p.m. EST Tuesday, NBC, CBS, CNN, Fox, ABC and the Associated Press all called Florida, with its decisive 25 electoral votes, for Gore. Polls were

still open in the western part of Florida, which is in the central time zone, as well as most states in the West.

At about 9:55 p.m. EST, the networks and the AP began taking back those projections based on the actual Florida vote count that showed a tight race between Gore and Gov. George W. Bush.

**"When [Americans are] being told by the networks that it's already over, that's akin to disenfranchising them."**

— Billy Tauzin  
House telecommunications panel chairman and Republican representative

Early Wednesday, the TV networks called Florida for Bush and declared him winner of the presidential election, then were forced to back down on that projection as well. The AP did not declare an election winner. A recount is underway to determine the actual winner.

Tauzin said he is sending a letter to the heads of the TV networks and the AP asking a series of questions about how the projections are made. Although Congress returns for a lame-duck session on the budget next week, Tauzin said hearings would probably not take place until next year.

Central to the probe, he said, is the role of the Voter News Service, a consortium of the networks and the AP that uses voter exit polls and actual results to help make election projections. Other news organizations subscribe to VNS data.

"I don't intend to violate the law or the spirit

See EARLY CALLS on Page 8.

## Accused B-CS rapist fights extradition, denies charges

By SOMMER BUNCE  
The Battalion

Fugitive Don Richard Davis Jr., arrested in Cleveland, Ohio, last week and accused of sexually assaulting two Texas A&M women, has chosen to fight extradition to Texas.

Davis, an A&M graduate, was indicted in 1996 on two charges of aggravated sexual assault on the A&M campus. Just days before his scheduled trial, Davis skipped bail and has since been on the run.

After an Oct. 24 arrest for a traffic violation in Cleveland, Davis' fingerprints alerted authorities that he was a fugitive from Texas. The Brazos County district attorney's office must now ask the governor's office to extradite Davis to Texas for trial.

The extradition process enables the Texas governor to ask the governor of another state to release a suspected fugitive to Texas' custody.

Davis is held in Ohio in lieu of a \$10 million bail and is fighting

extradition on the grounds that he is not the man authorities have been seeking. The Cleveland sheriff's office initially thought Davis would choose to waive extradition. However, Davis' appointed attorney may have advised him not to waive the extradition.

"Extradition cases, in general, center around identity," said Brazos County District Attorney Bill Turner. "You have to carefully examine fingerprints and photos. What's at issue here is whether he is the same person."

The extradition process can take 30 to 90 days, Turner said.

In Texas, the two charges of aggravated sexual assault are punishable by up to 99 years in prison, said A&M University Police Department director Bob Wiatt.

The evidence that police have against Davis makes the case rock-solid, he said.

"We have a complete match of Davis' DNA fitting with the two victims," Wiatt said. "The

[victims] have also identified him in a lineup."

According to The Bryan-College Station Eagle, Davis has been arrested twice since he skipped bail in Texas, and he has lied to police both times about his identity. He first used the name William Allen Webster and listed himself as homeless, then took the pseudonym Bryan Armstead.

Posing as Armstead, Davis earned money as a bouncer and disc jockey at a strip club, he told Ohio police when he was arrested for the traffic violation. He was released but was arrested Oct. 31, after his fingerprints were checked by the Ohio criminal justice computer system.

A co-worker of Davis said the man he knows as Armstead has been in Cleveland for at least two years, The Eagle reported.

If the extradition is successful, a trial date will be set at a court in Brazos County. The district attorney's office cannot give a specific date yet.



CHAD ADAMS/THE BATTALION

defensive back Jay Brooks tackles Kansas State quarterback Nathan Beasley. Saturday's game against OU will be the second the A&M faces a Top 10 opponent at Kyle Field this season.

## Aggies to face OU, looking for upset

By BLAINE DIONNE  
The Battalion

At the beginning of this season, the Texas A&M football players already had the Oklahoma game circled on their calendars. They wanted revenge for the 46 drubbing they received from the Sooners in Norman, Okla., last year.

What an opportunity the Aggies (7-1 overall, 5-1 Big 12) have for atonement now. The Sooners (8-0, 5-0) are the No. 1 team in the country with aisman candidate at quarterback, and A&M finds itself faced with the ultimate spoiler role.

"We've got to show up and prove to the nation that we can play football," said outside linebacker Jason Glenn. "This is a big-time game, national TV. We're the No. 1 team in the nation going against Texas A&M, a very solid football program, and we're going to come out there and show them that we can play football, too."

The No. 1 Sooners are coming off a successful tuneup game against the

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**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