

THE BATTALION

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Diversity among students leaves hope for the future

In reaction to diversity and cultural issues that have affected Texas A&M this semester. The Battalion invited a panel of student leaders to convene to discuss racial and cultural issues at Texas A&M.

The result is a three-part series on diversity and culture at A&M from students with diverse points of view, but who all agree they are proud to be Aggies.

Part one focused on the past racial and cultural issues at A&M.

Part two covered present issues affecting the campus and part three covers the future.

By Emily Peters
THE BATTALION

Recent events surrounding diversity issues at A&M have perked the nation's ears in this direction. A glaring media spotlight has revealed questionable political cartoons, the proposal of a revolutionary top-20

plan to defer Hopwood restrictions and a major discrepancy between University and state minority ratios.

Student leaders realize the moment has come to look to the future of diversifying A&M, especially in a state whose population will be less than half white in three years.

Through a panel hosted by *The Battalion*, student leaders came up with innovative concepts for forming A&M's future in diversity.

Minority recruitment, administrative involvement

Panelists agreed that although the 1996 Hopwood decision prevents acceptance based on race, minority recruitment should be allowed.

"We should be able to talk to diversity clubs at high schools," said *Battalion* Editor in Chief Mariano Castillo. "When we need athletes, we recruit athletes. When we need scholars, we recruit scholars. I can't see why there is a difference with minority recruitment as long

they are not admitted based on race."

Student Government Association Director of Diversity Issues Pablo Rodriguez said University administration should create a vice president position devoted solely to campus diversity initiatives.

Samecia Bloomfield, MSC Executive Director of Cultural Programs Coordination, agreed and said she would like to see more administrators involved

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Passover



JOHN LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Rabbi Peter Tarlow dips his finger in a cup of wine during the naming of the 10 plagues. Tarlow and other members of the Hillel

Foundation began the Jewish holiday Passover at the Hillel Center. The celebration will continue for an additional seven days.

Suicide bomber in Israel leaves 15 dead

NETANYA, Israel (AP) — A suicide bomber burst into a hotel dining room and blew himself up Wednesday just as Israelis dressed in their holiday best were sitting down to a Seder meal celebrating the Jewish Passover. At least 15 people were killed and more than 100 were wounded.

The explosion tore through the ground floor of the Park Hotel in the northern coastal resort, blowing out walls and windows and overturning tables and chairs. Bits of rubble and wires dangled from the ceiling. In the chaos, one table remained standing, covered by

a white cloth and with the elaborate Seder place settings still in place.

The Islamic militant group Hamas claimed responsibility for what Israeli government spokesperson Gideon Meir called a "Passover massacre."

The bombing in Netanya threatened to derail the latest U.S. truce mission, just hours after President Bush said his envoy to the region had made some progress.

Bush urged Yasser Arafat and his Palestinian Authority "to do everything in their power" to try to stop the killing. "This callous, this cold-blood-

ed killing, it must stop," Bush said. "I condemn it in the most strongest of terms."

Israel, which had reluctantly accepted the latest U.S. ceasefire proposals, said it would have to reassess its policy and held Arafat responsible for the bombing. Police Minister Uzi Landau called for retaliation, saying the Palestinian Authority must be destroyed.

The Palestinian leadership said in a statement it "strongly condemned" the attack. A Palestinian security official, speaking on condition of

See **Bomber** on page 2A

Pilot program opens rooms for freshmen in Hobby Hall

By Araceli V. Garcia
THE BATTALION

Hobby Hall, a modular residence hall usually reserved for upperclassmen, will hold 25 percent of its rooms this fall for incoming freshmen.

The measure to open Hobby to a group of students traditionally absent in the hall's co-ed rooms is part of a year-long pilot program that was approved at the Residence Hall Association's general assembly last week. Residents of Hobby hope more freshmen will increase hall unity.

Hobby currently houses 7 freshmen out of the 250 students who reside in the hall.

The goal of the pilot program is to lower the turnover rate in the residence hall, which loses upperclassmen in droves each year as they move

off campus, said Chris Mahaffey, a RHA delegate from Hobby Hall.

Delegates from other residence halls said opening Hobby to more freshmen could drain first-year students from the less-expensive mostly-freshmen halls.

Mahaffey said allowing more freshmen into Hobby should not affect the number of freshmen willing to live in other halls.

"The freshmen will come from elsewhere, not from other dorms," Mahaffey said.

The number of reserved spots for freshmen will not be known until all "Decision 2002" contracts for Fall on-campus housing have been submitted. Once the number of returning residents is calculated, the remaining spots will be held for incoming freshmen, Mahaffey said.

Triathlete, mentor receives award

By Melissa Sullivan
THE BATTALION

Take one look around Jose Grimaldo's office and it is no secret what his passion is. Pinned to the walls are several paper numbers he wore while competing in triathlons and marathons, along with a sign that reads: "Run Hard, Live Easy."

Grimaldo, who grew up in Bryan-College Station and currently serves as funding opportunities coordinator for Texas A&M's Research Services office, is a nationally-ranked triathlete who has participated in eight marathons. He was named A&M's 2001 Mentor of the Year.

"I am a mentor for students here who want to com-



GRIMALDO

pete in triathlons and marathons. I coach them on the ins and outs, and we are currently preparing for the SWT Collegiate Championship (a triathlon)," Grimaldo said.

A 1986 A&M graduate, Grimaldo earned a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture and has worked in the field for eight years.

His most exciting project was helping design the Moody Gardens in Galveston.

"I got to design plans, approve construction and provide documents," he said. "I love going back with my kids and showing them what I worked on."

After deciding to start a family with his wife, Lisa, also an A&M graduate, Grimaldo switched his career and arrived at A&M in 1991.

"I was an unofficial mentor at the beginning because I didn't join the program until last year. I was stunned and in shock when I was chosen as Mentor of the Year," he said. "It was very heartfelt and quite humbling."

When not at work, Grimaldo likes to spend time with his family, which he said he always puts first and for whom he gave up his dream career.

"I bought my two girls each a guitar for Christmas and they like to bang on it. They get real frustrated

See **Mentor** on page 2A

Aggie pleads not guilty to child porn

By Sommer Bunce
THE BATTALION

Stephen Michael Johnston, a senior psychology major and member of the Corps of Cadets, pleaded not guilty Wednesday to charges of conspiracy to distribute child pornography on the Internet.

Johnston, 21, was arrested March 19 as part of Operation Candyman, a

national FBI operation that left seven other Texas men and 81 others in jail. He pleaded not guilty before a Houston judge.

He was still in a jail in Houston Wednesday after being denied bond in a hearing earlier this week.

Johnston's personal com-

See **Plea** on page 2A

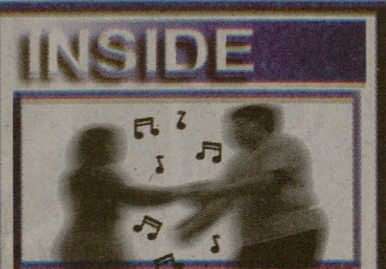
Student Body Elections

- Today is the last day to vote
- Vote online at vote.tamu.edu
- Vote on campus in the MSC, Evans, Blocker, the Commons and the Rec Center
- Polling locations are open from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Source: The Election Commission

CHAD MALLAM • THE BATTALION

Check www.thebatt.com for tonight's election results



AggieLife Pg. 3B

Swing, brother, swing

Aggie Wranglers take their talent to campus and beyond

WEATHER TODAY

HIGH 78° F
LOW 53° F

FRIDAY

HIGH 80° F
LOW 62° F

FORECASTS COURTESY OF www.collegeweather.com