

THE BATTALION

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Texas A&M University

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One Spirit, One Vision Progress Report:

	GOAL	PROGRESS TO DATE
College of Agriculture	\$140 million	\$35.6 million
Corps of Cadets	\$35 million	\$10.6 million
College of Engineering	\$210 million	\$89.5 million
College of Liberal Arts	\$35 million	\$16.5 million
12th Man Foundation	\$100 million	\$80.2 million

RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: TEXAS A&M FOUNDATION

Nye: Campaign will reach goal

By Brad Bennett
THE BATTALION

Despite an economic slowdown, Texas A&M Regent Erle Nye said Friday that the One Spirit, One Vision fundraising campaign will reach its \$1 billion goal. "People give because they care," Nye said. "It is easier to raise money in boom times. But

I've found people don't quit giving when the economy is struggling."

More than 700 donors were given the opportunity to ask questions and air concerns during a special Board of Regents meeting at The Zone in Kyle Field Friday afternoon to kickoff the public phase of One Spirit, One Vision.

A&M President Robert M. Gates said the campaign, now in its third year, has raised \$511 million in gifts and pledges as of March 2003.

Gates and Robert Harvey, Class of 1977, and vice chair of the campaign, answered questions from donors who wanted to know how the money would benefit students.

"The first priority established by this campaign is to increase the number of faculty," Gates said.

Gates said A&M has fewer tenured professors

See **Campaign** on page 2

Veterans urge troop support

By Rolando Garcia
THE BATTALION

Americans must present a united front in support of the conflict with Iraq because anti-war demonstrations can slowly erode soldiers' morale, a Vietnam war veteran told students and community members gathered for a pro-war rally Sunday.

"There's a time to protest, but when the shooting starts, we all need to support the troops," said Mike Southerland, a Bryan businessman and Vietnam veteran.

About 50 people gathered at the Academic Plaza at a rally organized by the Texas A&M chapter of the Young Conservatives of Texas to show their support for American forces in Iraq.

The right to demonstrate against the war should not excuse Americans from their obligation to support forces in the field, Southerland said.

"For 30 years, nobody ever publicly thanked me for my service," Southerland said. "And there was always a question in my mind as to

whether we did the right thing."

Vocal anti-war protests not only degrade soldiers' morale on the frontlines, but feelings of doubt can linger long after the fighting has stopped, Southerland said.

"It's always in the back of your mind, what are we doing here?" Southerland said. "It may not come to fruition then, but it does affect you."

Richard Stadelmann, a philosophy professor at A&M, also addressed the rally and defended the decision to invade Iraq against critics who claim it is an unwarranted act of aggression.

The war, Stadelmann said, is the final phase of an effort to disarm Saddam Hussein that began with the Persian Gulf war ceasefire agreement. If Iraq is allowed to continue stockpiling weapons of mass destruction, those weapons will likely fall into the hands of terrorists, Stadelmann said.

See **Rally** on page 6

Primping the pooch



RANDAL FORD • THE BATTALION

Dog shower **Besty Keith** performs final touches on her English Springer Spaniel, **Carson** before the Springer Spaniel contest at the Brazos Valley Kennel Club dog competition at the pavilion

off of Highway 6 and Tabor Road. The Brazos Valley Kennel club competition was host to more than 50 breeds competing this past Saturday and Sunday.

for Baghdad

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... owned an Army Apache ... U.S. drone aircraft, but ... officials confirmed only ... of a reconnaissance ... they said footage of a ... Apache shown on Iraqi ... television was of an ... that was lost during fight ... day. After curtailing ... because of to blinding ... and thunderstorms, ... anes intensified their ... Thursday as the weather ... They flew more than ... missions across Iraq, ... al focus on Republican ... res ringing Baghdad, ... aid.

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Big Event 2003

- 6,500 students participated
- Completed 700 jobs
- Jobs included painting houses and cleaning yards in the Bryan-College Station area



SOURCE: BIG EVENT COMMITTEE

TRAVIS SWENSON • THE BATTALION

6,500 students fill Big Event kickoff

By Lauren Smith
THE BATTALION

For students in the Sports for Kids organization, the volunteer service job they completed as part of Big Event was a perfect fit for the mission of their organization.

"Our mission in Sports for Kids is to give underprivileged children the opportunity to participate in sports," said Jenny Baker, an executive director of Sports for Kids. "Our job on Saturday was to paint Bryan's Boys and Girls Club, a facility that SPK members visit every Friday to play or read to the children there."

Picking out the colors that would cover the walls of the facility was no easy task, Baker said.

"We hand-picked the colors because we wanted those kids from often bro-

ken homes to have a bright, happy place to come to," she said. "Many of the children spend more time here than they do at home, which sometimes is a very good thing."

