

# THE BATTALION

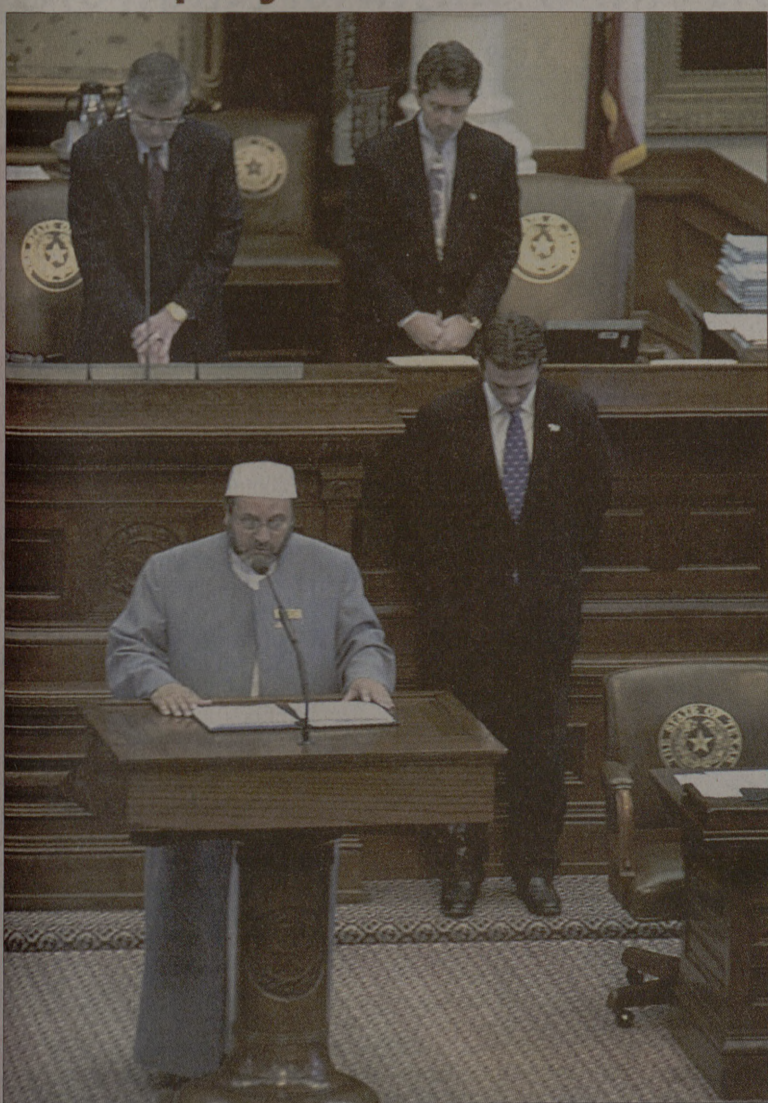
Volume 109 • Issue 114 • 10 pages

Texas A&M University

www.thebatt.com

Wednesday, March 19, 2003

## A new prayer



Members of the Texas State House of Representatives bow their heads during the opening prayer Tuesday morning by Imam Bikhshah of the Fort. Worth Islamic Association. This is the first time a Muslim has said the opening prayer during the Legislative Session.

## Yell leaders may face sanctions

By Rolando Garcia  
THE BATTALION

In addition to University investigation into allegations of hazing in Parsons Mounted Cavalry, three yell leader candidates who are members of the Corps of Cadets unit are staying tight-lipped on whether they could face disciplinary sanctions.

About half of the cavalry unit, some 30 cadets, will be brought individually before a Student Life disciplinary panel and could receive penalties ranging from a warning to expulsion from the University. Junior yell leader Jonathan Lusk and Corps yell nominees John Magruder and Paul Terrell are members of the unit.

The cavalry investigation is separate from a hazing investigation involving the yell leaders, said Dr. Dave Parrott, dean of Student Life. Parrott declined to discuss the specifics of the allegations and whether they implicated all five yell leaders, but said his department began an investigation the week before spring break after yell leader adviser Rusty Thompson forwarded hazing allegations to Student Life.

The fact-finding phase of the investigation is complete, Parrott said, and a Student Life disciplinary panel will conduct a hearing for each of the yell leaders involved and decide whether to hand down sanctions.

An inquiry into the Parsons Cavalry case concluded that juniors had been hazing sophomores by hitting them with axe handles and forcing them to perform exercises in a pit of urine and

horse manure, said Corps Commandant Lt. Gen. John Van Alstyne.

Magruder declined to comment on the investigation, but said he hoped that suspicions of wrongdoing would not erode students' trust in him.

