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Gainesville greets president

By **MEGAN SEERY**

Alligator Writer
mseery@alligator.org

President Bush was warned not to expect much of a crowd when stepping into the "bastion of liberalism" known to many Republicans as Gainesville.

But what the president found on Sunday was a sea of 20,000 boisterous supporters waving American flags and chanting, "Four more years!"

Two days before Florida and the nation will decide who the presidential victor will be, Bush held the last rally in a three-city Florida romp at Gainesville Regional Airport's University Air Center, thanking campaign backers and re-emphasizing his agenda for the next four years.



The president, introduced by his brother, Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, reiterated the usual points in his bid for re-election: strong leadership, national security, affordable healthcare and school accountability.

He also dispelled rumors of a military draft, which his campaign has called a "scare tactic" used by Democratic opponents.

"The all-volunteer Army will remain an all-volunteer Army," Bush said.

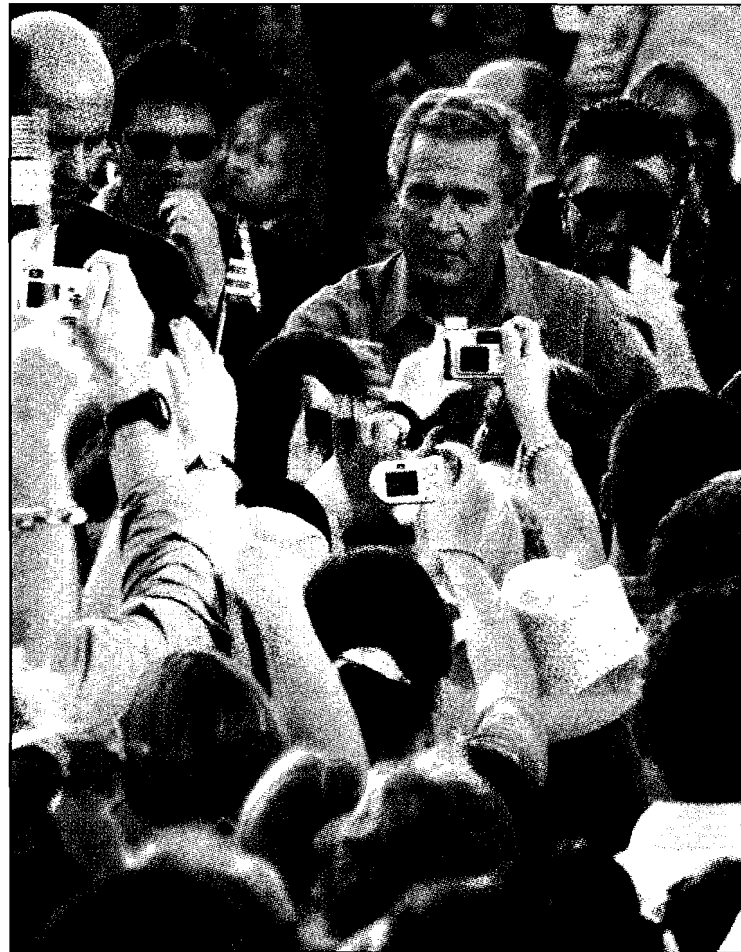
The president criticized his opponent, Sen. John Kerry, for the "flip-flop hall of fame" in his 2003 votes both for and against \$87 billion in funding for U.S. troops in Iraq.

"My fellow Americans, there's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat," Bush said.

The key difference between the president and Kerry is voters know where Bush stands on the issues, he told the crowd.

His speech occasionally was muffled by chants in support

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Megan V. Winslow / Alligator Staff

President Bush shakes hands with supporters Sunday afternoon following the Victory 2004 Rally at Gainesville Regional Airport.

Democrat to speak downtown

By **MIKE GIMIGNANI**

Alligator Writer
mgimignani@alligator.org

Former UF student and rock 'n' roll legend Stephen Stills is coming home again, sort of.

One of the three namesakes of the seminal supergroup Crosby, Stills and Nash will stump for U.S. Senate hopeful Betty Castor today at 2 p.m. at the Downtown Plaza.

The event is part of a massive last-minute swing for Democratic candidate Castor, which also includes current Florida Sens. Bill Nelson and Bob Graham and, in other cities, rock great Jimmy Buffett.



Graham

"[Stills] is a great supporter of Betty's," Castor campaign spokesman Matt Burgess said.

Stills, 59, whose wife Kristen gave birth to their second child Oliver Ragland last week, could not be reached for comment.