In this issue of *Spirit*, Jim Nelson '49 says, "You don't lie. You don't cheat. You don't steal. You don't compromise your engineering opinion. Period!"

Billie Turner '51 says, "What A&M has is beyond comprehension."
A Tribute to Teachers

Every Aggie had one—a professor who lifted us up, inspired understanding and fanned the flames of our ambitions. As our teachers, they evoked mixed emotions: anxiety, gratitude, irritation, reverence. But maturity mellows that mixture, often into long-lasting friendships. Years after graduation, you still send her a card on the holidays or call him with news of your latest professional success.

The unique Spirit of Texas A&M goes beyond the bond among students. It resides also in the relationship between professor and student.

This issue of Spirit looks at the role of faculty and how private support strengthens it. For Jim Nelson '49 (p.2), a love for three faculty mentors expressed itself in one of the largest gifts ever made to Texas A&M. For industry leader Billie Turner '51 (p.8), endowing a faculty chair was one more step in reclaiming his Aggie heritage. Professor George Bass (p.12) talks about the impact faculty endowments have had on his pioneering work in nautical archaeology. Finally, the story of Professor Emeritus Dik Vrooman '52 (p.6) tells of a teacher whose legacy reaches well beyond the classroom.
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After more than 50 years in the oil business, a man like James "Jimmie" K.B. Nelson '49 could have amassed an office full of memorabilia. But Nelson clings to only one item: a wooden bench with a slatted back, simple arms and an upholstered cushion.

He is a man who believes in heroes, and the bench provides a tangible connection to some of those who have influenced his life. For more than 70 years, it sat at Grey Wolf Drilling Company, one of the world's premier deep well drilling firms, which Nelson owned from 1978 until his retirement in June 1997.
"Most of the pioneers in the oil industry—everybody from H.L. Hunt to the chairman of Standard Oil of New Jersey—have sat on this thing," he explains. Among them were Harold Vance, Bert Stevens and Bob Whiting, members of Texas A&M University's early petroleum engineering faculty.

From 1945-1949, when Nelson earned dual degrees in petroleum and mechanical engineering, the Texas A&M campus swelled with mature, hard-working World War II veterans who raised the bar for younger students. "Out of that group came many of the leaders of the petroleum industry. And all of them that I knew revered these three men," Nelson says of Vance, Stevens and Whiting.

Nelson maintained his friendships with these three mentors throughout his career. Vance was the one who recommended him to Roger Wolf, Grey Wolf's founder, in 1958. Still grateful 40 years later, Nelson refused naming opportunities for himself last December when he and his wife, Audrey Calais Nelson, committed $10 million to Texas A&M's Petroleum Engineering Department. Instead, he asked that the department be renamed for Harold Vance, and he established the Albert B. Stevens and Robert Whiting chairs in petroleum engineering.

Dr. Charles Bowman '59, department head, says, "We're blessed in our field with a lot of former students who've done well and who've retained their loyalties to both A&M and our department."

Nelson recalls the lives of his heroes like a sports fan who's memorized all of his baseball cards: He can still tell you that Vance, one of the world's first petroleum engineers, was trained by L.C. Uren at the University of California, built his reputation as a superintendent for Marlin Oil in the Permian Basin, and came to the East Texas oil fields as a consulting engineer.

Vance had the opportunity to build considerable wealth for himself, Nelson says, "but he was more interested in educating young men and giving them something they could do to benefit society, earn a living and obtain a good life."

Stevens, who also came from California, invented the first means...
of measuring porosity in reservoir rock. The industry still uses a form of the Stevens Porosimeter today. "Stevens developed much of the modern theory for pipelines," Nelson recalls. "These three men were anything but military, but during World War II, Stevens was responsible for Pluto, the underwater pipeline from England that carried fuel to the Allies on the front lines in Europe."

Nelson calls Bob Whiting the "Father of Reservoir Engineering." Whiting wrote manuals for a number of major companies, and his senior-level course prepared A&M petroleum engineers at a level no one else in the industry could match. "We were so proud of him; he was renowned all over the world," Nelson says. Whiting, now a professor emeritus, succeeded Vance and Stevens as department head in 1953 and served the university in that capacity for more than 25 years.

The oil industry was just awakening to science and engineering during Nelson's college days. "That department at Texas A&M was the best in the world; it still is," Nelson says. "They worked us to death. It was campus wisdom that the students who stayed up studying all night must be petroleum engineers."

