

Alternative SFA Homecoming bonfire planned

Sept. 30, 2011

NACOGDOCHES, Texas – Due to the extreme drought in East Texas, this year’s Stephen F. Austin State University Homecoming torchlight parade and bonfire will be modified to ensure safety without dampening the Lumberjack spirit surrounding the annual tradition.

The torchlight parade, which kicks off at 9 p.m. Friday, Oct. 28, at the SFA statue, will feature lanterns, glow sticks and other portable lights as opposed to the customary flaming torches. As always, students and alumni will join the SFA spirit teams and marching band as they proceed down Raguet Street and Starr Avenue to the bonfire site on the intramural fields.

The bonfire structure will not be lit this year, but it will be set aglow with electric lights, providing a spirited backdrop for the introduction of the Lumberjack football team and the SFA Homecoming king and queen. The a capella group Nota, season-one winner of the NBC show “Sing Off,” also will perform at the bonfire pep rally, which is scheduled to begin at 9:30 p.m.

“The homecoming bonfire is one of our most cherished traditions; however, we have consulted with local leadership with regard to this matter and are assured that the prolonged drought makes lifting the burn ban inadvisable,” said Dr. Adam Peck, dean of student affairs.

SFA students are sensitive to the fact that Texans have lost homes, businesses and, in some cases, their lives in recent wildfires throughout the state, he said. Members of the Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity, Student Activities Association and Traditions Council are working with university officials to plan an alternative bonfire celebration that allows for the expression of Lumberjack pride and Homecoming spirit without placing the campus or its neighbors in danger.

“I know that our campus community will be disappointed, but I also know everyone will be supportive of this decision because our consideration for others is so engrained in the campus culture,” Peck said. “We look forward to hosting the traditional bonfire and torchlight parade for Homecoming 2012.”

Another aspect of the SFA bonfire tradition, the Burn Shirts, will take on added meaning this year. During Homecoming week, students, faculty and staff are encouraged to discard apparel branded with the logos and names of other universities in exchange for free SFA T-shirts that read “Lumberjack Spirit Burns in My Soul!” This year, the discarded clothing will be donated to Texas wildfire victims.

The SFA Homecoming game against McNeese State University will kick off at 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 29, at Homer Bryce Stadium.

-SFA-

Contact:
SFA Public Affairs
(936) 468-2605