

## There's a new lady in town

By HOLLY HUFFMAN

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A&M ends search for Reveille VIII with border collie from Kansas

Company E-2 Mascot Corporal John Busch holds an image of Reveille VIII on Monday. He's joined by (from left) Sean Cook, Andrew Davis and Austin Stobaugh.

Eagle photo/Stuart Villanueva

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[See more Reveille VIII photos](#)

Texas A&M University on Monday announced that a 2-year-old collie from Kansas will serve as the next campus mascot, ending months of speculation and a national search.

Tapestry Tenacious Juell -- more commonly known by her nickname "Kelly" -- was selected over the weekend while visiting the A&M campus, A&M officials said. She was among six candidates, all collies.

Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Kevin Jackson said Reveille VIII met nearly all the criteria outlined in May by an advisory committee aiding in the search process. Though she has not been through service training as was suggested by the committee, the new mascot has undergone basic obedience training and appears to be a good candidate for advanced training, Jackson said.

"She is a beautiful dog, she is a very smart dog and she is right in the right age range," Jackson said, speaking via conference call during a press conference Monday on the Texas A&M campus. "In essence, she became the preferred among the preferred candidates."

The new mascot will replace Reveille VII, a 7-year-old female collie who was retired at the end of the spring semester. A&M administrators announced the planned departure in February and formed a 16-member committee to help determine what dog should take her place.

Among the panel's responsibilities was the task of determining if the mascot should be another female collie, as recent tradition has dictated, or a different breed.

In May, the committee released a list of key traits that members felt should be embodied by Reveille VIII. They stopped short of naming a specific breed but did stress the next mascot should be an adult dog with a

noble look about her, similar to that of a collie or golden retriever.

Jackson said he was acting on a recommendation from A&M's College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences when he began his search with the Delta Society, a leading nonprofit organization centered around service animals. As a result, he contacted 11 service and therapy dog associations -- some provided additional leads while others declined.

Three weeks in with fewer leads than he planned on, Jackson said he decided to expand the search and began talking with rescue shelters, breeders, kennels and various societies for collies and collie-like dogs. Organizations began sending to A&M information and pictures of potential mascots, and administrators developed a list of half dozen "preferred candidates."

No golden retrievers made the short list because the university never received many leads for golden retrievers, Jackson said. One group he contacted said it hadn't responded to his original query because it felt A&M was synonymous with the collie breed.

Kelly, a sable and white-colored dog registered with the American Kennel Club, came to Aggieland over the weekend, meeting with administrators, student leaders and members of the Corps of Cadets, officials said. She was the only candidate to visit the campus. The other five, who were located across the country, were prescreened in their respective homes.

Upon her selection, she immediately began working with E-2 Mascot Corporal John Busch, a sophomore. E-2 is the company in the Corps of Cadets that is responsible for Reveille. She did not attend the press conference Monday, and university officials said it was because Kelly still was transitioning into her new role as Reveille VIII.

"Ladies and gentlemen, this is Reveille VIII," Busch said, smiling proudly as he displayed an oversized photograph of the new mascot. "She says, 'Howdy.'"

In describing the new mascot, Busch said he was struck by how calm she is. When meeting with her Saturday, she didn't bark or show any aggression, but Busch said she was eager to hop up on the sofa and sit next to him.

Student Body President Mark Gold described her temperament as flawless, adding that the selection of the new mascot seemed to be the issue with which students were most concerned. "I'm very excited she's a collie. It's great to maintain that tradition."

Reveille VIII was donated by Julie Hinrichsen and Russell Dyke, who own Juell Collies in Topeka, Kan. Together, the couple operate a small kennel -- known for breeding dogs with a calm and even temperament -- and show dogs as a hobby. Hinrichsen and Dyke said they had planned to begin showing Kelly -- one of their 11 dogs -- this fall.

Hinrichsen and Dyke said they learned of the mascot search through a Collie Club of America colleague who knew Kelly and thought she would be the perfect fit for A&M. The couple and their 14-year-old niece Felicia Van Cleave, who trained Kelly, came with the dog to College Station over the weekend.

"It was hard. We shed tears on the way home," Hinrichsen said.

Reveille will remain under the care of the Corps of Cadets. Lt. Gen. John Van Alstyne, corps commandant, said that Reveille VIII will keep the same abbreviated schedule instituted for Reveille VII during the last six months of her reign. Protocols stress that Reveille VIII is to participate only in university-sponsored events that are on campus or in the immediate vicinity, he said. He said Reveille would attend just two or three events per week in addition to attending daily classes with her handler.

"Our intent is for Reveille VIII to be around for a long time," Van Alstyne said.