

THE BATTALION

106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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Rising spirit



CHAD ADAMS/THE BATTALION

Students watch as Centerpole is raised Friday afternoon at the Bonfire site on the Polo Field.

Construction of Bonfire makes visible progress with arrival, placement of Centerpole at site

BY RICHARD BRAY
The Battalion

The spirit of Aggieland stood tall and proud on Friday when it was symbolized by the raising of the centerpole for Bonfire. Centerpole was provided by the Lufkin Cresote Company in two pieces which were joined together to create a final height of more than 75 feet a week after it was brought to campus. Traditionally, the residence hall or Corps of Cadets outfit that has spent the most time and worked the hardest on Bonfire to this point has the honor of putting its flag on top of centerpole. This year, Squadron 17, an

airforce outfit in the Corps of Cadets, has its flag flying on top of centerpole. Bonfire has been a tradition at Texas A&M since 1909, and the raising of centerpole is the first step in this tradition which embodies A&M's burning desire to "beat the hell" out of the University of Texas-Austin in the Nov. 26 football game. Sean Wasko, a freshman chemical engineering major who attended the raising of centerpole, said he came away from the event with a better understanding of the Aggie spirit and how centerpole is symbolic of that spirit. "There was a lot of bonding

and unity," Wasko said. "It is the base that keeps the entire Bonfire standing. It is also the first visible sign of all the work we've put into Bonfire." Travis Johnson, head stack and a senior finance major, said centerpole is vital to the Bonfire tradition. "Centerpole is an important part of Bonfire, because it is the backbone on which Bonfire begins," he said. On Nov. 11, Push begins. Push consists of residence halls and Corps of Cadets units working on Bonfire from 6 p.m. until 6 a.m. every night until

SEE CENTERPOLE ON PAGE 2.

House built on campus completed, dedicated

BY BRADY CREEL
The Battalion

The family of Mamie Ellis now has a house to call home, thanks to the dedication, commitment and hours of work put forth by Aggies and other members of the Bryan-College Station community. Officials from the Aggie Habitat for Humanity and the Texas A&M student chapter of Habitat for Humanity, said building the house on campus was their dream project because it allowed student volunteers help with the construction. The house was dedicated Saturday morning with an official "board-cutting" instead of ribbon-cutting ceremony. Construction coordinators Dr. Jim Davis and Vince Fratinardo, a civil engineering graduate student, presented the Ellis family with keys to their new home. Taylor Handley, Aggie Habitat for Humanity president and a junior genetics major, said recipients of a home through the Habitat for Humanity program must meet certain eligibility criteria and make a 100-hour sweat-equity down-payment by working on other Habitat projects. Once the initial investment has been made, a candidate family must work an additional 300 hours on the house. Handley said the Ellis family easily surpassed its 300-hour quota. "I think they put in over 500 or 600 hours," he said. "They have been waiting and working for the fun of it." The structure itself was built in its entirety on the Polo Fields on campus. Once completed, it was relocated to Detroit Street. A small deck and wheelchair ramp were added once the foundation was established, and the house has been permanently placed. The Ellis family was presented with numerous housewarming gifts, and a Bible. Mamie's mother, Luezia, a patient at St. Joseph's Regional Health Center, is expected to come home to their new house soon.



ANTHONY DISALVO/THE BATTALION

Jim Daviz, Bryan-College Station Habitat Construction coordinator, and Vince Fratinardo, Aggie Habitat Construction coordinator, hold down a board as Mamie Ellis cuts it, instead of a ribbon, at the dedication of her home.

The Ellis family had been living in a two-story apartment. However, because of Luezia's health conditions and her inability to get upstairs, she had to live in a nursing home. Handley said building a house on the A&M campus was quite an accomplishment. "Needless to say, it is pretty tough to build something on the A&M campus," Handley said. "You can't just decide to build something, and nonetheless on Bonfire site." John J. Surovik, vice president in the Bryan office of Norwest Banks, which sponsored the house, said the Aggies have been a great support staff and thanked them for their active participation. "The Aggies built this house from the ground up, and due to their hard work, the Ellis' have a home now," Surovik said. Lynn McIlhaney, College Station mayor, commended A&M students for caring enough to get involved. "We always hear about the bad things the youth do

SEE HABITAT ON PAGE 2.