"The Corps put me in this position because they think I'm a good leader," said Magruder, a junior English major. Lusk and Terrell could not be reached for comment.

The operations of the cavalry unit have been suspended since October. Van Alstyne said he would personally interview every member of the unit to decide whether they would remain in the cavalry, and would then determine whether the organization would be allowed to continue.

The student body elections are March 26-27.

## Candidates tout SBP platforms

By Nicole M. Jones  
THE BATTALION

Candidates for student body president touted their platforms and campaign promises to students at a forum Monday evening.

The forum, sponsored by the Residence Hall Association and held in the Sbis quiet room, gave candidates campaigning for student body president, yell leader and class council positions the opportunity to introduce themselves to the student body.

However, most of the students present were cam-

campaign volunteers sporting their candidate's garb.

Karl Pfluger, a senior political science major, said he is running for student body president because he wants "to give back to the school that has given (him) so many incredible opportunities." Having had A&M students in his family since 1920, Pfluger said he is "proud of the present, and focused on the future."

Luke Cheatham, a senior civil engineering major, has lived on campus for three years and is presently a resident adviser in Walton Hall.

Cheatham said he

would be a tireless advocate for students.

"I know what you guys want, but I know what our problems are too," Cheatham said.

Stoney Burke, a senior international studies major, said his campaign focuses on what it means to be an Aggie, what it means to be a student and what it means to be a part of the community. If elected, Burke said, he plans to implement cheaper and more convenient parking for students and healthier dining options on campus.

Kyle Carlton, a junior business finance major,

said his campaign is about service and family, and he wants to avoid focusing on power. A key element of Carlton's platform is a campus calendar that would display the events of all student organizations on campus. This calendar would include a column in which the student body president and the MSC council president can voice their opinions.

Ed "El Ramos" Brown, a senior economics major, highlighted his outsider status, blasting student government leaders for being

See Forum on page 2

## Troops prepare for combat in Iraq

By David Espo  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD, Iraq — In an edgy prelude to war, Saddam Hussein mocked an American ultimatum Tuesday to surrender power, and the Bush administration claimed public support from 30 nations for its international coalition supporting Iraq's disarmament.

The streets of Baghdad captured the moment — panic buying by residents bracing for a fearsome U.S.-led attack, side by side with a government-prompted, mass demonstration in support of Saddam.

"This war, in short, is tantamount to genocide," charged Mohammed AlDouri, Iraq's ambassador to the United Nations, in one of a string of insults the Iraqi high command hurled at Bush.

It was a daylong act of defiance in the face of an invasion force of more than 250,000 troops ringing Iraq, a nation of more than 23

million that Saddam has ruled brutally for nearly a quarter century.

One day after President Bush set his deadline of 8 p.m. EST on Wednesday, troops in the Kuwaiti desert loaded their ammunition and combat gear into fighting vehicles, ready to invade on short notice.

"I think I'd probably have a better chance of being elected pope than we have of Mr. Saddam Hussein leaving the country," Capt. Thomas A. Parker said aboard the USS Kitty Hawk — an aircraft carrier preparing to take on a supply of 1,000-pound, satellite-guided bombs from a nearby munitions ship. "So this is probably going to follow to its logical conclusion."

As the hours dwindled toward Bush's deadline, the White House worked to keep Saddam guessing.

Presidential spokesman Ari Fleischer would not rule out a U.S. attack before Bush's 48-hour clock ran out. "Saddam Hussein has to figure out what this means," he said.

One official, speaking on strict condition of anonymity, said Bush was leaving the door open in case Saddam makes a pre-emptive attack or U.S. intelligence warns that one is likely.

Underscoring what Bush said on Monday night, Fleischer said U.S. troops would enter Iraq, either as an invading force or as part of an unannounced effort to locate weapons of mass destruction.

At the same time the administration prepared for an invasion, it announced a series of steps at home to protect against terrorist attacks.

"We know that our interests have been attacked abroad. And we should prepare for potential attacks, either here or abroad at this time," said Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge.