The children of the Boys and Girls Club will provide the finishing touches to the SPK members' five-hour paint job by painting stenciled hand prints throughout the room.

Although Saturday brought cold winds, 6,500 students still huddled together on O.R. Simpson Drill field for the 8 a.m. kickoff of the campus-wide service project, Big Event.

"Through interacting with the kids while we were working and seeing their faces as the play room transformed, getting up at 7 and losing a Saturday definitely did not seem important anymore," Baker said.

See **Event** on page 2

Iraqi Shiites flee, await Saddam's fall

By Mark Fritz
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Thousands of Iraqi Shiites who fled into Iran to escape repression by Saddam Hussein are poised to return home if the dictator is dethroned, with some bringing extra baggage: strong anti-American sentiment.

Paramilitary units of Iraqi expatriates are already posted in their home country, and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld warned last week that they will be considered just another U.S. enemy if they enter the fray.

The Iran-based guerrillas, called the Badr Corps, have openly deployed in the Kurdish territories of northern Iraq and have been crossing back and forth into southern Iraq since 1980, when Iran and Iraq began an eight-year war.

Abu Islam, spokesman of the Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution in Iraq,

denied that Iran-based forces have entered Iraq since the current war began, but said Badr guerrillas are based throughout that country. Some are even officers in Iraq's regular army, he said Sunday.

Iranian government spokesman Abdollah Ramezanzadeh was quoted by the official IRNA news agency as saying, "Tehran does not allow any military activities on its (Iraq) border in favor or against any of the belligerent parties."

The Badr Corps' numbers swelled in 1991, when Saddam crushed a Shiite uprising in southern Iraq in the wake of the Persian Gulf War. The group claims to have 10,000 fighters and has said for years that it has spread guerrillas throughout Iraq in anticipation of a revolution.

Unlike the two million Afghan refugees in Iran, where life is vastly better than in their bombed-out country, the roughly 200,000 Iraqi expatriates seem eager to return to their homeland post-Saddam.

"The Iraqi refugees overwhelmingly say if Saddam Hussein falls, they will go back immediately," said Bruno Jochum, head of the Doctors Without Borders humanitarian mission in Iraq. "On the one side, they will be pretty happy to see the current regime fall but they are absolutely against any American administration."

Apparently worried that the Shiite rulers of Iran are seeking to extend their influence in Iraq, where a majority of people are Shiites, Rumsfeld warned Tehran on Friday to stay out of the war.

He said any combatants entering Iraq not under U.S. control "will be taken as a potential threat to coalition forces. This includes the Badr Corps, the military wing of the Supreme Council on Islamic Revolution in Iraq."

The Supreme Council — the biggest Iraqi opposition group — is based in Tehran and

See **Shiites** on page 2

Iraq gives \$34,000 to suicide bomber's family

By Hamza Hendawi
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Iraq gave \$34,000 to the family of an Iraqi army officer who killed four U.S. soldiers in a suicide attack, and the leader of the militant group Islamic Jihad said Sunday its volunteers had gone to Baghdad for similar bombing missions against the "American invasion."

Ali Jaafar al-Noamani, a non-commissioned officer with several children, was posthumously promoted to colonel and awarded two medals for the attack in Najaf that killed the unidentified Americans, Iraqi state television reported.

His family reportedly was given a fortune by Iraqi standards: 100 million dinars, the equivalent of \$34,000.

In the Israeli coastal town of Netanya on Sunday, an Islamic militant blew himself up in a

crowded pedestrian mall, wounding 30 bystanders in what Islamic Jihad called "a gift to the heroic Iraqi people."

Ramadan Shallah, Islamic Jihad's leader in Damascus, Syria, also said the group already had "martyrdom seekers" in Iraq.

"This is fulfillment of the call of sacred duty ... an opportunity for Jihad and martyrdom is available now for the Islamic nation," he said.

"We say to all sons of Jihad and supporters, to our nation, our people, wherever they are, that whoever is able to march and reach Iraq, Baghdad, Najaf and blow himself up in this American invasion. ... This is the climax of Jihad and climax of martyrdom."

Shallah urged "the entire (Islamic) nation, including the Jihad and resistance in Palestine, if they were able to get there, to fight side by side with the Iraqi people against this butcher Bush."

Iraqi Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan indicated Saturday's attack in Najaf was "just the beginning" and even raised the specter of terrorism on

U.S. or British soil. "We will use any means to kill our enemy in

See **Bomber** on page 6



KTR CAMPUS

Iraqi civilians survey the damage to a market in Baghdad, Iraq, March 29. Iraqis said an air raid on a Baghdad market on Friday evening killed dozens of civilians.