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Enslaved, but not forgotten Students hold 24-hour stand against modern slavery

Shelby Knowles — THE BATTALION

ACTIVISM



Elizabeth Smart speaks about abduction and empowerment in Rudder Theater Thursday.

Abducted. Abused. Unbroken.

Activist Elizabeth Smart makes A&M appearance

By Nikita Redkar

Elizabeth Smart was 14 years old when a man woke her up, held a knife to her neck and abducted her from home. The man, who believed it was God's will to make young girls his wives, held her in captivity for the next nine months until the police returned her safely to her family. Thirteen years later, Smart took the stage in front of a sold out audience at Rudder Theater Thursday to recount her harrowing experience with abduction. Despite the dark nature of her situation, Smart managed to stay relatable, riveting and light. Smart begins her presentation

by saying she's never met anyone perfect and without challenges in life. "So many times we think of our problems and think 'Why does this happen to me,' or 'Why does it have to happen right now?'" Smart said. "But you never know how these events are going to shape you and affect those around you." Smart was abducted from her home in 2002 and held in captivity until being returned to safety by the police nine months later. Her kidnapping was the most-followed child abduction case to date. "I'm not sorry that I was kidnapped," Smart said. "I don't feel bad for myself, and I'm grateful that it happened because of what it taught me."

MORE AT TX.AG/BATT34

By Taylor Siskind

To send a message in support of victims of slavery, Aggies occupied Rudder Plaza for 24 hours — from 9:30 p.m. Wednesday to 9:30 p.m. Thursday. "Thirty-six million still enslaved," read one cardboard sign. "I stand for freedom," read another. The signs accompanied the effort on the part of the Texas A&M chapter of the International Justice Mission to raise awareness of modern slavery

and human trafficking.

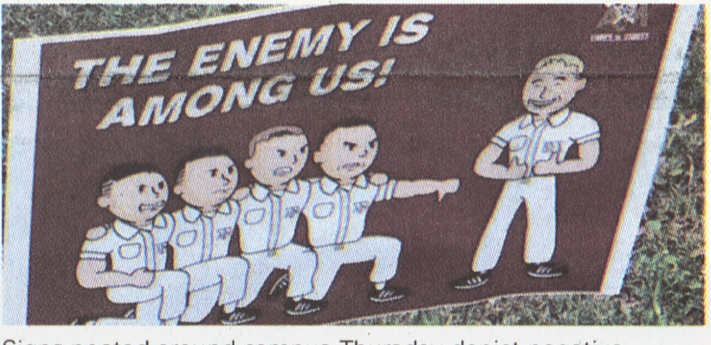
The Stand for Freedom event, held in conjunction with other IJM chapters, symbolizes a day in the shoes of a modern slave, which is reflected in the event's theme — "one day for their every day." Students took pictures with signs and posted to social media to send the simple message that they stand for freedom. They also sang worship songs, listened to a concert, prayed and signed a petition in support of the End Modern Slavery Initiative Act.

"Just being here is one way to tell those girls, 'Hey, I am praying for you and I am going to do what I can to at least stand for you,'" said Christina Cook, nursing junior. "If that's all I can do, then I want to do that." Taking pictures, speaking about the existence of human trafficking and worshipping through song for 24 hours became the focus of the event. The singing and the brightly lit display attracted students to the cause. However, when not as many

STAND-IN ON PG. 2

CAMPUS

Yell Leaders denounce message in signs targeting Greek life



Signs posted around campus Thursday depict negative images of fraternities and non-cadet yell leaders.

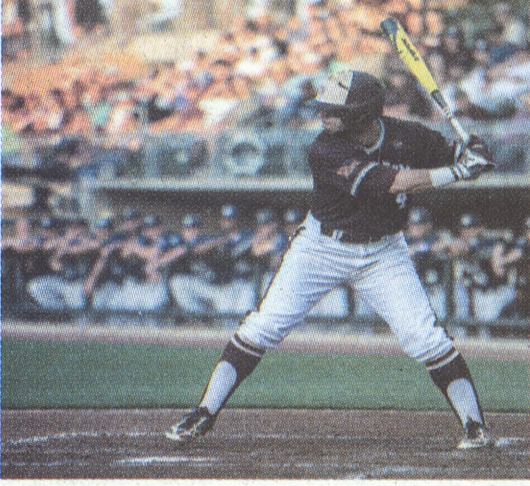
By Lindsey Gawlik

Signs placed on campus depicting anti-fraternity sentiment made a splash on social media Thursday. One sign featured caricatures of the four Yell Leaders from the Corps of Cadets giving Senior Yell Leader Steven Lanz, who is not a cadet, the thumbs down. Lanz is a member of the Christian social fraternity "Brothers Under Christ," or BYX.

Another sign featured a New Balance shoe toppling Albritton Tower. On another sign, tombstones with fraternity letters are shown below text that reads, "Don't rush to your grave." Corps of Cadets Commander David Trigg said these signs were not Corps-approved and neither the Corps nor the Office of the Commandant put them out. Trigg said the signs do not contribute to campus unity.

"I think part of the Aggie spirit is having respect and coming together as the 12th Man," Trigg said. "It's important to always realize the actions or the things we say to one another reflect how we truly care about one another, and I think as long as we continue to progress toward the goal of campus unity across all student organizations we will continue to see a rise in respect and care for each other."

SIGNS ON PG. 2



Nick Banks (left) steps into a pitch against Rice Tuesday. Mitchell Nau (right) slides into base safely during the 4-3 Rice win.

No. 1 baseball team puts hot streak on line against Bulldogs

By Andre Perrard

The Aggies have found a way again and again to come through late in ballgames, and Tuesday night they notched a 4-3 comeback win over the Rice Owls to bump their win streak to five games. Now, top-ranked A&M will continue a nine-game homestand this weekend against SEC foe Mississippi State. The Bulldogs (21-14, 5-7

SEC) are coming off a series win over South Carolina last weekend, though they dropped their mid-week contest at Memphis. Reid Humphreys has 21 RBIs this year and leads the team with five home runs. Jacob Robson will be a threat on the bases as well, as he has gone 15-for-20 on stolen base attempts this year. Also, in seven career games against the Aggies, senior Wes Rea has gone 13-for-

30 (.433) with six RBIs. Mississippi State is 7-1 against A&M in College Station. For the Aggies (31-2, 9-2 SEC), the lineup has been lethal all season. Nick Banks has reached base safely in all 32 games he has played in this season, and he is on a 10-game hit streak. Mitchell Nau — who is on a 10-game hit streak of his own — has also been on fire as of late.

BASEBALL ON PG. 4



Aggieland prepares for 30,000 participants at the 24th annual Chilifest Thursday.

Fraternity builds add unique flair to Chilifest

By Katie Fuller

Twenty-four years ago, six Texas A&M students held the first annual Chilifest in the parking lot of a local Walmart. This year, more than 30,000 people are expected to attend the popular event in Snook. The 2015 Chilifest will feature performances by the Eli Young Band, Eric Chase and the Josh Abbott Band among others. Tyler Luxion, Chilifest chairman and accounting senior, said

after a conversation on Twitter, Josh Abbott Band will keep a camel back stage, adding to the random collection of things to be found at Chilifest. Among the concerts and copious amount of beer, visitors can see the unique structures, called builds, fraternities and other groups create every year. "Every year the fraternities come out and they make their own separate

CHILIFEST ON PG. 3