

# THE BATTALION

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## Shots, fights end step show after-party early

By Sarah Walch  
THE BATTALION

Approximately 6,000 people created a disturbance on campus early Sunday, following an after-party at Reed Arena for the United States' largest-ever annual Greek Olympiad Step Show competition that ended an hour earlier than expected, College Station police said.

The step show ran from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. at G. Rollie White with an attendance of more than 7,000, organizer Ronnie Robinett said.

The capacity of G. Rollie White is 7,800.

A dance for attendees at Reed Arena immediately followed the step show and ended between 1 and 2 a.m., Robinett said.

University Police Director Bob Wiatt said it was an "unruly night," in which several cars around G. Rollie White were burglarized.

"I don't know that (the burglaries) were connected, but that is the area that (some attendees) were in," he said.

Wiatt said some of the 5,000-6,000 people inside Reed Arena for the dance were under the influence of marijuana and alcohol. He said several fights broke out on the dance floor.

The combination of drinking, drugs and fighting led to the decision to end the

party an hour early, he said, but UPD realized there were not enough officers to usher the several thousand attendees out.

"Some of them definitely didn't want to leave," Wiatt said.

UPD requested the assistance of the Brazos County Sheriff's Office and the College Station Police Department, calling for all available units.

CSPD sent all 23 officers on duty, said Sgt. Gary Vick.

Vick said that when he arrived at the Reed Arena parking lot, a crowd of several thousand was standing around the parking lot, and he heard shots being fired.

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### 2003 GREEK OLYMPIAD STEP SHOW COMPETITION

- Largest annual step show competition in the nation

- 7,000 people attended in 2003; 5,800 in 2002

- After-party at Reed Arena ended an hour early, prompting confrontations with police on and off campus

- CSPD made four arrests

TRAVIS SWENSON • THE BATTALION  
SOURCE: CSPD, UPD, RONNIE ROBINETT

## Public record access may be denied by bill

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — A bill filed this week would allow government agencies to withhold from the public information on anti-terrorism planning, possible targets and bomb-making details.

House Bill 1191, filed Friday by Rep. Ray Allen, R-Grand Prairie, is one of more than a dozen bills that would modify public access to government records and meetings. Other bills would make secret information about security at Texas ports, the names of people holding permits to carry concealed weapons, and private information about military veterans and people who apply for property tax exemptions.

Open government advocates expressed alarm over the number of bills that would limit public access.

"There are a lot of bills to close records this session," said Kathy Mitchell, research director for Consumers Union. "Many of them appear to be related to security, although many of them are broader than that."

