

2 Aggies to spend time on the road as Olympic Eagle Sam

By JAN PERRY
Reporter

Two Aggies are spending this semester having fun, making money and touring the United States — as Sam, the Olympic Eagle.

Mark Rudolph, a senior business major, and his cousin Kevin Inda, a junior journalism major, took a hiatus this spring to work as the mascot for 7-Eleven convenience stores.

Rudolph and Inda were hired by 7-Eleven's parent firm, the Southland Corp., to don a 60-pound eagle costume designed by Walt Disney Productions and travel to 7-Eleven stores throughout the United States. While one cousin is playing Sam, the other takes pictures.

Because 7-Eleven is a major sponsor of the Olympics, Inda says, the corporation can use the Olympic mascot to promote its stores and the Olympics. Southland is the only Olympic sponsor to use the mascot, although other major sponsors can use Sam if they wish.

Rudolph was the first cousin to be hired as a mascot. He says he was recommended to the corporation by a friend in Tulsa who was the original mascot. When problems arose, the first mascot was dismissed and Rudolph was left alone.

Without a partner, Rudolph says, the entire program would have been delayed indefinitely. To expedite the search for another mascot, he suggested that Southland hire his cousin, Kevin.

Inda was hired and the promotional tour began.

The official purpose of the mascots' promotional tour is to create as much exposure as possible

away from the West Coast for Sam and the Olympics. The unofficial purpose, Inda says, is to act as an ambassador at large for Texas A&M.

During their travels, Rudolph and Inda always take the extra time to visit colleges and universities.

The benefits Inda and Rudolph are receiving surprised both of them. Besides touring the United States expense-free, they will be a guest at the Olympic games. They also will receive a 17-day bonus vacation on the ship used for ABC's Love Boat.

Another unexpected benefit they are receiving is the great sense of gratification they get when visiting children in hospitals, Inda says. They feel good when they see the children's reaction to Sam's pantomimes.

In addition to visiting hospitals and 7-Eleven stores, Rudolph and Inda attend sporting events and make guest appearances on local television shows. Inda says they will be making their first national television appearance as Sam on a Chicago-based, nationally syndicated television show, "Bozo the Clown."

In between their television guest shots and public appearances, Inda and Rudolph are usually on the road. They travel from city to city in a customized van made for them by Budget Rental, another sponsor of the Olympics.

The outside of the van is brightly painted to announce the arrival of Sam in advance.

The interior was remodeled to accommodate their rather large costume and to provide sleeping accommodations when the weather warms up.



Mark Rudolph (left) and his cousin Kevin Inda stand beneath the costume they will wear on a tour to promote the Los Angeles Olympics.

When warm weather does arrive, Inda says, they face a problem. Sam's costume is very hot. Inda says they are a little warm inside the costume in 30-degree temperatures, but when the temperatures reach the 60s and 70s, they will be really uncomfortable inside the costume.

But the costume is one part of their job that they enjoy a great deal, Inda says.

"When you step into Sam you turn into someone else," Inda says. "Mark and I find ourselves talking as if he's (Sam) a third person."

65 tons of radioactive steel found by helicopter in El Paso

United Press International

EL PASO — The Martin Brokerage Co. in El Paso was storing 65 tons of radioactive steel reinforcing rods Wednesday, while a Department of Energy helicopter scanned over parts of West Texas and southern New Mexico in search of radiation contamination hot spots.

The reinforcing rod, known as rebar, will be shipped back to the Mexican foundry where it was manufactured, as soon as Mexican trucks are available to transport it, said manager Joe Quezada.

DOE officials, who have been conducting low-level flights throughout the El Paso area and over Dona Ana County, New Mexico, since last Saturday, have reported no radiation sites in the United States.

Quezada said the radiation from the rebar was at such a low-level that it is not being isolated from other material at the warehouse.

"In order for somebody to be hurt by the steel, they'd have to sleep on top of it for a night or two," Quezada said.

