

Fish

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"And I didn't expect things to be so lively. There was a really big water fight between the North and South side when I first got here!"

The best surprise of all to Comin was her roommate — a newcomer from Duncanville.

"She's great!" says Comin. "She's so considerate, our schedules match and she takes great phone messages."

Comin is seeing lots of other friendly faces around campus due to the her participation in Fish Camp '89.

"I didn't realize how many people I had met in Fish Camp," she said. "It's great being able to meet someone on campus that you know and go to lunch. I just get overwhelmed when I think about it."

"I learned such a bond at Fish Camp, and it really confirmed to me that I made the right decision on

where to go to school."

Fish Camp was where Comin met freshman Katie Sullivan, a journalism major from Richardson.

Sullivan started off her week by being cross cut during Greek rush, but she hasn't let that get her down.

"I was sad at first, but then I went and drowned my sorrows in pizza and I'm okay now," she said.

"Fish Camp prepared me for some great friendships that have carried over. Besides, I can say I'm

really familiar with the yells."

Sullivan does have two common complaints — the lines and the parking.

"They're absolutely impossible," she said.

With 370 extra freshman at A&M, standing in lines and fighting over parking spaces may be more commonplace in the near future.

Are the waits worth it?

"Definitely," Sullivan said. "Coming to A&M was a privilege, and I think it's great!"

Kenya

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ate fresh pineapple for breakfast. The staple of the natives' diet is made up of a cornflour paste called ugali, which Learned described as a foul-tasting substance that has the consistency of thick wallpaper paste.

"It's like when you ate Elmer's glue when you were little," she said.

Although not every aspect of the country suited Learned and her companions, the travelers found that Kenya is an incredibly beautiful land, full of natural wonders.

"We climbed some not so extinct volcanoes that were smoking at the top," she said.

One of the mountains they climbed gave them an excellent view of more than two million flamingos that live around Lake Nakuru. From a distance, the birds looked like a giant, pink oil spill clinging to the edge of the lake, she said.

Learned said the most remarkable part of the trip came when the group climbed Mount Kenya. As they climbed the mountain, they went through ecological zones ranging from rosewood forests and tropical rain forests to marshes. She said that when they got above the clouds and could look out across the countryside, the view was something that hardly could be described.

Kolache

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famous pastry. Four years later that idea has progressed into widely acclaimed celebration, luring spectators from Texas and beyond.

A kolache (ko-LAH-chee), for those who have never heard of one, is a Czechoslovakian pastry. It consists of yeast dough folded over a filling of fruit, poppyseed, cheese and other tasty fillings and then baked to a light golden brown. The favorite national dessert throughout Czechoslovakia, kolaches have a tradition of being served at Czech Texans' wedding feasts.

Besides having 16 booths for selling kolaches, this year's festival will provide a variety of attractions including baking contests, dances, live bands, 125 arts and crafts booths and 40 refreshment stands (offering a wide variety of ethnic foods and plenty of cold beverages, including alcohol).

Honey Dowdy, executive director of the Caldwell Chamber of Commerce, anticipates the best festival yet, expecting more than 25,000 spectators.

"Every year, the festival has just grown and grown," Dowdy said with enthusiasm. "It's definitely a community-wide effort. The uniqueness of our small-town atmosphere is so effective that you can sense the unity."

Dowdy, who was primarily responsible for the initial idea of the

festival, said the number of spectators has nearly doubled each year since 1985. Since then, the festival's fame has spread slowly across the nation.

Spectators ventured from as far as California last year, Dowdy said. This year, the secretary of the Czechoslovakian embassy from Washington, D.C., will be a guest at the celebration, and State Budget Director Jim Oliver will be one of the judges for the kolache bake-off.

In 1988 alone, the festival had a seven-page spread in Texas Highways and was highlighted in such popular magazines as National Geographic Travelers and Christian Science Monitor. The Monitor focused on how closely some American people cling to their ethnic roots.

The contribution that Caldwell and its festival made last year earned it two state honors. The city won the 1988 Texas Festival Association award, given each year to a Texas festival which promotes cultural recognition and advancement. Within six months after the festival, the Texas House officially designated Caldwell as the "Kolache Capital of Texas."

"We were so proud to receive the award because it symbolized the pride of Caldwell's cultural heritage," Dowdy said. "Because of this festival, we are renewing that pride."

Dowdy said Aggie students have plenty of reasons to attend. From an antique automobile show featuring more than 100 classic cars to a kolache-eating contest, Dowdy promises the gala event to be very entertaining.

"I think the students would espe-

cially enjoy the kolache-eating contest," she said. "And since admission to the festival is free, I know that should especially lure college students."

Pre-registration for the eating contest is scheduled for 8 a.m. at Hughes-Doonan Chevrolet in downtown Caldwell. The first person to eat a dozen kolaches wins.

Dowdy said the event also will feature a parade of costumes, a steam engine that makes ice-cream, polka dances, and a man who demonstrates the craft of making violins. There will also be demonstrations in stenciling, basket weaving, egg decorating, quilting, woodcraft, carving and sculpturing.

Although many of the musical performances are given by Czech bands who are not as popular in this area, Dowdy said they are all strictly professional, first-class musicians (both in bands and orchestras) from all over the state.

"Those who come will feel the sense of celebration and lend their souls to the fulfillment of the Czech cultural heritage," Dowdy said.

Caldwell is located approximately 25 miles west of Bryan-College Station at the intersection of State Highways 21 and 36. Two routes are possible. Take Highway 60 through Snook and turn right in Lyons on Highway 36 towards Caldwell or travel 25 miles west on Highway 21 towards Austin. The Kolache Festival will kick off Saturday at 9 a.m. in downtown Caldwell. Follow the signs that say "CZECH" IT OUT!

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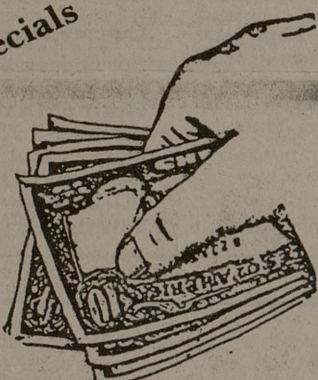
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