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BUSH AWARD for Excellence in Public Service

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy will be presented with this award on Nov. 7

Former President George Bush has 51 percent of the input on who receives the award

Kennedy is the first American to receive this award

Previous recipients of the award are German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and former Soviet Union leader Mikhail Gorbachev



Kennedy

RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: BUSH OFFICE

Kennedy to receive Bush award

Senator's antiwar comments lead students to question the choice

By Sonia Moghe
THE BATTALION

Former President George Bush will present Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., with a Bush Award for Excellence in Public Service on Nov. 7.

Kennedy, brother of former President John F. Kennedy, is receiving the award in recognition of the consistent stand he has maintained on issues throughout his 41 years in the U.S. Senate.

The George Bush Presidential Library Foundation's decision to give this award to Kennedy will make him

the first American recipient. Previous recipients of the award include former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, as well as former Soviet Union leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

Some Texas A&M students and alumni, though, have voiced concerns about Kennedy's selection, citing his recent comments against President George W. Bush's plans for Iraq.

"The purpose of this award is not to celebrate a partisan ideology," said Jim McGrath, spokesman for the Bush Office, "but to recognize the American ideal of public service."

The decision to award Kennedy was made in January, with 51 per-

cent of which was in the hands of the other members of the Bush Foundation, McGrath said.

"He gave (members) free reign to make the decision they wanted to," McGrath said. "He encouraged them to think boldly."

This decision was made around the time Kennedy voiced his opinion regarding the manner in which current President George W. Bush was handling the war in Iraq. Despite the announcement of the Bush Award, Kennedy has continued to criticize the current president's policy.

"An unnecessary war based on unreliable and inaccurate intelligence, has not brought an end to dan-

ger," Kennedy said in a released statement on Oct. 16. "Instead, it has brought new dangers, imposed new costs and taken more and more American lives each week."

Barbara Bush, wife and mother to the former and current presidents, was interviewed by Larry King last Wednesday. She shared her discontent with Kennedy's remarks, but acknowledged that he deserved the award because of his years of contribution in the Senate.

"(George) Bush will be making a statement in his speech regarding

See Kennedy on page 2

Gearing up



RANDAL FORD • THE BATTALION

Beyond Petroleum (BP) firefighter instructor David Mayville on Tuesday afternoon. This week, BP is training firefighters from all over the world including two oil fighters from Kuwait.

Ferris promotes Air Force art

By Pammy Ramji
THE BATTALION

Because Keith Ferris' father was often away on business, his 4-year-old son had to find a way to show him all the planes he saw from his backyard in his dad's absence. So, Ferris picked up a pen and some paper, marking the beginning of what has been a long and successful career in aviation painting.

Ferris spoke Monday night at an issues forum at the George Bush Library and Museum on his flight experiences and passion for painting. "The Art of Keith Ferris" is on display at the Bush Library and will be exhibited until Jan. 4, 2004.

Ferris said he was practically made for the U.S. Army Air Corps, as he was born the son of a career Air Force pilot who served from 1925 to 1955.

Ferris attended Texas A&M, where he majored in aeronautical engineering. Although his career in the Air Force ended when he discovered he had an allergy to some of the required inoculations, he wanted to stay close to the Air Force.

Before ending flight missions, Ferris flew in the United States, Asia, Europe, Antarctica and many other places within every jet fighter aircraft in the Air Force.

Ferris found a perfect fit at the Air Force's Training Publications Unit at Randolph Air Force Base in San Antonio as a civilian apprentice artist. The job combined his two loves, and his career in serious aviation painting started.



JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Aviation artist Keith Ferris stands in front of "Thunderbird Take Off," one of 29 paintings depicting U.S. aircraft on display at the George Bush Library's Museum Center.

"I was not quite sure what I was going to do when I had to stop flying," Ferris said.

After several years as an apprentice artist, Ferris left the civil service altogether, opting for work at an art studio with Cassell Watkins Paul in St. Louis, Mo.

In 1960, Ferris became a member of the Society of Illustrators in New York and made the move to the Big Apple.

"I did not know anyone that lived there, but I still went with my wife and my 1-year-old daughter," Ferris said.

Ferris started freelancing more, specializing in aviation art. Some clients he has served in the more than half a century he has worked include the Aviation Trade Association, Texaco, Air Force Association, Air Force Magazine and Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association.

Not limiting himself to

aircraft alone, Ferris started painting smaller airplanes on helmets worn by Air Force pilots.

"I am not painting airplanes, but I am painting what is likely to fly," he said.

