

# THE BATTALION

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## A different drum



JOSHUA HOBSON • THE BATTALION

Downfall 2012 drummer **Josh Pazada** performs with fellow band members for 20 minutes of their one-hour show at Rudder Fountain Thursday before the rain arrived. The band is promoting their new album, "The Fuse is Lit."

## Corps sets GPR above average

By Carrie Pierce  
THE BATTALION

The Corps of Cadets is seeking to improve the academic standings of its members, a process that includes raising the required grade point average for Corps leaders from a 2.6 this fall to a 2.8 in the spring.

The GPR requirement for a student leader in most University organizations is 2.3.

"When a leader of an outfit makes good grades, he or she tends to emphasize good study habits with the entire outfit," said Col. Rick Mallahan, assistant commander for academics and discipline.

The Corps is also setting higher goals for the overall average GPR. According to the 2003-2004 Corps Scholastics Policy, the goal for the fall semester is a 2.95, and a 3.0 GPR is set for the spring. If these goals are reached, Corps leaders hope to score 2 percent above the University's average GPR, which is 2.9.

The average Corps GPR last spring was a 2.7. Mallahan said this is not an accurate picture of the Corps, because it is tough to identify who is still in the Corps and who has withdrawn from the

Corps but still has grades included in the cadet figures.

"There is always room for improvement," Mallahan said.

To meet the goals spelled out by the Corps Scholastic Policy, free tutoring will continue to be provided to cadets.

"There has always been free tutoring," Mallahan said. "Now it will just be a special emphasis."

David Macicek, a senior mechanical engineering major and Corps scholastics officer, said that based on test grades, freshmen may be required to seek some sort of tutoring.

"The number one focus of the Corps is academics, and freshmen need to develop their study skills now," Macicek said.

This fall, freshmen began their academic training during Freshman Orientation Week the week before school started, Mallahan said. One day of orientation was set aside to emphasize academics and introduce the College Student Inventory, a program that identifies high risk students who will most likely need help later.

In the past, this program was never introduced during FOW.

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## Republicans halt fining of Democrats

By Kelly Shannon  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — The Texas Senate approved a Republican proposal Thursday to hold off on enforcing thousands of dollars in fines against Democrats who fled the state to block a GOP-led redistricting plan.

However, the Republicans placed the Democratic senators on probation until January 2005. If the Democrats leave again to break a quorum, they were told, they would have to pay the \$57,000 apiece in fines that Republican senators already imposed on them.

Under the proposal by Sen. Kyle Janek, R-Houston, the 11 Democrats will be able to again have access to their office privileges, including postage and cellular phone use, and they will get to use their Capitol parking spaces. If any of the senators are absent without a sufficient excuse for more than 72 hours, when attendance has been required in a "call" by the rest of the chamber, the fines and sanctions would be reinstated.

The vote was 13-10 in favor of the plan. Not all senators were present. The vote fell almost entirely along party lines.

## Hurricane Isabel downgraded to tropical storm

### Storm barrages East coast

By Emery P. Dalesio  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KILL DEVIL HILLS, N.C. — Hurricane Isabel plowed into North Carolina's Outer Banks with 100 mph winds and pushed its way Thursday up the Eastern Seaboard, weakening to a tropical storm by evening but not before swamping roads and knocking out power to more than 2.5 million people.

Isabel was blamed for at least two traffic deaths and the electrocution of a utility employee.

The storm that had once threatened 160 mph winds and a 12-foot storm surge rolled in around midday just south of isolated Ocracoke Island with a 5-foot surge and gusts that rattled plywood boards spray-painted "Bring it on Izzy."

"A lot of trees are down — there's one down across the garage," Rudy Austin said as he looked out on his yard in Ocracoke surrounded by a knee-deep soup of sea water and debris. "There's a lot of stuff floating around: boards and buoys and boxes and young'un's' plastic toys."

The storm downed trees, snarled air traffic and knocked out electricity — more than 2 million customers were without power in North Carolina and southeastern Virginia alone.

More than 430,000 customers in Maryland, 78,000 in the District of Columbia and 10,000 in New

Jersey also lost power.

In North Carolina, a utility employee was electrocuted while restoring power, and the storm was blamed for the deaths of two motorists in Virginia and Maryland.

Isabel's top sustained wind eased to around 70 mph by late evening. It continued to weaken, though it was still expected to produce hurricane-force gusts of at least 74 mph in parts of northern Virginia and Maryland.

National Hurricane Center Director Max Mayfield said fast-moving Isabel still posed a threat because of its dimensions — about the size of Colorado — and its potential to bring 6 to 10 inches of rain and flooding to an East Coast already sodden from one of the wettest summers in years.

"This is certainly not over for people experiencing Hurricane Isabel," he said. "This hurricane will not be remembered for how strong it is. It will be remembered for how large it is."

