

# THE BATTALION

Volume 109 • Issue 38 • 8 pages

www.thebatt.com

Tuesday, October 22, 2002

## Group to protest Chinese president's visit

**FALUN GONG PROTESTS JIANG'S VISIT**  
 Thursday, Oct. 17,  
 Presidential Conference  
 Center  
 9 a.m. - 10 a.m.  
 Falun Gong will meditate  
 and protest  
 11:15 a.m.  
 Chinese President, Jiang Zemin  
 will speak

MANDY ROUQUETTE • THE BATTALION

By Sarah Walch  
 THE BATTALION

Members of Falun Gong were on campus Monday handing out pamphlets to share their objections to the Chinese president's visit to the George Bush Presidential Library this week.

Falun Gong is a group of practitioners of healthy living and meditation who are typically dissenters of the Chinese government. Members based in Houston will protest with a meditation outside

the site of People's Republic of Chinese President Jiang Zemin's speech Thursday morning. The group has been barred from practicing in China since 1999.

Liang Lihua, a graduate international affairs major and an exchange student from Beijing, said she feels Falun Gong is a cult whose members set themselves on fire. Liang worked at a state-run television station in Beijing before coming to the United States.

"The government has banned them for a reason," she said.

Falun Gong activist Lilian Tee Chan of Houston said the Chinese government fabricates stories about what Falun Gong is and what it does.

"The police don't treat people right. People have the right to speak. They just shut you up," Chan said.

Chan pointed to several pictures in the magazine, *A Witness to History* which capture instances of violence against protesters and false representations of the group that the Chinese government propagates.

"We just want to get the truth out

there, for people to realize what's going on," Chan said.

Pamphlets and magazines Falun Gong members handed out include graphic pictures of the results of imprisonment and torture of members by the Chinese government.

Robert Nappi, a Falun Gong member from Washington, D.C., participated in a protest in Tiananmen Square recently and was confined in a room with 20 other protesters while being closely

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## Police question two men in sniper case

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Police trying to establish contact with the Washington-area sniper said Monday that a phone call had come in but was too muddled for authorities to understand. They pleaded with the person to call back.

"The person you called could not hear everything you said. The audio was unclear and we want to get it right. Call us back so that we can clearly understand," Montgomery County, Md., Police Chief Charles Moose said.

Moose said he could not discuss the message further.

Moose made no mention of a development in Richmond earlier Monday in which police seized two men for questioning in the attacks.

Hanover County Sheriff Stuart Cook said the men were taken into custody about 8:35 a.m. at or near an Exxon station in suburban Richmond.

"The two people we have in custody are being questioned as regards the sniper shootings," Cook said. "When we have further information that we can give to the public ... that we've concluded this case we'll do so, but that's not the case at hand."

He refused to describe the men as suspects in the string of

shootings that have left nine people dead and three wounded.

During an earlier news conference, Moose focused on establishing a dialogue with the unidentified person who left a message and phone number Saturday night near a Virginia steakhouse where the latest victim was shot.

On Sunday, he had publicly pleaded with the note writer to call authorities. On Monday, he said: "The message that needs to be delivered is that we are going to respond to a message that we have received. We are preparing our response at this time."

Moose did not specify whether the message was a new communication or the same one they discovered at the steakhouse. He refused to answer questions.

The nature of the message that investigators say was left at the Ashland shooting scene was not disclosed.

The flurry of activity raised hope there had been a break in the search for the sniper who has roaming Virginia, Maryland and Washington since Oct. 2.

Schools in Richmond and nearby counties were shut down Monday because of fears raised by the sniper's southward march.

## Down for the count



JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Senior manufacturing engineering technology major **Justin Beutley** (left) and sophomore mechanical engineering major **Samuel Robles** (right) go through a starting exercise Monday night at G. Rollie White. Both **Beutley** and **Robles** are members of the A&M wrestling team, whose season will start in mid-November.

