

Texas A&M University — Celebrating 125 Years

# THE BATTALION

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**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**Bush signs bill, putting screeners on U.S. payroll**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush signed legislation Monday to put the nation's airport baggage screeners on the federal payroll, part of an effort to enhance airline safety and reassure passengers the skies are safe 10 weeks after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The legislation — the subject of political wrangling — was the latest in a series of steps the government has taken to tighten safety in the skies. Additional air marshals have been assigned to flights in greater numbers; airline companies have strengthened cockpit doors and members of the National Guard now patrol many of the nation's airports.

The measure requires airports to expand inspections of checked baggage, and explosive detection systems are to be in place by the end of next year. The Transportation Department may authorize pilots to have weapons in the cockpit of their planes.

To finance the security improvements, passengers will be charged a \$2.50 fee each time they board a plane for a flight, up to \$5 per trip. Congress began work on the measure not long after the Sept. 11 suicide hijackings that killed thousands in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania.

**PUBLIC EYE**

**Students who ride on-campus buses each day**

**11,791**

TODAY  
**AGGIELIFE**

Page 4A

**Understanding Islam**

**SPORTS**

Page 1B

**Lookin' for respect**

• Ags hope to upset No. 5 Horns, spoil Texas' 2001 National Championship hopes

**OPINION**

Page 5B

**Rivals to the Corps ... always**

• Battalion and Texan editors square off

**WEATHER**

TODAY

HIGH 60° F  
LOW 40° F

TOMORROW

HIGH 65° F  
LOW 32° F

FORECASTS COURTESY OF www.weathermanted.com

**Reed Rowdies promote A&M basketball**



Mike Solomon, a member of Reed Rowdies, smashes a car set up by the group to promote awareness and participation in the Texas A&M-George Washington basketball game tonight.

CODY WAGES • THE BATTALION

## Seniors 'die' at E-Walk

By CHRISTINA HOFFMAN  
THE BATTALION

Today, the Class of 2002 will "die" out, and the Class of 2003 will officially take its place as seniors.

Elephant Walk and Junior E-Walk begin at 2:02 and 2:03 respectively. Elephant Walk marks the end of the "usefulness" of the Aggie seniors to the student body as they wander around campus for the last time, said Beth Weems, Class of 2002 president and a senior agricultural development major.

"There has been a lot of hard work put into these events, and it will be great to see fellow classmates join together in unity to carry out such a time-honored tradition," Weems said.

Junior E-Walk coincides with Elephant Walk because juniors walk in celebration of becoming the new leaders on campus. Started in 1992, the junior event is called E-Walk because juniors are not allowed to say "elephant," Weems said.

Events will begin at 10 a.m. on the Law-Puryear Field. There will be live music, a fajita lunch at 11 a.m., games and Reveille and elephants to take pictures with, said Chris Durham, a junior genetics major and president of the Class of 2003. Tickets for the lunch will be on sale in limited numbers at Law-Puryear Field for \$7.

After the fajita lunch, seniors will meet at Kyle Field for yell practice and to hear the Elephant Walk speaker, Dr. John Hoyle, a professor in public school administration and future studies. The Class of 2002 will step off from Kyle Field, Weems said.

Juniors will remain at Law-Puryear Field for the Jr. E-Walk speaker, Ronnie McDonald, Class of 1993 and A&M's first African-American yell leader, Durham said.

"This is the first time for the Class of 2003 to come together, unified as a class," Durham said.

Bryan Barton, a senior economics major and a member of Traditions Council, said Elephant Walk and Jr. E-Walk are ways for the classes to come together a few last times.

"It's a realization that our time is quickly coming to an end," Barton said. "We have to use all the time we have left."

## A&M-Blinn co-enrollment up

By MELISSA SULLIVAN  
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M students enrolled at Blinn College account for 14 percent of Blinn's total enrollment this semester, officials said.

A&M Registrar Don Carter said the more than 1,400 co-enrolled students may be the result of full classes at A&M, not the perception that classes are easier at the community college.

"They don't necessarily take classes there because they may be easier; we have instructors who teach there as

well as here at A&M," Carter said. "Primarily, there are more classes at Blinn that don't fill up as easily."