Buddhist master reveals key to finding true Buddha nature

BY JESSI HIGHFILL
The Battalion

Tibetan Buddhist master Tulku Thubten Rinpoche said love is the key to experiencing the Buddha nature last night in a lecture, "Buddha Nature," sponsored by the Texas A&M University Buddhist Association. Rinpoche spoke to his audience about the difficulty in finding the true Buddha nature and how elements of Buddha is inherent in everyday life. Nathaniel Rich, A&M Buddhist Association president and a senior philosophy major, introduced Rinpoche and called for more than 15 minutes of meditation. Rinpoche used the story "The Ugly Duckling" to illustrate how people are trapped in false identities and are unable to look past these identities to realize their Buddha nature. "The reason we are looking for spiritual unity with God or with a transcendental entity is because

we have forgotten who we really are," Rinpoche said. "God—Buddha—is already in each of us." Rinpoche said love is the highest religious experience, and there is no religious experience that is supreme to love. "But the Buddhist perspective is not the poet's perspective on love," he said. "Love is acceptance of who we are. The path to ultimate love is to accept ourselves as who we are—as God, as Buddha, as a divine entity." Rinpoche was born in the Golok region of eastern Tibet. He began formal Buddhist training at 13 and at 15 was recognized as the reincarnation of Ahnam Lama, an important 19th-century Buddhist spiritual master in Tibet. Rinpoche currently is director of the Vajrayana Foundation College of Buddhist Studies in Santa Cruz, Calif. The A&M Buddhist Association will host "An Evening with Tulku Thubten Rinpoche" tonight at

TIBETAN BUDDHIST MASTER

TULKU THUBTEN RINPOCHE

- BORN IN EASTERN TIBET
- RECOGNIZED AS REINCARNATION OF AHNAM LAMA, AN IMPORTANT BUDDHIST SPIRITUAL MASTER IN THE 19TH CENTURY

WILL ANSWER QUESTIONS **TONIGHT**

RUDDER 504

8:30 p.m.

RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

8:30 in Rudder 504. This will be an informal meeting for anyone who is interested in meeting or speaking with Rinpoche.

Mini-Olympics end, top winners named

BY JEANETTE SIMPSON
The Battalion

For the last three weeks the Student Recreation Center, and Reed Arena have been filled with students from around the globe competing in the International Students Association (ISA) Mini-Olympics. The games wrapped up this weekend with the African Students Association (ASA) as Mini-Olympics overall champion. Noriko Yoshida, a member of the coed Japan Club basketball team that finished second overall and senior sociology major, said the Mini-Olympics were fun and competitive. "The games were fun, and it gave me a chance to meet new friends from many places," Yoshida said. "At times the games became very competitive, everyone wanted their team to win, but even with the competition was fun for all the players."

Each event had first and second place awards, and there were three all around best positions. The African Student Association finished first overall. The China Club came in second, and the Indonesian Student Association finished third. The ASA took home first place in basketball, soccer and track and field. The China Club swept the table tennis event winning both first and second place in all categories. It also took home the first place in male and female doubles, male singles and coed doubles in the badminton event and claimed the first place coed volleyball medal. The Indonesian Student Association won first and second place in team and male singles bowling. They also took the first place position in bowling in the female singles division. The Japan Club took the first place medal in putt-putt golf.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

MINI OLYMPICS OVERALL PLACE

- 1 AFRICAN STUDENTS ASSOCIATION
- 2 CHINA CLUB
- 3 INDONESIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION

BRANDON HENDERSON/THE BATTALION

The first place finishes for softball in both the male and coed divisions were won by the Taiwanese Student Association. The second place finish for softball in the male division was won by the Panamanian Student Association. The second place finish for softball in the coed division was taken by the ISA. The Indian Student Association

SEE ISA ON PAGE 2.

A&M club hosts competition for gymnasts to raise money

BY MATT LOFTIS
The Battalion

Sarah Childs, a sophomore nutritional science major, and Ann Edmond, a sophomore animal science major, tied for first place in the intermediate division of the biannual Texas A&M Gymnastics Club Aggieland Tumble-Off yesterday. The tie was broken when Childs won a handstand-endurance contest. Childs and Edmond were two of nine gymnasts who participated in Sunday's tumble-off competition. Edmond, who had completed before, said she enjoyed the competition. "It was just for fun," she said. "It was also a good chance to tumble." Jennifer Lim, Gymnastics Club Women's captain and a sophomore biomedical science major, said the Tumble-Off is a fund raiser held every semester to help pay for uniforms, warm-ups and club trips. Participants paid a \$5 entry fee and spectators paid \$3. John Shaffer, Gymnastics Club vice president and a sophomore English major, said the team is saving for a

A&M GYMNASTICS CLUB

TUMBLE-OFF

Intermediate

(TIE) Ann Edmond

* Sarah Childs

* Won the handstand competition to break the tie

Advanced

- 1st Effie Hadley
- 2nd Peter Korte

RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

trip to a national competition in Philadelphia. Competition in the Tumble-Off was divided into three categories according to skill level: beginner, intermediate and advanced. Competitors participated in floor tumbling and were judged on their execution of 15 separate

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INSIDE Sports

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Opinion

• Everything I learned... I learned in the crib Teaching foreign languages to children beneficial.

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Batt Radio

Listen to KAMU-FM 90.9 at 1:57 p.m. for details on the closing of a center for teens.