Ferris said he examines all the planes he paints before starting a piece, such as the Thunderbird, which is the oldest Air Force plane. The examination of the Thunderbird birthed "The Retirement Party for Old Thunderbird," one of the 50 major paintings Ferris featured in the Air Force Art Collection.

Ferris uses only the three primary colors for his work.

"My dreams were with paint, and I absolutely love it," he said.

Currently, the National Air and Space Museum houses two of Ferris' paintings, a mural of a B-17 and jet aviation.

Thousands evacuate San Diego county

By Seth Hettena
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN DIEGO — Tens of thousands of people fled mountain communities in San Diego and San Bernardino counties Tuesday and caused a traffic jam on a narrow mountain highway as frantic residents raced to avoid California's deadliest wildfires in more than a decade.

Frustrated firefighters said there was little they could do to stop the flames, and exhausted crews in San Diego County were pulled back even though two devastating blazes began merging into a super fire near Julian, a mountain town of 3,500 known for its apple crop.

In San Diego County, a blaze of more than 200,000 acres formed a 45-mile front stretching into Scripps Ranch and Julian. The fire was just miles from joining with a 37,000-acre fire near Escondido.

The two fires have

destroyed more than 900 homes. If they join up, the flames would cut off escape routes and whip up the wind.

"Just about everything is burning," said William Bagnell, fire chief of the Crest Forest Fire Protection District.

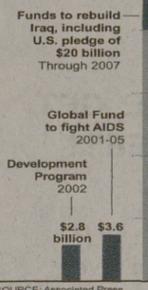
Authorities announced two more deaths in San Bernardino County on Tuesday, bringing the death toll from the fires to 16.

Nearly 1,600 homes have been destroyed, and 10,000 firefighters were on the front lines throughout the state. Gov. Gray Davis estimated the cost at nearly \$2 billion.

Since Oct. 21, at least 10 wind-driven wildfires — many of them arson-caused — have rampaged through Southern California, demolishing neighborhoods, gutting businesses and blackening more than half a million acres of land from the Mexican border to the Ventura-Los Angeles county line.

Promises of aid to Iraq dwarf other causes

A comparison of financial pledges to agencies within the United Nations.



SOURCE: Associated Press

Donors pledge billions in aid to Iraq

By Barbara Borst
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

UNITED NATIONS — Donors were generous last week in pledging billions to rebuild Iraq — disproportionately generous compared with their donations to fight poverty and AIDS in the world's poorest countries, development and AIDS officials say.

The \$33 billion for Iraq over the next four years, including \$20 billion from the United States, is more than 10 times the U.N. Development Program's annual funds of \$2.8 billion for all underdeveloped countries. The amount is also nearly 10 times the pledges to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, which kill millions every year.

At development agencies and in poor countries, leaders are worried that the generosity shown to Iraq — a middle-income country with major oil reserves — at

the donors' conference in Madrid, Spain, will erode resources for other needs.

Stephen Lewis, the U.N. secretary-general's special envoy for AIDS in Africa, called the contrast between pledges for Iraq and other donations a "weird, discordant upset in the scales of justice."

"I don't deny that Iraqis are under stress and numbers of them are dying tragically. But I am forced to point out that more than 2 million Africans are dying of AIDS every year, and their poverty is vastly more wretched," he told The Associated Press. "There is something fundamentally wrong with the sense of moral balance."

Lewis said he understands the focus on fighting terrorism but that it has introduced "a completely unconscionable distortion" of funding priorities.

See Donors on page 2

Grenade attack kills U.S. soldier in Baghdad

By Robert H. Reid
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A car bomb exploded Tuesday west of Baghdad, killing at least four people a day after three dozen people died in a wave of suicide bombings in the Iraqi capital. U.S. officials said one of Baghdad's three deputy mayors was killed in a hit-and-run shooting.

The latest attacks, including the killing Sunday of Deputy Mayor Faris Abdul Razzaq al-Assam, raised fears that a strengthened insurgency is increasingly targeting Iraqis who work with the U.S.-led coalition as well as international groups that had considered themselves at less risk than U.S. soldiers.

Despite the escalation in attacks on Iraqis, American forces remained targets, with

insurgents firing on a U.S. military base and convoy in two northern cities Tuesday.

In Baghdad, a rocket-propelled grenade attack killed one U.S. soldier and wounded six others while they were trying to destroy roadside bombs, the U.S. military said Tuesday.

The soldiers, from the 1st

See Grenade on page 2



SOURCES: Associated Press; ESRI