

Nick Banks preps for Opening Day against Holy Cross. For more on Banks, check out pg. 4.



# Bright skies over an Olsen Field weekend

Opening Day | pages three & four

Tanner Garza — THE BATTALION

## Aggieland Saturday descends on campus

By Katie Canales

▶ Campus will be swarmed with prospective students and their parents this Valentine's Day as Aggieland Saturday hosts its open house full of dorm, library and computer lab tours.

Aggieland Saturday is also a chance to learn more about the colleges and majors A&M offers, with presentations given by A&M departments to display the various resources available to students.

In addition to individual department presentations, full campus tours are offered every half hour from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. and start from either Rudder Plaza, the corner of Joe Rountt and Houston streets by Kyle Field or the Zachry Engineering Center at Bizzell and Ross Streets.

### STUDENT GOVERNMENT

## 'Aggies got Talent' to further SGA endowment

By Kylee Reid

▶ Student Government Association will kick off its first "Aggies Got Talent" show Saturday to raise money for its endowment fund.

Gracie Wood, senior political science major and SGA Development Commissioner, said the event will consist of 16 various talent acts, including a yodeler and an electric violinist, as well as a silent auction.

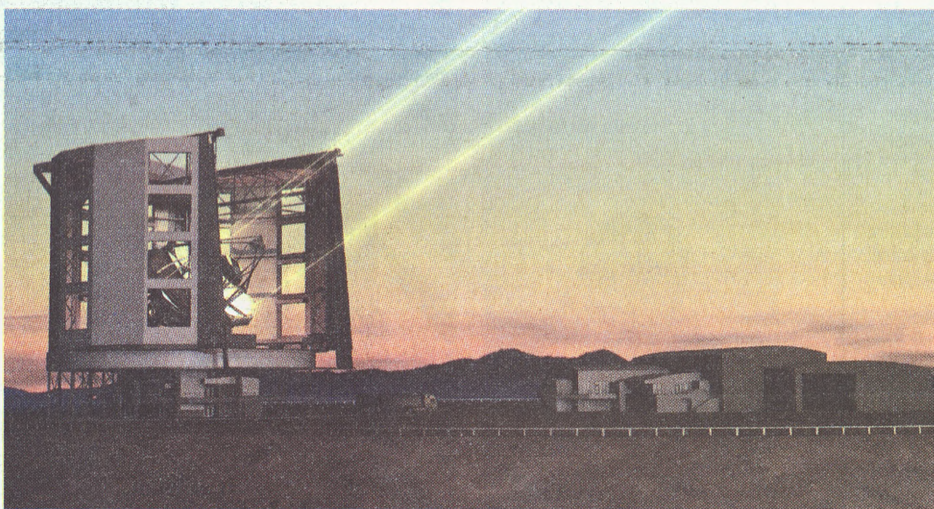
"We do auditions and we had almost 50 acts come audition for the show and we chose 16 out of those 50 acts," Wood said.

Hannah Wimberley, SGA public relations vice president and psychology junior, said the event organizers hope to

TALENT SHOW ON PG. 2

## FIRM COMMITMENT

Board of Regents approves \$50 million to fund world's largest telescope



Courtesy of GMT Corporation



Alison Bradshaw — THE BATTALION

(Top) A&M is one of 11 international partners in the Giant Magellan Telescope Corporation. (Bottom) The Board of Regents voted Thursday to approve the final half of its \$50 million contribution to the telescope.

By Katy Stapp

▶ Texas A&M secured its position at astronomy's cutting edge Thursday when a unanimous vote at the A&M Board of Regents meeting approved the final half of its \$50 million commitment to fund the world's largest telescope.

Set to open science operations in 2022, the Giant Magellan Telescope is an observatory projected to have 10 times the resolution of the Hubble Space Telescope. Texas A&M and the University of Texas at Austin are two of 11 international partners who hope to start construction in the Chilean desert before summer.

A&M's recent commitment caps a funding drive begun largely by the efforts of the late George P. Mitchell, who donated close to \$28 million toward A&M's stake before he died in 2013.

Texas A&M and UT have now committed 5 percent of the total cost of the telescope's

construction. A&M officially made a \$22 million contribution after Thursday's meeting on top of the \$28.1 million that has already been raised, said Darren DePoy, physics professor and member of GMT's board of directors.

"We have already committed about \$28 million, mostly out of philanthropy from George Mitchell, and some other funds from various pieces of the university," DePoy said. "What we needed to do is go from \$28 million to about \$50 million or so. This extra 22 will push us in that direction."

UT declared \$50 million to the GMT in March 2014 after a University of Texas System Regents meeting gave the greenlight. Both A&M and UT hope to raise their commitments to 10 percent, or \$100 million.

DePoy said the primary reason for contributing such a large portion to the cost of GMT's construction is that it will involve A&M in a state-of-the-art, internationally scaled project.

GMT ON PG. 5

### W. BASKETBALL



Cody Franklin — THE BATTALION

Chelsea Jennings (right) secured the win Thursday with a last-second steal.

## Jennings' steal, free throws seal 59-55 victory

By Lawrence Smelser

▶ In an intense SEC rematch, the Texas A&M women's basketball team squeaked out a 59-55 win over the Arkansas Razorbacks at home Thursday.

The last time the two teams met, Achiri Ade won it for A&M on a layup at the buzzer. The game again went down to the wire, with Jessica Jackson cutting the Aggies lead to one with 34 seconds remaining. A steal from Chelsea Jennings and two clutch free throws with 2.8 seconds remaining sealed the win for the No. 15 Aggies.

Junior guard Courtney Walker praised Jennings after the game.

"She does it every day and there has been several times where we've had a player at that position as the same as Jessica and she'll come in and put a stop to it and we were able to trust her to do that again today. And she did and made the big play at the end as well as hit the big free throws," Walker said.

Head coach Gary Blair started sophomore guard Curtyce Knox in place of junior Jordan Jones, who was out with the stomach flu. She did not disappoint, finishing with eight points, five assists and four rebounds.

Texas A&M will host Alabama at 6 p.m. Monday in Reed Arena.

### THEBATT.COM

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**HIP-HOP:** A PANEL THURSDAY SAYS HIP-HOP MAY BE HELPING THE ECONOMY

**WOMEN'S GOLF:** THE TEAM WILL TRAVEL TO TALLAHASSEE, FLA., FOR A WEEKEND TOURNAMENT

**TRACK:** THE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S TEAMS ARE SET TO RUN IN THE ARKANSAS TYSON INVITATIONAL THIS WEEKEND