

# THE BATTALION

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## CORPS RETENTION RATE

Last year, the percentage of freshmen staying in the Corps was at its lowest point in five years.

Year	Number of freshmen cadets on first class day	Number of freshmen cadets at Final Review	Percentage remaining after first year
1998	776	571	73.5%
1999	564	418	74.2%
2000	668	516	77.2%
2001	665	488	73.4%
2002	710	508	71.5%

RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION  
SOURCE • OFFICE OF THE COMMANDANT

## Corps to emphasize academics

By Dan Orth  
THE BATTALION

Last year, the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets' freshman retention rate was at a five-year low, with only 71.5 percent of freshmen who began the year making it to Final Review in May.

The overall goal is to retain 90 percent of freshmen entering the Corps, said Col. Shady Groves, assistant commandant. This percentage will not be met this year, he said, because 68 cadets have already resigned.

The Corps is putting a new program into action this year to focus on academics in an attempt to

improve the low freshman retention rates.

The retention rate for freshmen cadets has dropped over the last two years from 77 percent in 2000-01 to 73 percent in 2001-02 to last year's low of 71.5 percent.

The Corps' goal is to reach a total of 2,600 cadets, including 900 freshmen, according to the Corps recruiting Web site.

Of the 710 freshmen who joined the Corps last year, 202 dropped out throughout the course of the year. These numbers fall short of the Corps' goal of beginning each year with 900 freshmen.

Lt. General John Van Alstyne, beginning his first full year as Commandant of Cadets, has

directed a change emphasizing academics, more positive leadership and improving qualities in the individual cadet.

Groves said the two main factors attributed to why students drop out are concerns about grades and cadets being unprepared for the structured lifestyle of the Corps.

Groves said he believes grade improvement will aid cadet retention.

Justin Woods, a senior cadet and Corps public relations officer, said he has noticed a change as the focus has moved more towards academics and a higher grade point ratio requirement for people in leadership positions.

Sophomore cadet Derek Rosson said the Corps has been encouraging more active participation in extracurricular activities and academics.

"Last year when I was a freshman, academics and getting involved on campus were not stressed as much," Rosson said.

Another change initiated this year is easing the freshmen into Corps life by postponing training until the second week of school, allowing them more time to acclimate to college.

Numbers for female cadet retention have only been on record since last year, but show lower rates than overall cadet retention at only 61 percent.

## Faculty increase to aid Vision 2020

By Jenna Jones  
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M will take a step toward achieving top-10 public university status with the hiring of 447 new faculty members over the next five years, said University President Robert M. Gates.

"The goal of this plan is not to continue the growth of the student body but to reduce class size and enhance the learning experience for the student," said Dr. G. Kemble Bennett, dean of the College of Engineering. "This is the most exciting step forward I have witnessed in my 18 years at A&M."

The faculty reinvestment initiative will increase the A&M's faculty by 25 percent.

"(This) is as big of a step as one can take because it is a very unusual move for a university to increase faculty size by 25 percent," said Dean H. Joseph Newton of the College of Science.

The decisions of where to distribute the planned faculty hires

### Proposed Faculty Increases

Gates plans to add faculty to colleges and academic units across campus.

- 112 - Engineering
- 70 - Science
- 64 - Liberal Arts
- 46 - Agriculture and Life Sciences
- 37 - Veterinary Medicine
- 34 - Business
- 32 - Education and Human Development
- 23 - Geosciences
- 18 - Architecture
- 8 - Bush School of Government
- 3 - Libraries

