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## ELEPHANT WALK

2001

**12:01 p.m. @ Kyle Field**  
**November 21, 2000**

Pre-Elephant Walk Games & Pictures with Elephants

**10 - 11:30 a.m. @ Law/Puryear Field**  
(by All Faiths Chapel)

CLASS COUNCILS

The Texas A&M University Student Media Board is accepting applications for

### Editor THE BATTALION

- Including radio and online editions -  
Spring 2001  
(The spring editor will serve from Jan. 8 through May 11, 2001)

Qualifications for editor in chief of *The Battalion* are:

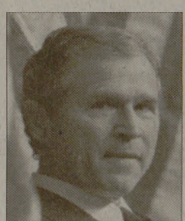
- Be a Texas A&M student in good standing with the University and enrolled in at least six credit hours (4 if a graduate student) during the term of office (unless fewer credits are required to graduate);
- Have at least a 2.00 cumulative grade point ratio (3.00 if a graduate student) and at least a 2.00 grade point ratio (3.00 if a graduate student) in the semester immediately prior to the appointment, the semester of appointment and semester during the term of office. In order for this provision to be met, at least six hours (4 if a graduate student) must have been taken for that semester;
- Have completed JOUR 301 (Mass Communication, Law and Society), or equivalent;
- Have at least one year experience in a responsible editorial position on *The Battalion* or comparable daily college newspaper, -OR- Have at least one year editorial experience on a commercial newspaper, -OR- Have completed at least 12 hours journalism, including JOUR 203 and 303 (Media Writing I and II), and JOUR 304 (Editing for the Mass Media), or equivalent.

Application forms should be picked up and returned to Francia Cagle, Student Media business coordinator, in room 014A Reed McDonald Building. Deadline for submitting application: noon Friday, November 17, 2000. Applicants will be interviewed during the Student Media Board Meeting beginning at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, November 21, in room 221F Reed McDonald.

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# Florida recounts expanded

(AP) — Al Gore won his fight Thursday to expand manual recounts in Florida, even as advisers said he likely will not overtake George W. Bush's 300-vote lead before the Republican secretary of state certifies their marathon White House race Saturday. GOP lawyers asked courts to stop the counting and "the disintegration" of America's presidential election system.



GORE

The vice president and his team aggressively defended the hand recounts in Democratic-leaning counties, laying the groundwork for Gore's case to continue the vote-counting if he fails to pull ahead of the Texas governor before the secretary of state's deadline.



BUSH

"The choice really is whether the voters are going to decide this election by having every vote count or whether that process is going to be short-circuited without all the votes being examined," Gore said in a radio interview.

The Florida Supreme Court later handed Gore a modest victory, authorizing officials in Palm Beach and Broward counties to recount ballots by hand. The effort, which officials said will take about six days, had been stalled on order of Secretary of State Katherine Harris.

The ruling did not say whether any votes found in the recounts can be

added to Gore's totals — the heart of a legal clash that has thrust the presidential campaign into limbo. The justices are all Democratic appointees.

Within minutes, Palm Beach election officials decided to start recounting Thursday night. After two full days of counting in 86 of 609 precincts, Gore had gained 21 votes in Broward County on the state's southeast coast.

"The Florida Supreme Court has spoken; the counts can continue," said Gore chairman William Daley.

Bush supports the secretary of state's weekend deadline and wants a declaration of a Florida winner after the last overseas absentee ballots are due Friday at midnight.

"Once these votes are counted, we will know the final result of Florida's election and the nation's election," Bush campaign chairman Don Evans said. "Win or lose, this election will be over."

Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, who thus far has been unable to deliver the state for his brother, agreed: "Saturday morning we'll know who won the state," he said.

Democrats begged to differ. Gore's attorneys asked a state judge in Tallahassee to have hand recounts rolled into the election totals, even if the vote-counting is not finished by Friday night. They argued that Harris, a Bush supporter, acted arbitrarily when she refused to update vote totals with the results of manual recounts after a Tuesday deadline.

Bush looked to a federal appeals court in Atlanta to shut down the canvassing altogether, calling manual recounts inaccurate and prone to political mischief. Both sides said

the case could be headed to U.S. Supreme Court.

"Eight days after Florida's presidential vote, the entire nation is witnessing the disintegration of a process that was designed to elect America's president," reads the Bush brief in the federal appeal. "The Florida manual recount process is being used to eliminate any possibility of an orderly, rational and final end to the election."

The federal court also agreed to consider a related case filed by three Bush supporters from Brevard County. They claim that their rights are being violated because their counties are not canvassing votes by hand.

Some scenes were chaotic, bordering on the comical.

Broward County sheriff's deputies took custody of 78 tiny bits of paper after Republicans demanded that the scraps be held as evidence of potential ballot tampering. The paper, from the holes in punchout ballots, was placed by police in an envelope marked, "Crime. Found Property."

Joked elections supervisor Jane Carroll, herself a Republican: "Let the chads fall as they may."

Later, a lawyer burst into the county's hurricane emergency center and served subpoenas on startled county election officials. "The nation is watching you," said Republican activist William Scherer, who filed a lawsuit on behalf of fellow attorney Steven Stoll.

About 100 protesters from groups including the NAACP and the Sierra Club gathered at the West Palm Beach counting station, where the canvassing board was waiting for court guidance before recounting.