The steel was returned to the border from Free Market Steel Co., of Phoenix, Ariz.

Radioactive steel was discovered Jan. 23 at the Los Alamos Laboratories in New Mexico and returned to the border, where officials of the Texas Department of Health and the Mexican Nuclear Safety Commission traced its origin to a Juarez, Mexico junkyard.

Scrap metal from the junkyard was sold to a foundry in Chihuahua City, Mexico 240 miles south of the border, where it was made into steel rebar and exported to the United States.

Investigators learned the scrap metal came from a cylinder of Cobalt 60 stolen from a hospital warehouse and sold to the junkyard for \$10. Some of the scrap metal was also processed into steel at a small Juarez foundry which manufactures restaurant table parts for export to the United States and Canada.

The cylinder was originally part of a radiation therapy machine purchased by a group of Juarez doctors in 1977. The

machine originally came from Methodist Hospital in Lubbock and was sold to the doctors by a Fort Worth firm. The cylinder was stolen in mid-November, 1983.

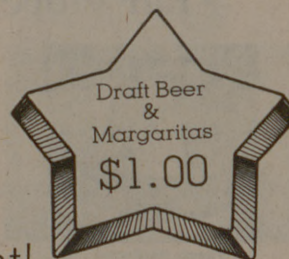
DOE officials are searching for tiny pellets of the radioactive isotope, Cobalt 60. Most of the pellets were accounted for when the cylinder was discovered at the junkyard. Helicopter crews are flying over parts of West Texas and southern New Mexico in search of the remaining 1,500 to 2,000 pellets.

William Silva, chief of incident investigation for the Texas Bureau of Radiation Control, said the helicopters will continue flights for six weeks in an attempt to determine if any of the pellets are still in the El Paso area.

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Drunk

Pledge suffers alcohol poisoning at SMU frat party

United Press International

DALLAS — Southern Methodist University has curtailed activities of a campus fraternity chapter pending an investigation into three "alcohol related incidents" that sent a pledge to the hospital.

SMU's student newspaper, "The Daily Campus," reported Wednesday that paramedics had rushed a pledge suffering from what campus security officers called apparent alcohol poisoning to Presbyterian Hospital March 1.

Campus security officer Richard Abshire identified the injured pledge as belonging to SMU's chapter of the national Kappa Alpha fraternity.

Abshire said the pledge said he attended a rally at the fraternity house Feb. 29 to get a "big brother." To qualify for a big brother, he had to drink a bottle of whiskey.

Abshire's report said the student was returned to his room at the fraternity by a person who said the pledge might be "a little hurt." Abshire continued that the pledge lay comatose on

his bed until paramedics were called at 1 p.m. Thursday afternoon, his right arm and hand swollen, his eyes crossed and no apparent knowledge of his surroundings.

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Senator

Living Area (38)
College (38)

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Secretary
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Class of '86

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Class of '87

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Yell Leader

Senior (3)
Junior (2)

FILING INFO:
When: Mon-Wed March 5-7 9-4
Thursday March 8 9-6
Where: 214 Pavilion
LAST DAY

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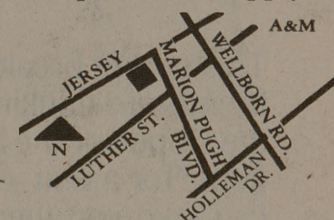
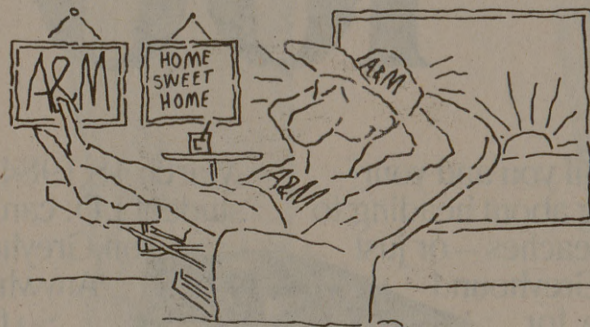
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