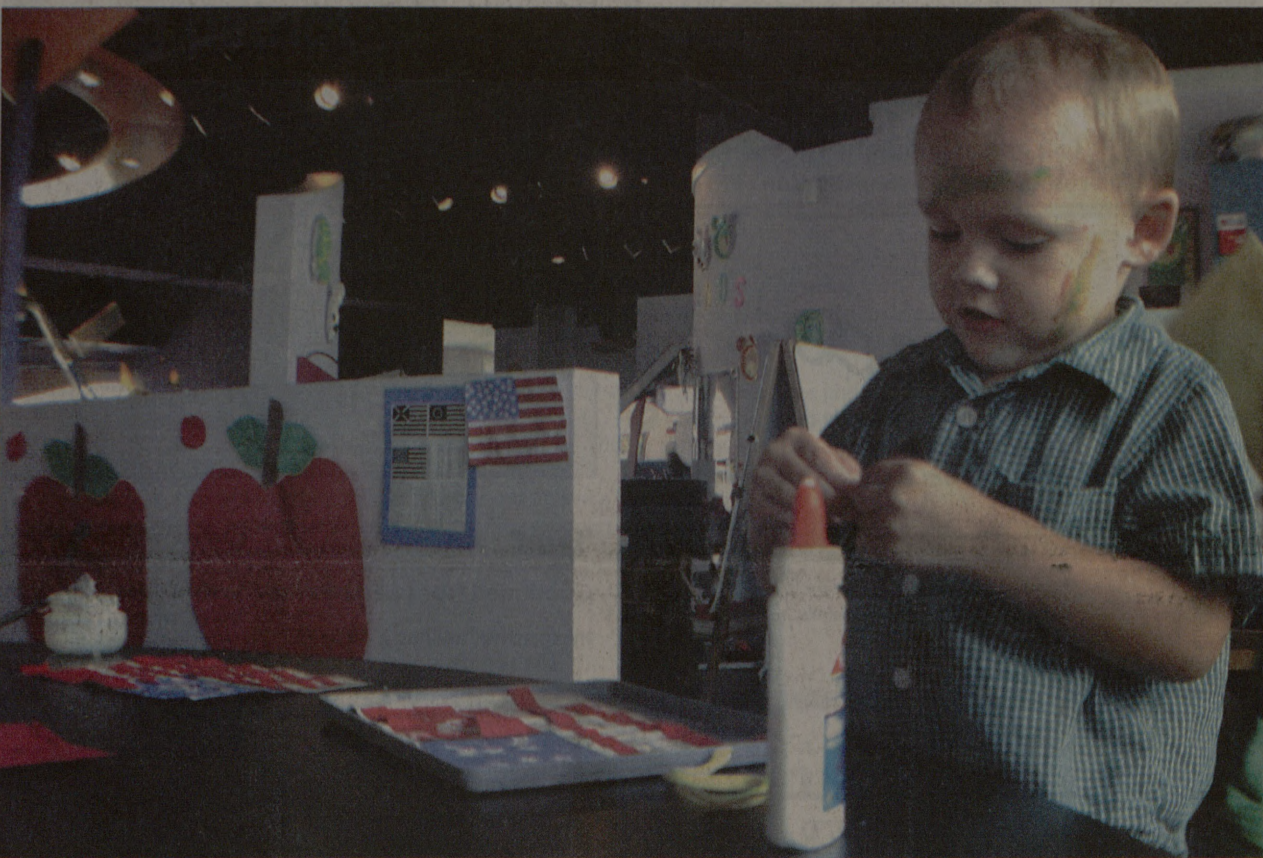
ANDREW BURLESON • THE BATTALION  
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were made during a proposal period in an all-day retreat with Gates, Provost David Prior and 10 deans of colleges at the University. The deans put together a plan that met the resources the University has.

"New positions will be invested in areas where Texas A&M can become No. 1," said Richard Adams, dean of the College of Veterinarian Medicine. "A halo will be encircled around the whole University to advance stature and

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## Young patriot



SHARON AESCHBACH • THE BATTALION

Three-year-old Tyler Flowers of Bryan patiently glues together stars and stripes of an American flag Wednesday afternoon at the Children's Museum of the Brazos Valley. The museum day program,

"United We Stand - Families Hand in Hand," included a visit from the Bryan police and fire departments promoting safety and also teaching children about the various emergency vehicles.

## Children remember 9-11

By Larry McShane  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Two by two they stepped forward at ground zero Thursday, the sons and daughters, nieces and nephews, grandsons and granddaughters of the Sept. 11 victims, mournfully reciting the 2,792 names of the World Trade Center dead.

"My mother and my hero," 13-year-old Brian Terzian said after reading the name of his mother, Stephanie McKenna. "We love you."

For a second straight year, the nation paused on a bright September morning to recall the day when hijacked jetliners slammed into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and a field in Pennsylvania, killing more than 3,000 people in the worst terrorist attack in U.S. history.

In New York, 200 children led the mourning, showing extraordinary poise as they read the enormous list of victims for 2 1/2 hours. Church bells tolled at the moment hijacked Flight 93 crashed near Shanksville, Pa. A moment of silence was observed at the Pentagon for the 184 victims there. And President Bush stood in silence on the White House lawn.