Blinn College students often enroll at A&M to earn hours at the four-year institution. Blinn has the highest transfer rate of any community college in the state, with 23.6 percent transferring to other colleges, said Vivian Jefferson, director of Admissions and Records for Brazos County from Blinn College.

Enrollment at Blinn, which includes an increase in the number of co-enrolled A&M students, has increased at least

3 percent every semester, Jefferson said.

"Blinn offers smaller classes, with 25 students as compared to 100, in subjects like English and government, plus more sections to choose from," she said.

Students like being a part of the A&M community, Jefferson said. She said students who are fresh out of high school find that enrolling at Blinn makes the transition to college easier.

The 1,400 co-enrolled students do not include the 370 students in TEAM Blinn, which places A&M waiting-list students into Blinn for basics and

then conditionally admits them to the University once they have completed 45 hours at Blinn. TEAM Blinn began this semester and guarantees co-enrollment with the majority of a student's 12-hour load taken at Blinn and three to five hours taken in residence at A&M.

Students must complete 45 hours at Blinn, 15 hours at A&M and maintain a 3.0 grade-point ratio to gain full-time admittance to A&M.

Co-enrollment admissions have already risen as a result of TEAM Blinn, and administrators at both schools expect admissions will continue to rise.

## Ags not visiting advisers

### A third have not sought advice

By JUSTIN SMITH  
THE BATTALION

Nearly one-third of Texas A&M students have never met with their academic adviser, according to a survey conducted by the Student Senate last month.

But advisers say it is important for students to consult with them to ensure they are progressing with their degree plans.

Students should visit with their adviser at least once a semester, said Dr. Lawrence Petersen, a computer science undergraduate adviser.

"Sometimes a rumor will start about what courses to take and students will end up taking a class which won't do them any good," Petersen said. "I'd much rather have a

See ADVISERS on page 2A.

## Proposed A&M program may fight bioterrorism

By EMILY PETERS  
THE BATTALION

The Sept. 11 terrorist acts and the appearance of anthrax have heightened national concern about bioterrorism and its potential effects on what the government has declared a "vulnerable" food supply.

Texas A&M may soon be one of the leaders in bioterrorism research. Plans for a new anti-bioterrorism institution at A&M will be presented to the A&M System Board of Regents in December.

If approved, the Institute for Countermeasures Against Agricultural Bioterrorism will culminate the A&M System's research efforts on multiple aspects

of bioterrorism, which is the deliberate release of toxins or infectious organisms.

"If you look across the entire idea of terrorism, there are people looking at all aspects at A&M," said Neville Clarke, director of A&M's Center for Natural Resource Information Technology. "We hope to align all of that talent."

Clarke said the plan existed before Sept. 11, but public need and government support have changed dramatically since then, and more government funds for this type of research have been made available.

The institute will develop technology to prevent attacks on U.S. agriculture and food supply and research how to handle outbreaks

See BIOTERRORISM on page 6B.

## Comstock, others file Bonfire lawsuits

Staff & Wire  
THE BATTALION

Two more lawsuits related to the deadly 1999 Aggie Bonfire collapse were filed Monday, the deadline to sue in connection with the accident, including one by the most severely injured survivor.

John Comstock and his

mother, Dixie Edwards, filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Galveston, said Lee Alford, the family's Bryan-based attorney. Comstock's left leg was amputated above the knee and his right arm was partially paralyzed after being trapped under the stack for seven hours.

Comstock was hospitalized for five months after the Nov. 18, 1999, collapse. He under-

went intense physical therapy in Dallas, living at home and learning to walk, write and drive again. Comstock was able to return to the A&M campus for Fall 2001.

"The lawsuit was filed to protect his rights and see what, if anything, he is entitled to recover for the damages he sustained," Alford said.

Texas A&M President Dr.

Ray M. Bowen, other school officials, several current and former students and several companies involved in constructing Bonfire were named as defendants, similar to other Bonfire lawsuits. All of the suits seek unspecified damages.

Comstock's federal lawsuit alleges Aggie Bonfire was a

See BONFIRE on page 2A.

**ELEPHANT WALK & JUNIOR E-WALK**

CLASS OF 2002  
KYLE FIELD 2:02 P.M.

CLASS OF 2003  
LAW PURYEAR FIELD 2:03 P.M.

ADRIAN CALCANEO • THE BATTALION