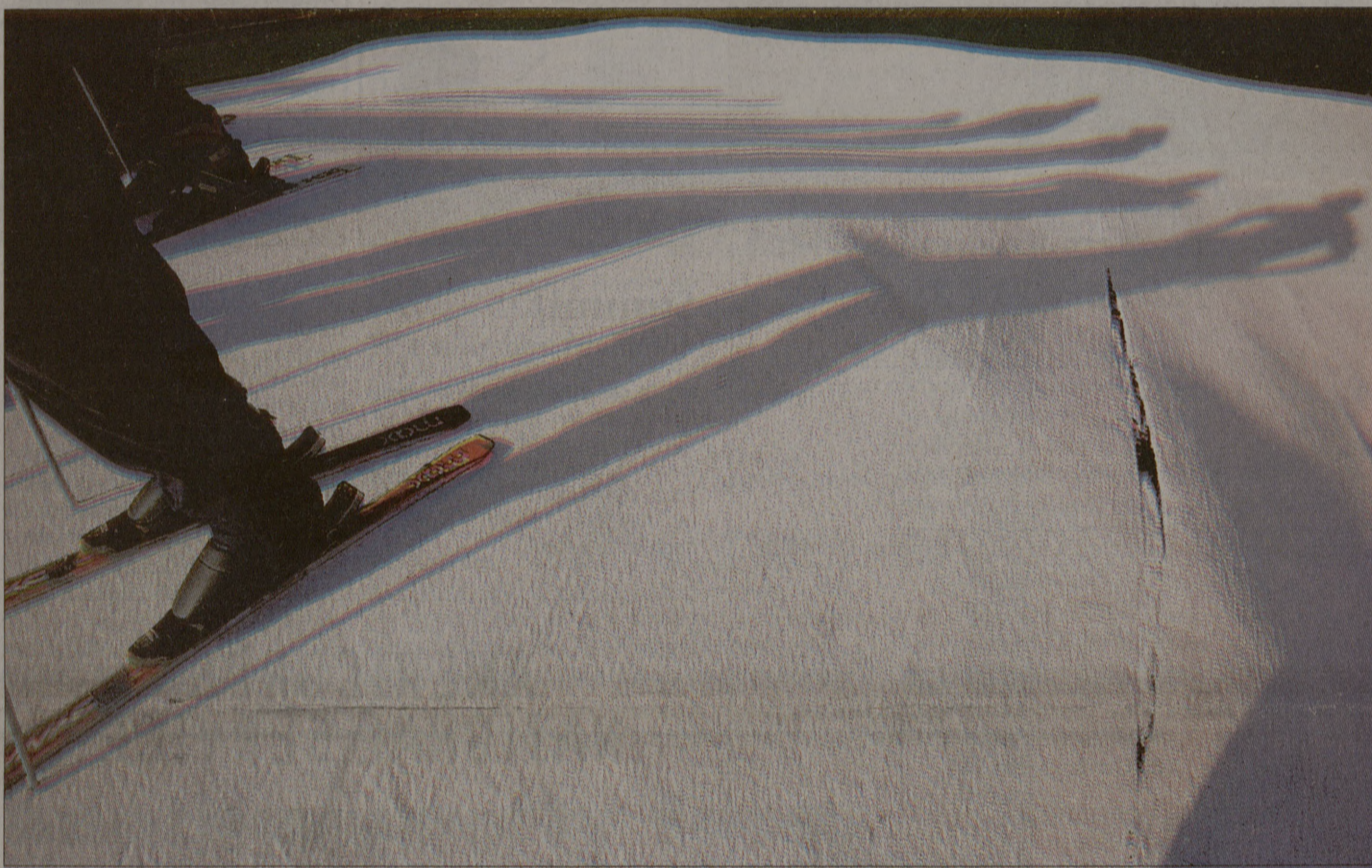
Other bills would increase access to government records, including one that would stop government agencies and officials from dragging their feet when responding to requests for public documents.

Allen's legislation seeks to close records that might be helpful to terrorists. It would make secret plans devised by police departments, fire departments and other emergency response agencies to investigate or react to terrorism or "related criminal activity."

A second confidential category would include reports in which government

See **Bill** on page 10

## Hitting the slopes



JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Students in the beginning snow skiing class take advantage of the favorable weather Sunday afternoon on top of Mt. Aggie at West Campus. Due to recent excessive rain, students were unable to practice for upcoming skills tests until Sunday.

## Actor Sean Astin announces 'Storm of 1900' project

By Sarah Walch  
THE BATTALION

The man who played Samwise Gamgee in the blockbuster trilogy "The Lord of the Rings" confirmed Saturday what fans devoted to British author J.R.R. Tolkien's definitive work have known for years: "Tolkien rocks!"

Actor and director Sean Astin said Tolkien's character development and epic storytelling is one-of-a-kind.

Astin was in College Station to introduce his short film, "The Long and Short of It" as part of the Texas Film Festival that was in town last week.

The film was shot on a Sunday during the filming of "The Lord of the Rings" in New Zealand. Astin teared up after receiving the film festival's Jury Award for his work on the project in collaboration with other actors from "The Lord of the Rings."

The screening of the short concluded the almost two-hour moderated discussion with an audience of about 200.

Astin responded candidly to questions about all things Middle-earth in the question and answer session following his commentary on films he acted in including "The Goonies," "Encino Man"



ASTIN

and "Rudy."

Astin is currently filming in Canada, but made a point to fit the trip to Texas into his busy schedule, he said.

"I made this trip on purpose, to announce a project I have been developing for two or three years," Astin said.

