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# Buddy system

Bonfire buddies offer camaraderie, support

BY EMILY PUDEK  
 The Battalion

Last Saturday, Bonfire buddies met and exchanged gifts for the first time, continuing a tradition that fuels the "burning desire to beat the hell out of t.u." and helps develop new friendships.

Libby Shortner, a sophomore education major, said the Bonfire buddies tradition encourages students who live in residence halls to mingle with each other.

"Buddies build excitement for Bonfire and friendships between halls," Shortner said. "It's a fun way to meet people. You can get several groups of couples together and go out to eat or go dancing. And if you go out to cut, you might see each other."

Bonfire buddies are couples, one male and one female student, who periodically exchange gifts during Bonfire preparation.

Eugene Woo, a senior wildlife and fisheries sciences major, said Bonfire buddies encourage students to get involved on campus.

"I think Bonfire buddies have very little to do with Bonfire and more with the Aggie spirit of friendship," Woo said. "A lot of people sign up for Bonfire buddies that don't actively participate in Bonfire. I wish more people would participate in it because it is something fun to do and a great way to meet new people."

Woo said men spend a lot of time trying to find gifts for their buddies because they do not know what to buy for women.

"People always remember their Bonfire buddies because, for a lot of guys, that is their first time to shop for women," Woo said. "It's

the beginning of a new challenge. Fish usually go to upperclassmen and ask them what gifts they should get."

Woo said guys often resort to generic gifts, like stuffed animals, when they have no idea what to buy their female buddies.

"Teddy bears from Walmart are an annual favorite because they are cheap and readily available," he said. "Some fish send elephants that they shouldn't be sending. They usually spend \$5 to \$10 on a decent gift, but some guys get really eccentric and spend much more money."

Shortner said her boyfriend helped choose a present for her buddy.

"I asked my boyfriend to help me pick out something that a guy would like, and he picked out a swimsuit poster," Shortner said. "I also got him a bubble-gum machine, a dart gun and a whole case of Ramen. The funniest gift was a doorbell that said, 'No girls allowed,' 'Leave a message,' 'Buzz off' and 'Come on in.'"

Woo said he spent a lot of time and effort on an original gift for his sophomore-year buddy.

"I spent an entire week, two hours a day, sanding, whittling and painting this piece of wood with her name, class and 'Bonfire' on it," Woo said. "It was a nameplate for her desk, and I painted it in the Crocker [Hall] colors of red, white and yellow."



ROBERT HYNEK

April Todd, a freshman international studies major, said she has only talked to her buddy on the phone and hopes he will like her gifts.

"I'm not so concerned about what he'll give me, but I want to give him some cool stuff," Todd said. "As I get to know more about him, I'll pick up some hints about gifts to give him. Some people buy their buddies Copenhagen and alcohol, but I don't really see

myself doing that. I guess how we get along, and the last gift I'll get him is more than candy that you throw away."

Woo said many guys see a Bonfire buddy with the gift-giving on their minds. "A lot of guys feel like the time to get hooked up," said. "Sometimes it happens

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