



The chilly weather puts some Christmas spirit into the hearts of Aggies. Lambda Sigma member Sheri Steele (right) sells Wes Williams (center) and Steve Ash a Christmas tree. Lambda Sigma will be

selling the trees all this week in front of Sbsa Dining Hall and the Commons.

Photo by GREG BAILEY

A&M debate team begins preparing a year in advance

By KELLI THOMERSON
Reporter

If most students think they spend too much time in the library studying, they need to think again.

Members of the Texas A&M Debate Team spend an average of 20 hours every week researching and preparing for tournaments, says Wayne Kraemer, the team's coach.

"Preparation is over the entire year," Kraemer says. "At the end of the summer we get a debate topic that is selected by the debate coaches all across the nation, and we'll research that topic all year long."

The topic is announced in April and tournaments start in September.

The team debates on two different resolutions or areas, the National Debate Tournament and the Cross-Examination Debate Association, Kraemer says.

The NDT resolution involves anything that requires a course of action, a policy, he says. CEDA is an offshoot of the NDT topic and deals with values instead of policy.

The debate focuses on the underlying values of the resolution instead of policies, Kraemer says. The CEDA resolution is for people who don't have as much time to do research as the people on NDT do, he says.

There are five two-man teams on each resolution. Each team first researches and writes arguments on the chosen topic.

"Part of the research involves writing an affirmative case, which means we have to go out and research a problem area within the confines of the resolution," Kraemer says. "We then offer a workable solution for that problem and the advantages that stem from specific solution."

"At the beginning of the year, after we do all the research, we prepare ourselves for the tournament."

Kraemer says the first round is always hard because no one knows what the other teams will argue. Afterward, the team learns the different affirmations which are being used across the nation, so it can prepare for the next round.

"It's kind of an ongoing, year-oriented process," Kraemer says.

Debate tournaments take place over four or five days. There are four preliminary rounds and then the power round, which is the final round in each tournament.

"You go against teams with the same record from the preliminary rounds, and then the top three teams advance to the final round," Kraemer says. "That goes on for three rounds, and then the top three teams are chosen to go into the single elimination round and on to the final round."

Debaters can enter an amateur division, Kraemer says. "If you have had no college experience, you can enter the novice division. The novice division is for people who have had no college experience in the eye and mind."

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Astronomy club offers B-CS chance to see comet

By JO BETH MURPHY
Reporter

The Texas A&M Association of Amateur Astronomers will have telescopes set up in a local park Friday and Saturday to give the community an opportunity to see Halley's Comet.

Halley's Comet is seen only every 76.09 years because it takes the comet that long to orbit the sun.

Darrin Lewer, a co-founder of the association, says it hopes to have at least four telescopes set up at Southwood Park at 1601 Rock Prairie Road in College Station. He says more telescopes might be available if the University's physics department is able to loan them to the group.

The eight- and 10-inch telescopes will be set up from 7 p.m. to midnight on the youth soccer fields.

There is no charge to look through

the telescopes or to get into the park, but there will be a donation box. Contributions will be used for equipment upkeep and repair and to fix up a dark-sky observing site, Lewer says.

He says the telescopes and the knowledge of the association's members are being provided for community awareness.

"Basically, one of our functions is to help the community become aware of astronomy and astronomy events,"

Lewer says.

He says that members of the association include people from the community as well as A&M students.

An interest in astronomy is the only membership requirement, he says.

Lewer says clear weather is necessary for viewing the comet.

If the weather is bad, the viewings will be called off, he says, which is what happened on the Nov. 16

attempt to see Halley's Comet.

Halley's Comet was the first for which a periodic pattern was determined.

It was first sighted by astronomer Edmund Halley in 1682, but ancient peoples sighted it as early as 240 B.C.

Comets often were thought to be forewarnings of the actual cause of human or natural events and disasters.

Scientists have counted back the

years, and Halley's Comet is the

to the comet depicted on a map from the eleventh century.

Comet also is the Great Comet of 1456 which caused panic among Christians, who thought it was

ated with the capture of Constantinople by the Turks.

The word comet comes from an ancient Greek "kometes," which means "hairy star."

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