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Muster

Continued from page 1

Libby said having Hufstedler honored at Muster is perfectly in line with the Aggie traditions he cherished so much.

Carmen Pendergraff, Blanco-Caldas' sister, will hold a candle at Aggie Muster in memory of her brother. Blanco-Caldas, the passionate Puerto Rican-turned-Texan, who was never without his guitar, was killed in Iraq on Dec. 28, 2003.

Pendergraff said she misses her bigger-than-life brother greatly and that although attending Muster is one of the hardest things her family will have to do, she couldn't imagine not going.

"It's finally saying goodbye," Pendergraff said. "It's the last chapter of his book. I don't think he would've wanted it any other way."

This is the first time Pendergraff has attended Aggie Muster, and she said she is honored that Blanco-Caldas is a part of such an amazing tradition.

"It validates the fact that once an Aggie, always an Aggie," Pendergraff said. "Ernie couldn't have chosen a better place to go to school and a better family to belong to. A&M really made him into the man he was."

Blanco-Caldas built five Aggie Bonfires while attending A&M and was also a Singing Cadet and a Ross Volunteer.

Blanco-Caldas' aunt, Joan Maymi of Sandy, Utah, said not a day goes by that she doesn't look at his picture and think of her nephew. She said that sometimes she still calls his cell phone just to hear his voice, and that she leaves a message telling him that she misses him.

Maymi said that although she is nervous about going to Muster, she knows that it is just one of the things keeping her nephew alive in spirit.

"I'm scared because I know it's going to bring up those feelings again, but in the same, it's something that helps us realize we're not going through this in vain, and we're not going through this alone," Maymi said.

Jonathan Rozier's wife, Jessica, will hold a candle at Muster for her husband, who was killed on July 19, 2003 while on patrol duty outside of his tank. Jessica, who met Rozier while they were in the Corps of Cadets together, said her husband was a die-hard Aggie who nobody ever seemed to have a problem with.

"Muster signifies that we are all Aggies, and once an Aggie, always an Aggie. You will never be forgotten."

— Cindy Abbott
Muster chair

Jessica said it's been hard raising her 17-year-old son, Justin, without Rozier, and that she's going to Muster will help give her closure.

"It's not something I ever wanted to go to soon," she said. "I guess I'm doing OK. I still think about him all the time, but I can think about thoughts and not just about his death."

Rozier's mother, Barbara, said her brilliant son loved the traditions and the feel of the University.

"The first time he set foot on campus, he said that was where he was supposed to be," she said. Barbara said Rozier was, by nature, a kind and meticulous young man, and that the information that he picked up at A&M ended him to go into the Army.

"He knew he needed to be there, and he believed that freedom is not free," she said. "I said that every generation was called and it was his turn to defend our freedom."

Barbara said her son truly earned his place in the roll call.

"Jon lived a lot of life in 25 years," she said. Muster Chair Cindy Abbott said it is

appreciate that these soldiers are at this year's Muster because Aggies have a history of being the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

"I think they deserve it," Abbott said.

Muster will begin at 10 a.m. with a flag-raising ceremony featuring the Band, Corps of Cadets, and the Class of 1954.

At 11 a.m., Muster will hold a barbecue at Academic Plaza or at Stadium. The barbecue will be a day long.

Students can visit the Reflections display at the Memorial Student Center, which will feature personal items of those on this year's roll call.

The doors at Reed Arena will open at 5:30 p.m. and the Muster feature speaker will be Hagler, Class of 1958.

Shannon Vogt, senior marketing manager for Roll Call and Families Sub Chair, encourages students to attend because she said it's a special that helps bond the Aggie family together.

Abbott said that with more than 400 Aggies worldwide, this is something every Aggie shares in and that epitomizes the Aggie family. "Muster signifies that we are all Aggies, once an Aggie, always an Aggie," Abbott said. "You will never be forgotten."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Government lists beluga sturgeon as threatened species

WASHINGTON (AP) — The government set the stage Tuesday for reducing or even banning imports of prized beluga caviar in six months, listing the beluga sturgeon as a species whose survival is considered threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

The move came as a result of a petition from

environmental groups. Afterward, they said, a decision by the Fish and Wildlife Service to go far enough because they had warned of immediate ban.

As of 2002, the United States imported 90 percent of the world's beluga caviar, down from 80 percent two years earlier.

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