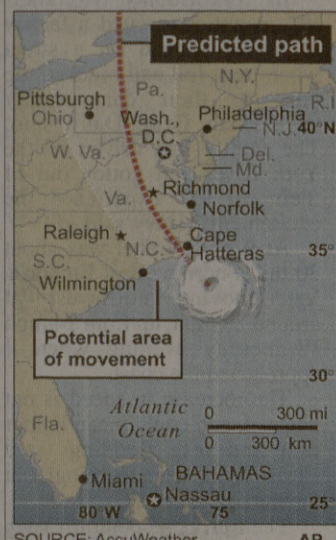
The storm spread rain across North Carolina and Virginia and into Maryland, Delaware and parts of West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

In Harlowe, a small community about 25 miles inland from the Outer Banks, about 30 to 40 homes were destroyed, either by winds, falling trees or flooding, said Jeremy Brown, chief of Harlowe's volunteer fire depart-

## Isabel makes landfall by noon

Position: 33.7° N, 75.2° W  
Movement: NW at 15 mph  
Sustained winds: 100 mph

As of 8 a.m. EDT Thursday



SOURCE: AccuWeather AP

## Fans brave harsh weather

By Dallas Shipp  
THE BATTALION

Hurricane Isabel smashed into the coasts of North Carolina and Virginia Thursday afternoon, but it wasn't enough to keep a few thousand Aggies away from Thursday night's game.

Some made the 18-hour drive from College Station while others flew into airports in surrounding cities on Wednesday, which turned out to be lucky for many traveling Aggies. Most flights into Virginia and North Carolina were cancelled on Thursday.

Brian Herbst, an agricultural economics Ph.D. student, met up with his family in Raleigh-Durham, NC, Wednesday night

before driving to Blacksburg Thursday morning.

Herbst has seen his share of bad weather before and said he never considered changing his plans because of the storm.

"I was hoping (Hurricane Isabel) was going to stay far enough east and avoid the game," he said. "But

I've been in weather like this before. The '97 Texas game was quite wet and the 2000 Independence Bowl was quite snowy. The wind and rain will play into the ballgame but it wasn't going to affect my plans."

While the weather didn't

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JOHN LYNAS • THE BATTALION

A&M 2000 graduate **Mike Palm** celebrates after a touchdown in the first half by A&M running back Courtney Lewis Thursday night in Blacksburg, Va.

## Bicycle thefts increase

By Sonia Moghe  
THE BATTALION

Campus-wide bicycle thefts have increased by 8 percent in the past two years, costing victims a total of \$138,392, University Police Department officials said.

UPD statistics show that during the 2001-2002 school year 289 bikes were stolen. During the 2002-2003 school year 312 bikes were stolen, said UPD Sgt. Alan Baron.

During the first three weeks of the current school year, eight bike thefts have been reported

to the UPD, with an average value of \$223.63 per bicycle.

But, not all bike thefts are reported to UPD, and less than 1 percent of all stolen bicycles are returned to their owners, Baron said.

Baron recommends students record the serial numbers of their bikes and, more importantly, get their driver license numbers carved on the frame of their bikes.

"The University Police Department will engrave bikes for free," Baron said. "It makes

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## BIKE SAFETY TIPS

In the past 2 years, bike thefts have increased by 8%. UPD offers the following advice to keep bikes safe:

- Engrave your drivers license number on your bike. You can get this done for free through UPD or a residence advisor.
- Lock the bike's frame and not just the wheels.
- Record your bike's serial number.



SETH FREEMAN • THE BATTALION  
SOURCE • UNIVERSITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

## A&M fall enrollment stays level

Texas A&M officials reported Wednesday that overall enrollment figures for graduate students have increased by 442 students to 8,281 from last year.

The increase in graduate students applies to both doctoral students and Master's degree candidates. Twelfth class day numbers show that Master's degree candidate enrollment has increased by 175 and doctoral students figures have increased by 241.

The trend of increases did not carry over to undergradu-

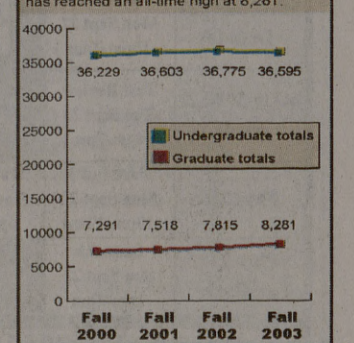
ate enrollment, which is down by 180 students this year, for a total of 36,595 students. Last year's number of undergraduate students stood at 36,775.

While graduate student numbers have increased, total enrollment figures for the University as a whole dropped by 267 to 44,876.

Frank B. Ashley III, acting associate provost for enrollment, said the decrease in undergraduate enrollment is representative of a normal fluctuation.

## STUDENT ENROLLMENT TOTALS

While the main campus enrollment total is 267 less than last year, graduate enrollment has reached an all-time high at 8,281.



RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION  
SOURCE • OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL STUDIES AND PLANNING