

Redpots supervise bonfire

by Brenda Bivona
Battalion Reporter

A lot of work goes into the making of the Texas A&M bonfire — a cherished tradition of Aggies.

The people who put the most effort and time into bonfire are known as redpots. They are the bonfire coordinators. Their name comes from the red pots (construction hard hats) that they wear. The pots are painted red for easy identification from a distance.

The redpots organize and execute every phase of bonfire, from the finances to safety measures, said Albert Eby, a senior redpot from Company B-1.

There are 16 of these bonfire coordinators — six seniors, six juniors, one junior and one senior in charge of the trucks, and a junior and a senior head civilian, Eby said.

Anyone who has worked hard and shown leadership and discipline while working on bonfire can become a redpot, Eby said. Junior redpots are chosen in the spring by someone who has become a senior redpot, he said. If the juniors do a good job, they become senior redpots the next year, he said. Almost all junior redpots achieve senior redpot status, said Eby. All the seniors this year were junior redpots last year, he said.

The head bonfire coordinator is known as the head stack.

Paul Tomaso, the only civilian senior redpot this year said, "The head stack is our connection to the administration. The redpots make joint decisions on

bonfire, but if there is a controversy the head stack decides."

The junior picked to be a redpot by the head stack automatically becomes the head stack for the next year, Tomaso said.

"I'm a redpot because I want to build bonfire. The tradition of bonfire brings a lot of Aggies together. It's an important tradition and I never want to see it lost," he said.

This group of students have a lot of traditions that are special to them and are passed down orally each year, Eby said.

Some redpot traditions include:

- Attaching their pliers to the center pole. The senior redpots pliers are attached to the top of the center pole before it is raised. The head stack goes up in a pulley and takes them down so they can wire the initial wrap of logs around the center pole.
- Passing pots. Towards the end of bonfire season, when the seniors feel the junior redpots

have earned their pots, the junior redpots are sent to the top of the fourth stack (the fourth level of wood). Then they are sent as many logs as they can wire in 45 minutes. When they come down the senior pots are passed to them and they become senior redpots.

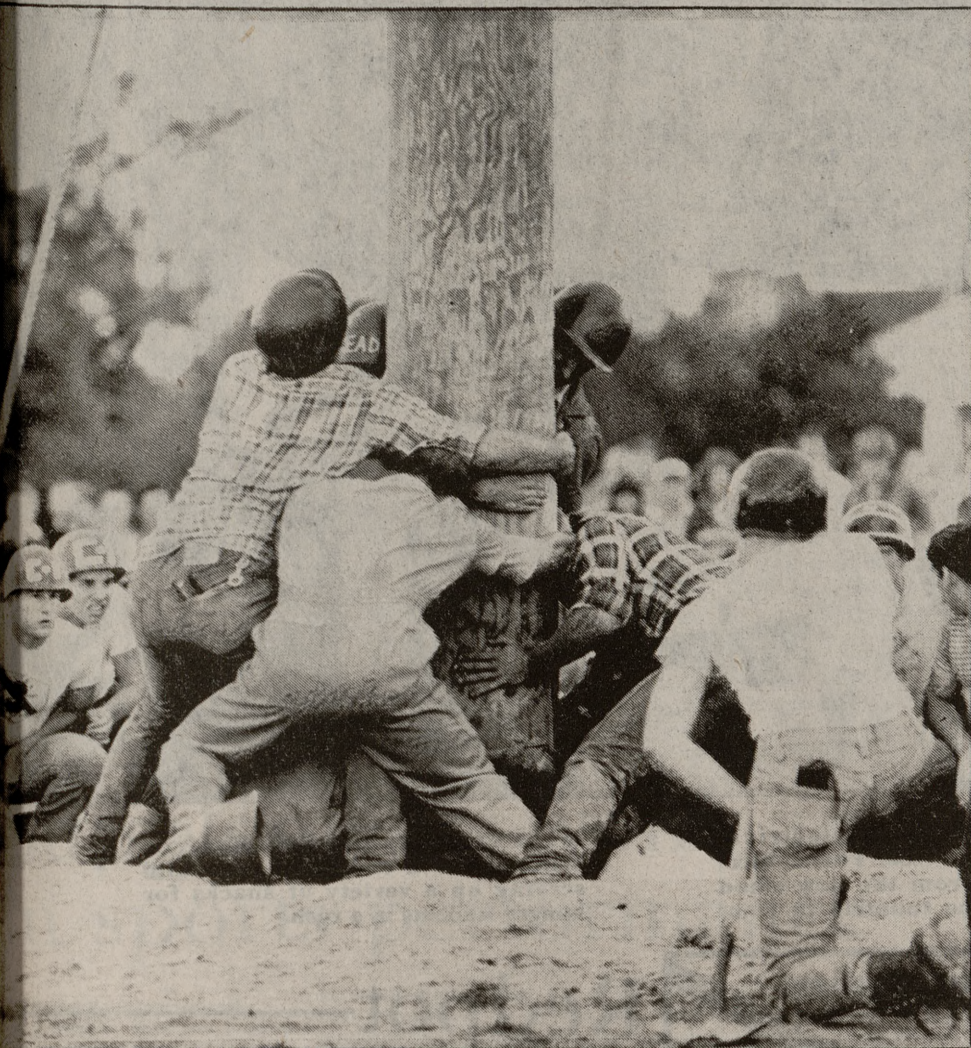
- Doing a class set on the cross ties. After the third and fourth cross ties go up the junior redpots each get on a cross tie. Then