"We remember the heroic deeds," Bush said. "We remember the compassion, the decency of our

fellow citizens on that terrible day. We pray for the husbands and wives, the moms and dads, and the sons and daughters and loved ones."

The relatives at ground zero appeared in various sad permutations: Police Sgt. Michael Curtin was represented by his three daughters, Jennifer, 17, Erica, 15, and Heather, 13. Kristen Canillas, 12, stood alongside 8-year-old Christopher Cardinali; both had lost a grandparent.

"I love you and I miss you," Kristen said after reciting the name of her grandfather, Anthony Luparello.

The children — the youngest was 7 — offered poignant messages to their lost loved ones, their emotions laid bare before a crowd that held aloft pictures of the victims, dabbed tears from their eyes, and laid flowers in temporary reflecting pools representing the towers.

The two years since the attack seemed to disappear as speakers surrendered to their emotions.

"My daddy, Gerard Rod Coppola," said Angela Coppola, 20, her voice cracking. "Your light still shines."

Brannon Burke, 13, and her 10-year-old sister Kyleen wore matching blue Engine Co. 21 sweat-shirts with buttons bearing the face of fire Capt. William Burke Jr. — their beloved Uncle Billy, a

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TIFFANY TOMPKINS • KRT CAMPUS

A U.S. Air Force KC-135 Stratotanker flies over a flag suspended by local fire departments on the Green Bridge in Bradenton, Fla. on Sept. 11. Americans united across the country Thursday to remember 9-11.

## Federal panel hears redistricting arguments

By T.A. Badger  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LAREDO, Texas — A three-judge federal panel heard arguments but didn't immediately make a ruling Thursday in a lawsuit brought by state Democrats hoping to derail a new round of redistricting in Texas.

But if the tone and intensity of questioning by the judges is any indication, the Democrats may be facing uphill odds in getting the panel to rule that Senate rule changes by Republicans to further the redistricting effort violate federal law.

The three judges, who listened to two hours of oral arguments Thursday, made it clear that they were reluctant to step into the summerlong political battle that included 11 Democratic senators fleeing Texas for more than six weeks to avoid redrawing the lines of the state's 32 congressional districts.

"We have a duty as a federal court to walk gingerly into state issues," said U.S. District Judge George Kazen. He was joined on the panel by Patrick Higginbotham, an appeals court judge from Dallas, and Lee Rosenthal, a district judge from Houston. Higginbotham said a decision could come as

early as Friday afternoon.

The GOP, which controls the Texas House and Senate, wants redistricting to increase the number of Republicans in Congress. Democrats opposed to the plan fended off the change in the regular legislative session, as well as two special sessions this summer. A third session is to begin Monday.

Some of the senators expressed bitterness at Democratic Sen. John Whitmire of Houston, who spent weeks with them in New Mexico and whose return to Texas last week provided enough members for a quorum.

"We're very angry because he unilaterally made the decision to break ranks," said Sen. Judith Zaffirini of Laredo. "He literally lied to us."

The judges closely questioned the Democrats' attorney, Paul Smith, who argued that dropping a Senate rule requiring two-thirds of the 31 members to agree to debate a bill violated the federal Voting Rights Act, enacted to protect minority voters.

"This is a very significant piece of how the Legislature operates," Smith said of the long-standing two-thirds rule, which was eliminated by Lt.

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## Baseball, softball fields to gain improved turfs

By Carrie Pierce  
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M's baseball and softball fields will be upgraded from artificial to sand-based turf next summer, an improvement that has already been implemented at Kyle Field and A&M's soccer field.

In January 1996, Aggie ath-

letics were changed forever when a new form of turf was introduced to Kyle Field, said Leo Goertz, athletic field maintenance manager.

Seven years later, the benefits of this state-of-the-art grass and drainage system have been introduced to other athletic fields and have had positive effects on athletic performance and recruiting, Goertz said.

Craig Potts, assistant athletic field manager, said the renovations to the softball field would take three to four weeks and cost approximately \$200,000, and Olsen field upgrades will take four to five weeks, costing \$600,000.

"Although the costs may be substantial, the benefits will be significant," Potts said.

Kyle Field was originally

designed with artificial turf, an endeavor which cost the University \$1 million, said Richard Duble, a professor of soil and crop sciences.

When it was changed to sand-based grass in 1996, the drainage system was dramatically improved and was also

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