## A&M considers branch campus in Arab state of Qatar



TRAVIS SWENSON • THE BATTALION

By Rob Phillips  
 THE BATTALION

Texas A&M is taking under advisement the creation of a branch campus in the Arab state of Qatar that would provide research, internship and degree programs for engineering students.

The program would give A&M students increased opportunities for study abroad programs and internships in the oil and gas industry, said Dr. Ronald Douglas, counselor to A&M President Dr. Robert M. Gates and former provost.

Research programs pertaining

mostly to oil and gas also would be offered to graduate and undergraduate students on both campuses, Douglas said.

Qatar is among the world's leaders in producers of natural gas. The Qatar Foundation, an institution supported by the nation's royal family, is seeking to establish a university consisting of branch colleges of American universities.

A&M has been targeted by the foundation because of its strong engineering program, Douglas said. The branch program would cost millions of dollars a year and would be funded entirely by the Qatar

Foundation, Douglas said.

Dr. David Prior, A&M's interim provost and executive vice president, said there are no commitments to the program. A&M officials are continuing to explore what the University's responsibilities and benefits would be before a contract is signed.

Douglas and several A&M officials visited Qatar University last June. The group met with Qatar branch colleges of Cornell University and Virginia Commonwealth.

"I was very much impressed by the vision shown by Qatar to create this world-class university and to be the educational center of the Middle East," Douglas said.

Once a contract is signed, a bridge program would be established to make certain the high school background and English-speaking capacity of Qatar students is satisfactory. A regular freshman class would begin in September 2004, Douglas said.

Qatar students would spend the summers of their sophomore and junior years at A&M, Douglas said.

Prior pointed out that globalization and diversity is one of the imperatives of A&M's Vision 2020, a plan to push A&M into the top 10 public universities by 2020.

"This (program) will certainly extend our outreach and relationships with another country," Prior said.

## Aerospace research project kicks off

By Brad Bennett  
 THE BATTALION

At the kick-off for the Texas Institute for Intelligent Bio Nano Materials and Structures for Aerospace Vehicles, also known as TiiMS, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison said new research conducted at Texas A&M will lead to better and more environmentally friendly aircraft and innovations with industrial applications.

"I am very proud today to see one more way we can be stronger," she said.

Hutchison, along with Texas A&M President Dr. Robert M. Gates, faculty from A&M, University of Houston, Rice University and two representatives from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), spoke at the kick-off in front of approximately 75 people.

"The work of this institute will slice deep into the unknown," Gates said.

TiiMS is a cooperative research project including A&M, Rice University, University of Houston, Prairie View A&M University, Texas Southern University and NASA.

"(TiiMS) is about developing technology solutions to address real vehicle systems in use," said Dr. Darrel V. Tenney, director of Aerospace Vehicle Systems Technology Office for the NASA Langley Research Center.

TiiMS research will focus on blending microscopic NANO systems, bio materials and multifunctional intelligent systems, such as aircraft bodies that change shape and sense problems.

Dr. Michael M. Reischman, special assistant for the Office of

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BRIAN RUFF • THE BATTALION

Dr. **Darrel V. Tenney**, director of the NASA Langley Research Center Aerospace Vehicle Systems Technology Office, speaks to other professionals and guests at the George Bush Presidential Library Monday.

## TWRI to fund A&M research, programs

By Eric Ambroso  
 THE BATTALION

The Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) at Texas A&M announced that it will fund 10 research projects and 13 extension programs dealing with soil and water conservation.

"The Texas Legislature gives Texas A&M around \$250,000 in order to fund these kinds of projects," said Ric Jenson, communications manager for the Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI). "Our institution works with individual researchers to support their studies."

TWRI has been located at A&M in the College of Agriculture since 1964. Each year the institute gives grants to A&M faculty members who want to research soil and water conservation.

TWRI announced the projects that will be funded from September 2002 to October 2003 and almost every one of these projects that will be given grants this year are new, Jenson said. The grants last for one year.

One study this year involves developing new kinds of cotton and soil that will use less water. If successful, the results could

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