The film will be based on the 1900 Galveston hurricane, the "Storm of 1900," that killed 6,000 Galveston residents in the nation's deadliest national disaster. In 2000, novelist Erik Larson brought the legendary storm to life in "Isaac's Storm," a novel that focuses on meteorologist Isaac Monroe Cline, who may have failed to warn Galveston residents to leave town before

the hurricane hit. Astin said he has acquired the rights to the novel.

He said he will have a love story interwoven with actual historical events in the picture, similar to what James Cameron's "Titanic." The screenplay has already been acquired, he said.

"Any help you (the audience) can give me will be greatly appreciated," Astin said.

He said he intends to film the project entirely in Texas.

Astin serves as a civilian adviser to the Secretary of the Army, whom he visited with on Friday in Hawaii before flying to Texas.

See **Astin** on page 2

## Leaders at summit back calls for Iraq to disarm

By Jamie Tarabay  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — A summit of mostly developing nations backed strong calls Sunday for Iraq to disarm, while Malaysia, the host nation, warned that an invasion of Iraq would be seen as "a war against Muslims."

Preparations for the Non-Aligned Movement summit opening Monday have been dominated by the issues of Iraq and North Korea, both member countries.

Over the weekend, the 114-member group, which includes many U.S. allies as well as bitter foes, drafted a compromise statement on Iraq that urged Baghdad to "actively comply" with U.N. resolutions, but made clear its strong revulsion toward a U.S.-led war.

Delegates also were debating a separate statement on Israeli-Palestinian issues, and appeared likely to label Israel's seizure of Palestinian lands as

a war crime, Palestinian delegates said.

Since the 1967 Middle East War, non-aligned nations have regularly condemned Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory. But the current meeting appeared set to go further by endorsing stronger measures against the Jewish state, the Palestinian delegation said.

Heads of state were arriving Sunday and were to approve separate declarations during their two-day summit ending Tuesday.

Non-aligned nations represent the 55 percent of the world's population and hold nearly two-thirds of the U.N. General Assembly seats. Six are members of the 15-seat Security Council, where the United States and Britain need a nine-vote majority to pass a resolution authorizing an attack on Iraq.

Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad denounced U.S.-led preparations for an assault on Iraq,

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## Officials urge countries to side with U.S.

By Dafna Linzer  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

UNITED NATIONS — Senior U.S. officials have been quietly dispatched in recent days to the capitals of key Security Council countries where they are warning leaders to vote with the United States on Iraq or risk "paying a heavy price."

For some of the countries, such as Angola, Guinea and Cameroon — poor African nations whose concerns drew little attention before they landed seats on the council — there is the possibility that supporting Washington's drive for a new U.N. resolution authorizing war may reap benefits down the line.

"For a long time now, we have been asking for help to rebuild our country after years of war," said Angolan Ambassador Ismael Gaspar Martins. "No one is tying the request to support on Iraq but it is all happening at the same time."

Angola's president, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, met in the capital, Luanda, Thursday with Assistant Secretary of State Walter Kansteiner, who was

diverted from a trip to South Africa to meet with the leaders of the council's three African nations.

"In Africa, the message is simple: time is running out and we think they should support us," said one U.S. diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

**"In Africa, the message is simple: time is running out and we think they should support us."**

— U.S. Diplomat

The United States and Britain plan to submit their resolution to the Security Council this week and will ask for a vote by the middle of March — when weather conditions in Iraq will still be favorable for a military campaign.

In the meantime, the State Department has sent some of its top people to the world's capitals to

lobby for support even as President George W. Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell and British Prime Minister Tony Blair work the phones. The Bush administration has also recruited the leaders of Australia and Spain to help push for votes.

"The order from the White House was to use all diplomatic means necessary," another U.S. diplomat said. "And that really means everything."

The wording of the order is a twist on "all means necessary," — the diplomatic terminology that authorizes going to war.

In the past three weeks, the administration has sent Undersecretary of State Marc Grossman and Kim Holmes, the assistant secretary of state for international organizations to Mexico City.

Mexican diplomats described the visits as hostile in tone and complained that Washington was demonstrating little concern for the constraints of the Mexican government whose people are overwhelmingly opposed to a war with Iraq.

"They actually told us: any country

See **Iraq** on page 2