

Texas A&M selects collie as Reveille VIII

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A 2-year-old female collie from Topeka, Kan., will continue Texas A&M University's decades-old mascot tradition and serve as Reveille VIII beginning this fall.

Texas A&M officials selected Tapestry Tenacious Juell, also known as Kelly, over the weekend to become the next Reveille in advance of the upcoming fall semester at the 46,000-student university. The sable and white, AKC-registered collie will be officially introduced to the public at Texas A&M's season-opening football game against Arkansas State Aug. 30 at Kyle Field. However, students may catch a glimpse of Reveille VIII on the Texas A&M campus over the next couple of weeks as she begins her mascot training.

"We are excited to welcome Reveille VIII into the Aggie Family and that she will continue the collie mascot tradition. I am particularly delighted to have her formally begin her reign as the university's new mascot in time for the start of the fall semester, which I believe also is important to Aggies everywhere," said Texas A&M President Elsa A. Murano. "I know there was concern that the process was taking quite a bit of time, perhaps too long. I, too, shared in these concerns and expressed them to those directly involved. The process worked well in the final analysis, however, and I believe we've made an excellent selection – a beautiful animal with all of the desirable characteristics outlined by the committee charged with helping us identify a new mascot following the retirement of Reveille VII. I would also like to personally thank everyone who served on the committee that was so instrumental in the selection process. I am confident that a great choice has been made—and I think Aggies everywhere will agree when they meet Reveille VIII later this month and in the coming months and years."

Reveille VIII was donated to Texas A&M by Julie Hinrichsen and Russell Dyke of Juell Collies. In place of payment a joint donation from Texas A&M in conjunction with Juell Collies will be given to the Collie Health Foundation. Hinrichsen and Dyke first heard of Texas A&M's mascot search through the Collie Club of America and later learned more about the tradition of Reveille through Becky McClintock '98, who previously served as training director for the Texas Hearing and Service Dog Association. Although Hinrichsen and Dyke initially were not interested in Kelly leaving their family, a visit to the College Station campus beginning last Thursday along with their niece Felicia Van Cleave ultimately changed their minds.

"We both knew of Reveille and thought, 'Wouldn't it be an honor to get involved in the tradition?' But we didn't truly grasp how big it was," said Dyke. "If it doesn't hurt a little to give her up, Texas A&M is not getting a good enough collie for what the university deserves."

The selection of Reveille VIII ends an extensive nationwide search for Texas A&M's next mascot following the retirement of Reveille VII in February. The search was based on the recommendations of a 16-member committee established by the Division of Student Affairs that was comprised of students, former students, faculty and staff, along with representatives of the Corps of Cadets, Athletics and the

Federation of Texas A&M Mothers' Clubs. The committee evaluated what type of dog might best serve in such a capacity, while also examining the demands placed on the university's mascot.

"Foremost, we wanted to continue the long-standing tradition of having an official mascot that was part of the student body," said Dr. Kevin P. Jackson, assistant vice president of student affairs, who chaired the committee and ultimately led the search for Reveille VIII. "We all agreed that Reveille needed to attend classes and live in a home-like environment on campus, while receiving top-quality care, love and attention."

Jackson added that Reveille VIII meets all seven essential characteristics established by the committee: medium-to-large size, healthy, outgoing personality, likes people and is at ease in crowds, not afraid of noise, not highly reactive, and positively motivated. Additionally, Jackson noted that Reveille VIII meets the committee's recommendations of being at least one-and-a-half years old, a female and having a collie-like appearance.

"You need health and temperament with this breed," said Hinrichsen, who has been working with collies for about a decade. "We always look first at these two issues. We reviewed our pedigrees and thought we might have that in this dog, which would be a match for Texas A&M."

Reveille is known as the First Lady of Texas A&M and is the only bearer of five silver diamonds in the 1,800-member Corps of Cadets. The cadet colonel, the ranking officer in the corps, wears four diamonds on his uniform. John Busch '11, an accounting major from Beaumont will serve as mascot corporal for the Corps' Mascot Company E-2.

The first Reveille was a mongrel that, according to campus lore, was picked up by some cadets alongside Highway 6, which runs through College Station. The precise date of her arrival on campus is believed to have been 1931, and it is well documented that she died on Jan. 18, 1944, and received a formal military funeral on the 50-yardline of Kyle Field. Her name was reportedly prompted by her habit of howling when the corps bugler played reveille to wake the cadets each morning.