

THE BATTALION

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ALISSA HOLLIMON • THE BATTALION

Demonstrators hold up signs of at the pro-peace protest at the George Bush Presidential

Library Complex Thursday night. More than 100 protesters gathered.

Protesters gather at Bush Library

By Melissa Fowler
THE BATTALION

"All we are saying is give peace a chance," sang protesters participating in a candlelight vigil Thursday night at the George Bush Presidential Library Complex.

More than 100 protesters gathered at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship on Wellborn Road and walked to the Bush Library holding signs and singing antiwar sentiments.

Robel Tekleab, a senior philosophy major and one of the organizers of the vigil, said the protesters encountered mixed reactions from drivers during their walk to the vigil.

Even though the war has already started, Tekleab said, he helped organize the vigil because the principles he believes in remain true. "We believe war is unnecessary and unjustified," he said. "We detest war."

The vigil organizers submitted a request to the Department of Student Activities Concession Committee to obtain permission to hold the vigil at the fountain in front of the Bush Library, but the request was denied.

Their application was returned with the instructions that their "planned activity be restricted to a designated area just west of the parking lot" at the Bush Library.

Even with these instructions, the demonstrators gathered around the fountain and held their vigil.

Lt. Bill Zitkus of the University Police Department was on site to oversee the vigil and allowed the protesters to stay in the area around the fountain.

"It's a public area and they aren't offending or assaulting anybody," he said.

UPD officers were there, Zitkus said, mostly as a safety issue to make sure no one interferes with the protesters' rights.

The Rev. Danita Noland from the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship said the vigil was held out of concern for the people in Iraq and to send a message of peace to our government.

"With heavy hearts we have gathered as people who love our country and all it stands for."

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ALISSA HOLLIMON • THE BATTALION

Protesters stand in front of the fountain at the George Bush Library Thursday night.

Ground war begins

Allied forces begin ground attack

By David Espo
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

American and British combat units rumbled across the desert into Iraq on Thursday and bombed limited targets in Baghdad. But military commanders withheld the massive onslaught that would signal all-out war as U.S. officials tried to talk the Iraqi regime into giving up.

Coalition forces suffered their first casualties in a helicopter crash that left 12 Britons and four Americans dead.

"The days of the Saddam Hussein regime are numbered," Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld predicted, although he also said there was "no need for a broader conflict" if Iraqi leaders surrender.

On the second day of Operation Iraqi Freedom, American officials held out the tantalizing possibility that Saddam had been killed in the initial Wednesday night bombing of Baghdad.

State-run Iraqi television said Saddam survived, and met with his top aides to counter the U.S.-

led attack. "We are resolved to teach the criminal invaders hard lessons and make them taste painful punishment," declared the Iraqi military.

Intelligence analysts tried to determine whether a man in military garb shown on state-run television was the Iraqi leader or a double. U.S. intelligence believes Saddam and possibly two of his sons were present inside a suburban Baghdad compound when it was struck and that medical attention was summoned after-

ward. There was no definitive word whether Saddam was caught in the pre-dawn attack.

The onset of war sparked anti-war demonstrations across the country — more than 1,000 were arrested in San Francisco — and at U.S. embassies around the world. The State Department warned U.S. citizens abroad of an increased danger of terrorism.

Rumsfeld hinted that talks with Iraqi military elements,

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ABD RABBO AMMAR • KRT CAMPUS

Smoke from an explosion appears over the Iraqi capital of Baghdad in the first hour of the war on Thursday.

University police increase security

By Rolando Garcia
THE BATTALION

With the ground war in Iraq underway and the national terror warning elevated to orange, the second highest level, local law enforcement remains on heightened alert and is urging residents to report any suspicious activity.

University Police Department Director Bob Wiatt said he has increased foot and vehicle patrols around potential targets on campus, such as the George Bush Presidential Library Center. For security reasons, he declined to discuss other vulnerable locations.

"There has been no threat against the University or the community, but we are still taking all precautions. We'll be out there and visible, and that's all we can do," Wiatt said. "Until you get a specific rumor, you just have to go about your business and be alert."

Police are also counting on residents to report

suspicious activity immediately, Wiatt said.

UPD is in contact with the FBI and will be alerted immediately of any rumors or intelligence reports that suggest the University or the Bryan-College Station community may be the target of a terrorist attack, Wiatt said.

UPD will continue patrols from its office at the University Apartments, where many international students live.

College Station Police Department spokesman Lt. Rodney Sigler said police are maintaining vigilance and keeping an eye on infrastructure that could be potential targets, such as utilities and water systems.

Should the national terror alert to be raised to red, indicating an attack could be imminent, UPD will continue its heightened patrols unless there is a threat against the University, Wiatt said. However, he said, it is likely that the Bush Library would be closed along with other federal buildings.

Student dies in car accident

By Brad Bennett
THE BATTALION

Adam Keith Knott, 23, was killed Thursday on his way to school when his motorcycle struck a turning pickup truck.

