

Aggie Hostesses welcome high school athletes to A&M

Group shows recruits around campus, answers questions

By Alysia Woods
The Battalion

Enthusiasm for Texas A&M traditions, football savvy, and winning personalities characterize more than just Aggie yell leaders. In fact, this inspirational bunch is especially unique from the yell leaders because they're women.

They're the Aggie Hostesses and together they have greeted thousands of high school athletes hoping for a shot at college football at A&M.

The Aggie Hostesses is a University-recognized organization that has been around since 1985. Hostess Dana Hurley says the organization has really grown since then.

"It was very informal in the beginning," says Hurley, a sophomore journalism major. "But we're finally getting some recognition that other groups have, like the Diamond Darlings."

Hurley, also on the organization's publicity committee, says an Aggie Hostess is a potential football player's only link to the student body.

"When recruits come down for a weekend, they probably get tired of talking to coaches asking them how much they bench press and what they eat," she says. "We are able to relate to them more because we are students."

A hostess is primarily responsible for welcoming and "showing around" high school athletes brought to A&M during the fall or spring semesters for possible recruitment into Aggie football. Occasionally, students for other team sports are recruited.

During the fall, various recruits and their parents are given tickets to a home football game as part of A&M's informal recruiting process. Hostesses must arrive two hours early for the game, dressed neatly in their khaki skirts and maroon-and-white rugby shirts. They receive basic knowledge about each recruit, such as his name, where he is from, what position he plays, and other related items. The really outstanding, sought-after players, known as "blue-chip" players, are singled out to hostesses in advance.

Each recruit is then assigned to a hostess, who greets him, tells him about A&M, takes him to an on-campus lunch, escorts him to



HUY NGUYEN/The Battalion

Friendly faces of the Aggie Hostesses offer warm welcomes to potential recruits for the A&M football program and their families.

pregame football practice and, finally, to 50-yardline alumni seats at the game.

Aggie Hostesses answer any questions the recruit and his parents might have and explain Aggie traditions throughout the game, as well as offer to get refreshments for the guests.

Hurley is quick to point out the hostesses are not allowed to date recruits or flirt with them in any way.

"We are strictly there to show

them around and answer their questions," she says. "We have to abide by a lot of NCAA regulations."

While they are in town, recruits and their expenses are not compensated for during the fall and hostesses are warned not to give recruits "false hope" they might be selected for the team.

"Good luck" is about all we can say," Hurley says.

Each spring, however, the pace - and race - for high school

recruiting quickens. Five specific weekends in January and February are designated for recruiting; the Aggie Hostesses, as well as A&M football players, host dozens of potential football players.

During recruiting weekends, each recruit is assigned a hostess and an A&M football player. Together they attend several meetings, eat meals, and on some occasions go out for a night on the town. Once again, says Hurley, the relationship between hostesses and recruits is kept on a friends-only basis.

Making new friends doesn't come easy, however. Being an Aggie Hostess, she says, takes a lot of time and dedication. Hostesses are not paid for their hours of hospitality.

Tracy Waters, one of three coordinators for the Aggie Hostesses, says the organization focuses more on personality than anything else in the selection of hostesses.

"Basically, we test their knowledge of football and Aggie traditions," says Waters, a senior animal science major in her second year in the organization. "But personality is the most important quality."

Hostess tryouts are in the spring. Interested women who maintain 2.5 GPAs and are in good standing with the University fill out applications, provide

photographs and write a paragraph explaining why they want to be Aggie Hostesses.

From there, interviews, conducted by the coordinators, Applicants are put in various situations in which they must provide quick responses. Some questions center on how the applicant would react if a recruit gave her a pass at her.

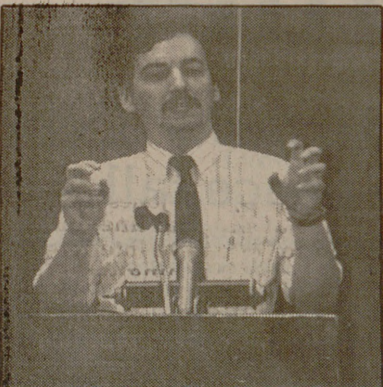
Tim Cassidy, A&M's recruiting coordinator and supervisor of the Aggie Hostesses, says women play key roles in recruiting because they provide support from a student aspect. "Although the girls don't have any benefits or pay, they are positive about Aggie football," he says. "They just have a burning desire that all Aggie have to help promote A&M."

Hostess Ashley Mathews, a junior marketing major and chairwoman of the public committee, says she enjoys being part of an organization that is based in Aggie tradition.

"I get to see a side of Aggie football that a lot of people never see," she says. "That's exciting."

The Aggie Hostesses were recognized at the A&M-Houston game today before kickoff, scheduled for 2 p.m. They will be featured on the cover of the football program this season.

Fear - it won't scare you to death



Dr. Karl Hursey

Tammy Bryson
The Battalion

This Halloween remember that all those haunted houses you go to and scary movies you see just might be good for you.

Fear is a normal part of life and can even be a good thing, said Dr. Karl Hursey, assistant professor of psychology at Texas A&M, in his presentation on the "psychology of fear" Monday night in Rudder Tower.

"People enjoy fear," he said. "They like the stimulation and

thrill as the roller coaster goes down that first hill."

"People enjoy the fear of something like a haunted house because in the back of their minds they know it's safe."

Hursey suggested that people need a certain degree of fear in their lives.

"You need fear," he said. "It makes you go to the dentist before you have a toothache. It makes you go to the doctor when you feel that pain in your stomach."

"Fear is adaptive - it's a good thing, but it can go too far."

Although fear is a normal emotion, it has gone too far when

it interferes with the normal course of your life, Hursey said. Phobias are one such type of fear that can go beyond reason.

"Many times fears are irrational," he said. "A person is more likely to get killed in his car driving to the airport than he is in an airplane crash, but many people are afraid to fly and not afraid to drive."

Phobias are fears that deal with the anticipation of an event, Hursey said. The anxiety caused by this anticipation can cause sufferers to avoid society.

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Chemistry Building enters second phase of renovation

By Troy D. Hall
The Battalion

Chain link fences placed around the west side of the Chemistry Building last week marked the start of Phase II of the University renovation project which began several semesters ago.

Phase II is a continuing phase of renovation for the complex which involves gutting the internal areas of the Chemistry Building to modernize the facilities, said Tim Donathen, assistant manager for Texas A&M Facilities and Planning.

"To my knowledge that portion of the building has never been thoroughly modernized and its mechanical, plumbing and electrical facilities have performed well over their life expectancy," he said.

The building was constructed in 1932. Phase I included renovation

See Building

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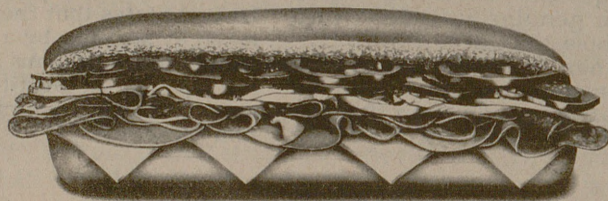
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