

Elon remembers President George H.W. Bush

University archivist and President Emeritus Lambert reflect on Bush's visit

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A war hero, a congressman, the director of the CIA and vice president for eight years. After the passing of former President George H.W. Bush, the American people and the Elon University community are remembering him not only for his credentials but also for his character.

Bush visited Burlington in 1992 during his re-election campaign before coming to Elon's campus in 2001 to give a convocation address. During the latter visit, he stayed in Maynard House with the Lambert family.

"I don't think he was one of those people that had a private persona that was different than his public persona. He was a genuinely good guy, and I think that was civil and caring and considerate of others," said President Emeritus Leo Lambert.

Presidential houseguest

Lambert's family enjoyed quality time with the 41st U.S. president at the expense of reorganizing their sleeping quarters. During Bush's stay, Lambert and his wife Laurie moved all of their belongings out of the master bedroom because Secret Service deemed the usual guest suite not secure enough and wanted Bush to stay on the second floor.

The 41st U.S. President even gave a tribute to the disruption at the beginning of his convocation speech in April 2001.

"They swept in to the beautiful Maynard House right over there, swept right out of his bedroom, bathroom, closet, and we're enjoying it. Thank you sir, we might not leave," Bush joked.

"We were honored to have Bush sleep in our bed," Lambert said, laughing.

Bush's entourage of Secret Service security also caused quite an obstacle course for Lambert's daughter Callie, who was just learning to drive at the time. Lambert recalled he would drive with her to school in the morning.

"The whole street and the driveway is lined with Secret Service vehicles and police vehicles. And she's trying to weave my old Volvo between all these vehicles," Lambert said. "And I said, 'Callie, if you can maneuver this, your driver's exam is going to seem really easy.'"

Bush visits campus

Lambert wasn't the only one that got a personal interaction with the president. When he was on campus, Bush had an open Q&A with the students



While signing autographs, President George H.W. Bush interacts with Elon students during his only visit to campus in 2001.

and even worked out at the university gym.

"A student came up to us afterwards and said he was on his cell phone calling his mom, saying, 'You'll never guess who's on the treadmill next to me,'" Lambert recalled.

But Lambert says the highlight of his visit was when one Elon student asked why Bush lost the re-election.

"It wasn't a disrespectful question, but it was pretty direct," Lambert said. "I just remember the sheer honesty of Bush's answer, and he didn't try to pin the blame on anybody else. He took responsibility."

At the Republican National Convention in 1988, Bush uttered one of his most famous

quotes: "Read my lips, no new taxes." During his term, the president did indeed end up implementing new taxes, which was used against him during his re-election campaign.

"There was a big economic boom later on in the 90s, and [Bush] said, 'But I just couldn't communicate that to the public, and so I lost my job,'" Lambert said. "It was such a disarmingly honest, sincere, forthright answer. I was just stunned, or struck by it. I'll never forget it in my whole life."

Lambert also said he highly respected Bush's decision to go back on his promise because raising taxes was what Lambert said the country needed at the time.

"When you place your political interests secondary to the interests of the country, I think that's one of the highlights of his presidency," Lambert said. "And I'm not sure you see such courageous acts of leadership so much anymore."

Lambert wants current pol-

iticians to take a lesson from their past president.

"I think the vitriol that we see in politics today is really harmful to our nation," Lambert said, adding that he was disappointed in how polarized the current political climate is. "[Bush] became great friends with President Clinton, the man who beat him. And that's a model for us."

When looking at lessons for current Elon students, he says Bush teaches us something easy and practical.

"One of the most powerful, important acts that you can do in your life on a regular basis is to say thank you to people and write notes to people. It takes a few minutes, and it has an enormous impact on other people's lives. And he was a master at it," Lambert said.

Knowing his character

University archivist Linda Lashaddock worked as a CNN White House producer during Bush's term. Reflecting on her time covering the White House, she says the dynamic between politicians and press has definitely changed.

"Oh my gosh, it was certainly not like today," Lashaddock said. "[Bush] was very respectful of the press, and he knew that they had a job to do. You have a job to do. I have a job to do. I might not always like you, but I want to respect you."

While covering Bush, Lashaddock went through a difficult divorce. She remembers that during a particularly rough patch, Bush went out of his way to comfort her.

"He said, 'Linda, I'm worried about you. You are going to be OK. You're smart, you're talented and you're beautiful,'" Lashaddock said. "And he kept tabs on me for the next probably three years to make sure that I was okay. That's how humble he was."

Lashaddock remembers Bush would joke around with the press during downtime. She says what set him apart from other presidents was that he took the time to know everyone's name, down to his servers in a D.C. restaurant.

"He would always ask the individuals for the first names, and it was remarkable, and he remembered that," Lashaddock said.

SGA proposes new budget model

Student leaders reassess budget allocation model after finding it favors senior student clubs

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SGA is proposing to reform its allocation budget model for next year after concluding that the previous model was unsustainable. A proposal for the original model to be replaced asks club members to make individual proposals through the year to SGA online at Phoenix Connect for each expense.

After assessment, SGA Executive Treasurer Max Pivonka said the organization found problems in the old system.

The previous budget model asks for club leaders to attend budget hearings every year, where each club asks SGA for a fixed budget. This model has been in place since 1999, according to Pivonka. If an organization misses its budget hearing, it risks not receiving the proper funding.

Also, if an organization does not use its entire budget, the budget could shrink for the next year. Pivonka said he saw organizations toward the end of the budget year spending its excess funds foolishly, not on student life, in order to maintain the same budget for the next year.

For the current 2018-2019 budget year, SGA was granted about \$770,000 to divide among the Student Union Board, Liberal Arts Forum and around 140 clubs and organizations.

Senators will vote on the new model and proposed in legislation at SGA's business meeting on Dec. 6. Pivonka is proposing that organizations can apply for up to \$300 of funding. Then, clubs would make individual funding requests online which would be reviewed on a "case-by-case basis," according to Pivonka.

With the new proposed system, SGA allows for greek life to access its funds for events that are open to the student body. It also allows for smaller, newer organizations to receive more funding than before.

At a Town Hall Meeting on Nov. 29, Pivonka proposed for the Finance Board to review clubs' funding requests on a weekly basis. The Finance Board would act independently of SGA, reviewing SGA's requests for funding.

Currently, the Finance Board consists of six SGA members. Pivonka is hoping to rework the board to have four elected members who are not a part of SGA in order to eliminate any bias.

Pivonka said there was a precedent for older organizations on campus to receive more funding, even if it had low student participation or activity. Funding for SGA comes from 51 percent of the \$272 yearly student activity fee required by every student at Elon University. SGA argues it isn't fair for students to pay a fee to fund organizations based on seniority.

"One of the main things that we think is important that what you are putting into these student activity fees could improve your college experience," Pivonka said.

Not all clubs feel as if they will benefit from this new model. Bryanna Chazotte, director of Safe Rides, said the fixed budget — the original budget model — was the primary way her organization ran.

"A lot of our charges, a lot of our expenses are usually unexpected and are usually great in value," Chazotte said. "So when I have a flat tire or when I have a vehicle's battery die or when an entire vehicle needs work on its engine, those are all costs that I can't predict and they're often in excess of \$300."

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To read SGA budget coverage, visit elonnewsnetwork.com



President George H.W. Bush responds during a Q&A session held in Whitley Auditorium during his visit to campus in 2001.