

# THE BATTALION

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**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**Former president takes Continental to show safety**

HOUSTON (AP) — Former President George Bush, promoting the safety of the nation's airlines and airports, said his flight from Boston "couldn't have been better" as he arrived back home in Houston Thursday aboard a commercial airliner.

Bush, flying in first class aboard a Continental Airlines plane, said his ride was "nice and smooth" and even included "nice, clean washrooms."

He was greeted at a gate at Bush Intercontinental, an airport named for him, by Gordon Bethune, Continental's chairman and chief executive.

"One thing I wanted to demonstrate, and I realize it's just symbolic, is the safety of the airways and the confidence I have in Continental," Bush said, noting that his son had made similar comments about the safety of air travel in an appearance Thursday in Chicago.

"I think people are ready to start living again," the elder Bush said. "People are going to take more precautions. There is going to be some inconvenience. But this is America and we're strong."

He said when he got to Logan Airport, the departure point for two of the four planes hijacked Sept. 11, he was met by a couple of state troopers, who talked about about what that city had experienced.

**PUBLIC EYE**

**Number of freshmen who voted in the freshman election**

**835**

**TODAY**

**AGGIELIFE**

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**Game day gatherings**

• Students discuss how to have the perfect tailgate party

**SPORTS**

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**Irish in search of luck at Kyle**

• Holiday earns first career start at QB for Irish, Ags aiming for 4-0

**OPINION**

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**Organized religion not the solution**

• Recent tragedies spark religious controversy

**WEATHER**

TODAY

HIGH 85° F  
LOW 52° F

TOMORROW  
HIGH 85° F  
LOW 52° F

FORECASTS COURTESY OF www.weathermanted.com

## Surplus may fund retreat center

By SOMMER BUNCE  
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M administrators hope to use the \$1.1-million Bus Operations surplus from the Student Services Fee toward a student leadership retreat center.

Architects will present preliminary designs for the retreat center to the A&M System Board of Regents today, but no action will be taken by the board.

The student body voted in Spring 2001 to add a \$50-per-semester transportation fee to the student fee statement, making Student Services Fee funds previously

earmarked for Bus Operations unnecessary. The Student Services Fee was not altered with regard to Bus Operations, resulting in a surplus.

The additional money is to be used on a one-time basis, said Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. J. Malon Southerland. He said a Student Services Fee rebate was considered but not adopted.

Southerland said he was given the option of using part of the \$1 million for any unforeseen funding problems with student services, but that measure is not necessary.

Instead, he asked Director of Student

Activities Kevin Jackson to recommend to the Student Service Fee Advisory Board (SSFAB) that the \$1-million surplus be used to build the retreat center.

"I think it's a terrific potential compromise," Southerland said. "We didn't dip into it (the million dollars), so we have it now for whatever arises. I'm reluctant to ask for money from the students, but [the retreat center] would be such a good way to use it."

The additional funds could be used in other areas of student services, to help finance the proposed retreat center and attract matching funds from potential

donors, or not used at all, Southerland said.

If used for building the retreat center, the \$1 million would be the only direct student contribution to the center, Southerland said, and would allow the center to assess a lower user fee than would otherwise be necessary.

No relationship exists between the additional student services money and University President Dr. Ray M. Bowen's proposed Excellence Fee, Southerland said. A \$6-million shortfall in the University's budget prompted Bowen to

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## UPD enforces zero tolerance this weekend

By AMANDA SMITH  
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M University Police Department (UPD) officials are taking all references to terrorism and terroristic threats seriously, enforcing a zero-tolerance policy against such statements at the football game against Notre Dame Saturday and Friday night's Midnight Yell Practice.

At the Sept. 22 football game, three fans were restricted from entering Kyle Field for joking comments related to the terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., UPD director Bob Wiatt said.

*"The game attendants are addressing the students like they are at the airports, where you do not kid about hijacking a plane, or at a movie theater where you do not shout out fire."*

— Bob Wiatt  
UPD director

"These attacks are not something you joke about or mess around with," Wiatt said. "It is disappointing this happened, because all involved were students."

One student was not permitted to attend yell practice Friday for accusing a woman of committing the attack on the

World Trade Center, Wiatt said. The student said the woman was carrying hazardous materials to orchestrate more destructive acts.

Two other students were banned from Kyle Field Saturday for joking they were carrying weapons as they were entering the stadium.

"The game attendants are addressing the students like they are at the airports, where you do not kid about hijacking a plane, or at a movie theater where you do not shout out fire," Wiatt said. "If the game attendant found the threat to be very serious, the individual could be charged with a misdemeanor."

If the students' threats had been considered serious, they could have faced a class A or a class B misdemeanor.

Wiatt said security will continue at a heightened state of alert at Saturday's game and at yell practice, where officials from UPD and Bryan-College Station law enforcement agencies will be present.

Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. J. Malon Southerland, said security has changed since the recent attacks in New York and Washington.

"It's clear that the security precautions are just not the same as they were," Southerland said.

Former President George Bush will be on hand for the Lech Walesa speech today and Saturday's pre-game march-in. The University released a statement this week advising of heightened security by the U.S. Secret Service at events Bush will attend.

## Honoring Sully



ANDY HANCOCK • THE BATTALION

Bonnie O'Connor, a freshman business major, cuts birthday cake for passersby in honor of Lawrence Sullivan Ross' birthday. The event was hosted by the Southern Heritage Society, a new student organization at Texas A&M this year.

## Panel: Western media misinterpret Islam

By JONATHAN KOLMETZ  
THE BATTALION

The Associated Press printed more 100,000 words about terrorism in the first four days after the attacks in New York City and Washington D.C., Texas A&M journalism professor Douglas Starr said at a Thursday night panel discussion on media interpretation of Islam.

More than \$500 million in commercial revenue was lost in around-the-clock television news coverage, Starr said.

"Reporters try very hard to not use opinion words," Starr said. "But we're all human — errors creep in with biases."

More than 500 students met with experts on Islam Thursday night to discuss the role the media plays in interpreting the Muslim religion. Speakers examined media coverage of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and how the attacks have affected Muslim life in the United States. Reports of 58 incidents involving harassment against Muslims on

See ISLAM on page 6.

## Fish to face off in a runoff

By C.E. WALTERS  
THE BATTALION

There was only one outright winner in the first round of freshman class election, with the top two vote recipients for five offices — Class of 2005 president, vice president, secretary, historian and social secretary — ready to square off in a runoff Oct. 1-2.

Kelly Howard, who received 231 votes, or 29 percent, will face T.J. Waller, who received 200 votes, or 25 percent, for Class of 2005 president. Both candidates cited religion as a motivating factor for their desire to serve.

"I want to be a good witness through Christ," Waller said. "Our class is going to have a

great time, and I want to be there to facilitate and make sure things get done that need to be done."

"I want to serve God through



GUY ROGERS • THE BATTALION

T.J. Waller and Kelly Howard are in a runoff election for freshman class council president.

servicing our class and to represent the whole freshman student body and not just one," Howard said.

Timothy Soeken was elected Class of 2005 treasurer with 359 votes, or 51 percent. Lauren Rossman, Precious Atlas, Alex Lee and Amy Gray were elected to represent the freshman class in the Student Senate.

Lee, a general studies major, said he ran for the senate to protest the unfairness of the Corps of Cadets meal plan, which requires cadets to eat lunch on certain days at Duncan Dining Hall.

"It's a ripoff because they take away our meals whether we're able to make it to Duncan or not," Lee said. "If they improved the food there they wouldn't

See RUNOFF on page 2.