they do a class set (a set of push ups) on the cross ties.

- Leading Elephant Walk. The senior redpots lead the senior class in Elephant Walk.

- Lighting bonfire. The redpots lead the march to the bonfire site. They walk around the bonfire once, followed by the brownpots, yell leaders and the Aggie Band. The band goes

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John Makely, Battalion staff

Raising the center pole is tradition for the senior bonfire coordinators, distinguished by their "red pots."

Group brings artists together for discussions

by Maria Gautschi

Battalion Reporter

If you're an artist who enjoys discussing different crafts with other artists, or if you just enjoy talking with creative people, then the Texas Designer/Craftsmen is the organization for you.

Potters, fabric weavers, jewelers and other craftsmen meet locally and state-wide to discuss problems they have as artists, and to discuss new ideas in their individual crafts.

Helen Finney, president of the Bryan-College Station chapter, said the organization gives artists a chance to learn about other craftsmen's work.

"Every artist has a favorite form of art they don't do but have a passion for," Finney said. The organization gives artists a chance to discuss such topics as the marketing of crafts, packaging and shipping, getting work into galleries and professionalism, Finney said.

"We try to teach artists how to treat their art as a business," she said. "It's hard for an artist not to want to throw a temper tantrum because a gallery wants 33 percent of the profit."

She said every artist has a different experience to share, and that there is always someone who is able to give the do's and don'ts from their experience. Finney said they would like to

get new people into the organization. Right now there are 10 that meet locally.

"We need new people to bring new blood into it and revive it," Finney said. "The members have worked hard to set up exhibitions and they are very tired."

She said that by teaching art courses at the Memorial Student Center Craft Shop, she has found that there are many talented people at Texas A&M.

"A lot of these people need to have an outlet like this organization," Finney said. "It lets artists know their work is acknowledged by others who share in the same struggle for recognition."

Susan Brown-Straus, who de-

signed felt masks and costumes, said for her the organization is a way for her to meet with other artists and learn about their work.

At the annual state conference, artists from all over the state meet to discuss problems and attend workshops designed to teach different crafts. The next conference will be held in Galveston, during fall of 1984.

Finney said there are also some people who don't do any art work but still join the organization, because these people like to watch artists at work and learn about the different techniques they use.

"There's an artist in everyone, and observation is one way to cultivate it," Finney said.

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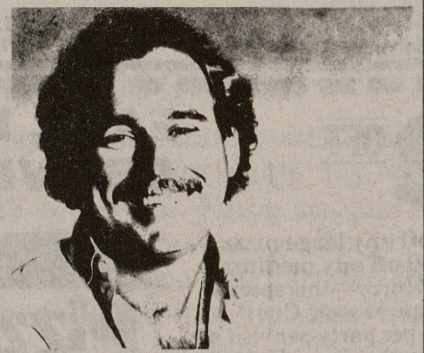
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