The plan, dubbed "Operation Liberty Shield," heightens security at the nation's borders, airports, seaports and railways, at

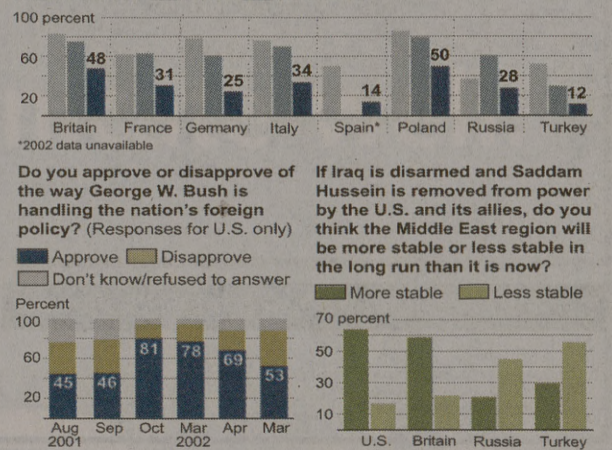
See Iraq on page 2

### POLL

#### Foreign opinions of the United States

Many countries have an unfavorable opinion of the United States, according to a recent poll. In addition, fewer Americans approve President Bush's handling on foreign policy.

Favorable opinion of the United States  
1999-2000 2002 March 2003



NOTE: The poll is based on interviews with 5,520 people in nine nations from March 10-17 with a margin of error varying from 3.5 to 5 percentage points.

SOURCE: Pew Research Center for the People and the Press

AP

## Kyle Carlton: Campaign stresses service projects, unity

By Rolando Garcia  
THE BATTALION

Service, Kyle Carlton said, is a centerpiece of his campaign for student body president.

In the student senate, Carlton helped formulate the Texas Aggies Building Spirit (TABS) proposal, a fall program based on service projects. Carlton said the eventual implementation of TABS is one of his top priorities. Students would be involved in designing and building projects across the state in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, and the leftover wood from the buildings could be used to make a scrap fire, he said.

"It's about coming together to make a difference, and building bonds through service," said Carlton, a junior finance major. "We can take a horrible tragedy and turn it into something positive."

Texas A&M President Robert M. Gates has said Bonfire would remain on hiatus until litigation is resolved.

Carlton said he would oppose efforts by Unity Project to hold an off-campus bonfire this fall.

"(An off-campus bonfire) only serves to divide the Aggie family," he said.

The camaraderie and unity inspired by the TABS service project would also create a more welcoming and diverse environment on campus, Carlton said. Although he opposes using race as a factor in admissions or financial aid, Carlton said he supports efforts to target more private scholarship money to minorities and working with black and Hispanic student groups to recruit more minority students.

Carlton said he would encourage involvement in campus activities by publishing a weekly calendar of events. Students are often unaware of

the events and functions put on by student groups, leaving many events underattended, Carlton said.

"(An events calendar) would enable Aggies to support other Aggies," Carlton said.

Carlton said he supported the student fee increases that were voted down by students in the fee referendum in February. If students had known more about what the fee hikes would be spent on, they would have voted for the increases, Carlton said.

Carlton said he is open to supporting some forms of tuition deregulation, but would oppose giving the A&M University System Board of Regents unrestricted authority to set tuition rates.

Student government is most effective when it works closely with University administration, Carlton said.

"Regents and administrators will listen to students if you present a good case," Carlton said.

### STUDENT BODY ELECTIONS 2003

This is the second of three installments featuring two of the six candidates for student body president. The profiles are based on candidate interviews with The Battalion editorial board.

By Rob Phillips  
THE BATTALION

If elected Texas A&M student body president, former Student Government Association vice president for campus relations Stoney Burke said he will "actively represent the Aggie student community" by setting attainable goals for strengthening the University now, not later.

Burke, a senior international studies major, said he wants to increase student involvement on campus by placing more emphasis on extracurricular activities, establishing online message boards within student government and educating students about campus issues such as new fees and parking changes.

"(Getting students more involved) is something that's a cliché that you'll hear every year, but you never can have enough involvement," Burke said.

## Stoney Burke: Advocate of campus relations, involvement



Burke said he voted in favor of all three fee increases in the February fee referendum, but said there is a difference between voting simply for personal reasons and making decisions that affect the entire student body.

"If I'm sitting at the chair of the Student Fee Advisory Board, I have to look at that and be like, 'How is this going to affect students,' and I have to get adequate feedback on that," he said.

A&M needs a more welcoming and diverse environment, Burke said.

"Every single student at this University pays the exact same amount of tuition and fees, but we don't all receive the exact same amount of respect," Burke said.

grams that provide academic extra credit for students who participate.

"Some of them may be just thinking about academic extra credit, but once they're in that room they could learn so much," he said.

Burke said he will focus on returning the burning of Bonfire to campus in some shape or form and building it up from there.

"We have to start small and I think the administration has shown that the burning can be feasible and we can start small with that burning and build up," he said. "And how that burning takes place, whether or not that's through a service project, that seems to be possible in the works."

As SBP, Burke said, he would not support the Unity Project off-campus bonfire, saying it impedes the efforts to bring Bonfire back to campus.