Knott, a junior engineering technology major from Athens, Texas, went to bed early Wednesday night so he could spend the next morning working on a paper for class.

Knott was riding northbound on Texas Avenue. At approximately 8:40 a.m., he hit a trailer being pulled by a Chevy S-10 pickup while it was turning right onto Brentwood Drive, according to a College Station Police Department press release.

Knott died at the College Station

Medical Center, where he was transported moments after the crash.

Knott's mother, Virginia Knott, said her son had taken a class to learn how to ride a motorcycle after buying his first motorcycle more than a year ago.

Virginia Knott said her son usually wore one of his three helmets while riding his motorcycle but was not wearing one at the time of the accident.

It is not known whether wearing a helmet would have saved Knott, said Lt. Rodney Sigler, public information officer for CSPD.

Virginia Knott said Adam had left his favorite helmet at a friend's house, and he didn't like his spare helmets as much as that one.

"He was a wonderful son and always did the right thing except this

once not wearing his helmet," said Virginia Knott, who encourages motorcycle riders to wear helmets at all times. "People think they are invincible. On our way home from the hospital we saw a grown man riding a motorcycle without a helmet."

State law requires motorcycle riders to wear helmets, but the law can be negated by loopholes, Sigler said.

"There is a law to wear a helmet but it allows riders to not wear helmets if they carry certain types of insurance," Sigler said.

It is unknown whether Adam Knott carried such insurance.

Virginia Knott said Adam loved sports and was especially good at golf, both frisbee and traditional, but he

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Tornadoes ravage Georgia

By Elliot Minor
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CAMILLA, Ga. — Tornadoes that one official likened to "a big lawnmower" swept across two counties in southwestern Georgia before dawn Thursday, killing six people and injuring more than 200. One of the hardest-hit areas had been flattened by another tornado less than 3 1/2 years ago.

A man and his mother were killed near Bridgeboro, a rural community in southern Worth County, said Sheriff Freddie Tompkins, who declined to release the names.

Four others, including an infant and an 8-year-old boy, were killed in Mitchell County, said Jennifer Collins, spokeswoman with Georgia Emergency

Management Agency.

Including those with relatively minor injuries, more than 200 people were injured in Mitchell County alone, Collins said. Officials estimated 50 to 75 homes were destroyed, and 75 were damaged.

Funnel clouds formed between 5:30 and 6 a.m., and there were one or two fully formed tornadoes, said meteorologist Paul Duval of the National Weather Service in Tallahassee, Fla.

In Worth County, the tornado cut a streak about 10 miles long and up to 300 yards wide, Tompkins said.

"I was up in a helicopter this morning," Tompkins said. "It looked like a big lawnmower went through there."

About seven to nine homes were damaged, and three mobile homes were

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Whoopstock celebrates tenth anniversary

By Bernhard Hall
THE BATTALION

Whoopstock will celebrate its 10th anniversary Saturday, continuing the tradition that started in 1993 as a festival of unity to oppose a Klu Klux Klan rally.

This year's festival will be held on O.R. Simpson Drill Field and will feature a variety of bands, dancers and ethnic cuisines.

The festival hopes to become an important tradition at Texas A&M, said Dr. Marisa Suhm, adviser for the Whoopstock event.

"We want to grow, come into our own," she said. "We want to establish ourselves as a tradition

at A&M."

The first Whoopstock was organized in only two weeks and featured four bands and seven student performances, with approximately 400 students attending.

During the next several years, the event grew larger as the interest level rose from the community, said Megan Palsa, assistant director of Multicultural Services.

"I definitely think the event has grown," she said. "Whoopstock brings about an awareness of our community."

Director of Multicultural Services Dr. Felicia Scott said she hopes Whoopstock will establish an understanding of other cultures.

"More participation from the local commu-

nity creates an awareness," she said.

Scott said she remembers the circumstances that resulted in the first Whoopstock and marvels at its continued success.

"The biggest impact is that it continues to happen without an event to react to," Scott said.

Whoopstock attendance has grown the past few years. For the past two years, attendance has grown to more than 2,000 people.

Suhm said she hopes the event will attract another crowd of between 2,000 and 3,000 people.

Organizers said they do not expect the

Whoopstock Unity Festival 2003

When: March 22, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Where: Simpson Drill Field

- 10th anniversary

- Features a variety of bands, dancers and ethnic cuisine

TRAVIS SWENSON • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: MULTICULTURAL SERVICES

current war with Iraq to cause people to stay home, but it may bring more people out.

"I don't think (the war) will affect turnout," Suhm said. "Just because we are at war doesn't mean we can't be united."

Caesar

NOTHING BUT MUSIC FESTIVAL

Tuesday's Anthem

pretty impressed and agreed to be on the album, which took just two days to record. Norwood said that although Leyton and Shannon will not be appearing at the fes-