## RECOUNT

The Florida Supreme Court gave the go-ahead to manual recounts in the state's disputed presidential election Thursday. Within minutes, officials in Palm Beach County announced they would soon begin a manual count requested by Al Gore's campaign. Still unresolved is whether those tallies will mean anything since Secretary of State Katherine Harris has said she will not allow any ballots counted after a deadline Tuesday.

Gore asked a Florida judge to require the state to count ballots being hand tallied after the deadline. Gore, who trails George Bush by 300 votes in the state, Florida, asked the Tallahassee judge to reverse Harris' decision. Democrats want final vote certification in Florida delayed until recount totals are in.

Gore's legal team filed motions Thursday with the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals based in Atlanta. The court is expected to consider arguments on Bush's attempt to block manual recounts. On Monday, U.S. District Judge in Miami rejected Bush's claims that the counts are unconstitutional. Both sides said the case could be headed to U.S. Supreme Court.

The federal appeals court in Atlanta also agreed to consider a related case filed by three Bush supporters from Brevard County who claim their rights are being violated because their counties are not canvassing votes by hand.

# BEST robot competition comes to B-C

By KRISTIN ROSTRAN  
*The Battalion*

"Battle Bots" has been gaining popularity on Comedy Central and this Saturday, Texas A&M will host its own version with the fifth-annual remote-controlled robot vehicle competition between middle and high school students from Texas and five other states.

The Texas Boosting Engineering, Science and Technology (BEST) championship gives students six weeks to build robots using supplies from a list provided by the program. The supplies include a motor, radio controls, plywood, pipe and other materials.

"The kits allow everyone to start out on equal footing," said Gretchen Schultz, project assistant for Texas BEST.

"The competition offers students the opportunity to get involved with something that is very team-oriented," Schultz said. "They get to use a variety of skills, including teamwork, engineering ability and creativity."

Texas Instruments started in Texas BEST in 1993 and is still the major supporter of the program.

The theme of this year's competition is Pandemonium in the Smithsonian. The robots will compete four at a time and will have to maneuver around obstacles that represent different features of the museum.

Cylinders and levers represent historical artifacts that the robots must retrieve. Since the robots are in direct competition with each other, offensive and defensive strategies will be necessary.

The 50 teams participating in the competition

first compete in local and area competitions before progressing to the finals. The team whose robot earns the most points will be the overall winner. Special awards will be given to the most robust, creative, elegant and photogenic robot.

A BEST award also will be given in a separate competition in which 24 of the 50 teams are participating. The contestants must submit a notebook on details of the robot, make a presentation, and have high spirit and good sportsmanship throughout the competition. There are first-, second- and third-place categories, and the winners of the BEST award will receive grants of \$1,000, \$500 and \$250, respectively, along with trophies.

The local and area competitions will last from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in Reed Arena, and final competitions will begin in the afternoon. The event is open to the public and is free of charge.

# Bryan residents awarded \$41.4 million settlement with Atofina chemical company

By RICHARD BRAY  
*The Battalion*

Bryan residents who said they were harmed by chemicals released by the now-inoperative Atofina Chemicals plant, formerly known as Elf Atochem, have reached a \$41.4 million settlement with the company that will be split among the more than 14,000 claimants.

The settlement was approved Oct. 30 in a fairness hearing conducted by U.S. District Judge Lynn Hughes.

The case was brought by people who lived, worked or owned property in the area around an old farm-chemical plant at 201 West Dodge Street in Bryan between Jan. 1, 1973, and April 10, 1995. Children whose mothers were pregnant in

Bryan during the time period are also involved in the suit.

**"It means an end to the protracted litigation that has been going on for over eight and a half years."**

— Emily Watson  
Bryan residents' attorneys

The plaintiffs said the plant released arsenic and other chemicals that contaminated soil, water and build-

ings. According to the plaintiffs, these chemicals increased the risk of cancer and birth defects and caused anguish and property damage.

Emily Watson, an attorney for the Bryan residents, said the claimants will not receive their money until early spring. The settlement administrator, who is appointed by the court, makes awards to all the claimants.

The claimants will be divided into three subclasses based on the damage they suffered. The largest amounts, expected to be up to \$500,000, will be given to those who have developed cancer or had birth defects.

Watson said it would be difficult to ascertain how much the average claimant would receive.

"There's a very wide degree of

damages," she said. "There are people who lived in the area a short time and don't have any physical symptoms, but there are individuals with serious personal injury claims, so there is a continuum there."

Watson said the settlement also addresses the difficulties of bringing a lawsuit against Atofina on their own.

"It means an end to the protracted litigation that has been going on for over eight and a half years, and I think it's a good thing for the people of Bryan," she said. "Individual lawsuits are very difficult to pursue against companies, especially in this day and age when plaintiffs are really challenged to meet the standards for the admissibility of evidence."

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## NASA International Space Station Traveling Exhibit & Texas BEST Robotics Championship





**Saturday, November 18 • 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.**  
Get a sneak peek of the Space Station and how astronauts will live and work on board. Exhibit will feature mock-ups of Space Station facilities.

**Texas BEST Robotics Championship**  
Watch student-built robots from the top 50 middle and high school teams from Texas and five other states match up in a game of strategy, speed, and skill.


Local area teams include A&M Consolidated High School, Bryan High School and Burleson County Home School.

- Friday, November 17 • 8 p.m. - 9 p.m.  
Texas BEST program presentation with NASA speaker.
- Saturday, November 18 • 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Robotics competition and other exhibits from Texas A&M University and NASA.

• Free admission at Reed Arena.

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