When it came to professionalism, Nelson's mentors "were three peas in a pod." Vance, Stevens and Whiting constantly admonished their students, "You're honest. You don't lie. You don't cheat. You don't steal. You don't compromise your engineering opinion. Period!" Nelson imitates them, his voice rising, his eyes lighting. "Ethics was the subject of Bert Stevens' first lecture. It lasted an hour, and because of his tremendous character and what he was, that was all I needed the rest of my life."

Nelson was one of a special group of oilfield drillers who helped drill deep, high pressure wells before equipment and technology were adequate to meet their awesome challenge. Working on Gulf Coast drilling rigs was like being on a bomb disposal squad before U.S. oilfield manufacturers introduced the 10,000 psi modern blowout preventer and other technological improvements that saved lives and fortunes and eliminated much of the danger previously encountered in controlling high pressure wells.

Today's challenges are as intellectual as they are physical, incorporating computer technology and the geosciences. The Nelson's gift will help to ensure the department's "No. 1" status for years to come. "It got us half-way to our campaign goal of $20 million in one transaction, and since it's largely unrestricted, it gives us great flexibility to fill in where we have areas of need," says Bowman.

Since Nelson didn't want anything named for himself, the department found a sly way to show its gratitude. Bowman adds: "We did something he couldn't control. We named our premier scholarship program the Nelson Scholars Program."

Ever a model of humility, Nelson responded, "Well, I'll have to think about that a little bit."
For 45 years, Professor Emeritus Richard E. "Dik" Vrooman FAIA '52 made his mark on Texas A&M through teaching. While his personal passion was ancient design, he was one of few faculty members in the College of Architecture who volunteered to teach first-year students. As a result, he gave several generations of Aggie architects their basic training in design and drawing. "It was always my concern that they get started right," he says.
Vrooman's influence on Texas A&M also abides in more concrete respects. He has established an endowed scholarship that leaves a financial legacy, and the building he designed for Texas A&M endures as a part of the campus's contribution to the modern architectural movement that thrived in College Station and Bryan in the 1950s.

Vrooman has given $17,000 for the College of Architecture dean's and support funds; and he donated more than $100,000 to establish the Kelley Vrooman R.N. Endowed Scholarship in honor of his wife, who died of cancer in 1993.

The couple met during World War II while Kelley was working as an Army nurse in Europe. Kelley later worked several years as a school nurse in Bryan and for many years as a private nurse. "She was a nurse of the old-fashioned kind, one who truly comforted the discomfited," Vrooman says. Fittingly, the scholarship is awarded annually to graduate and undergraduate architecture students studying health facilities design.

Through his work, Dick Vrooman, too, brought solace to people. He designed the serene All Faiths Chapel, the campus landmark where scores of Aggies have been married. In a recent issue of the Rice Design Alliance's Cite magazine, architectural historian Stephen Fox notes the building's "expansive, de-centered interior, outdoor-outdoor vistas, anti-monumentality and fine detailing" and describes All Faiths Chapel as "one of the most modest and affecting buildings on campus."

Vrooman won the commission to create the fossilized limestone and glass edifice through a competition sponsored in 1956 by the Association of Former Students, which financed the construction. He also designed several residences and the School of Architecture Building at Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology, where, representing Texas A&M in an international coopeational program, he was that nation's first dean of architecture. But he still remembers the particular challenge of designing a space where people of all faiths could meditate.

"The colored window over the main entrance involves an offset cross and an offset Star of David, both made abstract to accommodate other faiths," he says. The landscaping was also crucial, but critical parts of it somehow didn't develop. "The idea was for it to be less like a building and more like a shelter in the forest," he explains.

During his teaching days, Vrooman's mantra was, "The best of design is in nature." In the chapel, in the endowed scholarship, and in his dedicated teaching, one can also see the best of human nature in his design.
A Heritage Reclaimed

THE STORY OF A MAN, HIS BOOTS, AND TEXAS A&M

Story byn Anna M. Thomas '50
Photography by Sandy Miller
Billie B. Turner ’51, chairman emeritus of multibillion-dollar IMC Global Inc., remembers a time when a new pair of “waist” pants meant the world.

Turner lost his father when he was two. Left with a farm near Whitesboro, Texas, his widowed mother and older sister worked hard to care for their young charge. The family was strong, which Turner credits to his mother’s Christian values, but they were poor. Their home had no indoor plumbing or electricity, and store-bought clothes were a luxury. “We were so poor that the only dresses my sister had were made from feed sacks,” Turner recalls. “I had two pairs of overalls: one for school and one for Sundays.”

When Turner started attending school “in town,” his overalls marked him for mockery. “The city boys didn’t like us rural boys,” he says. “They made fun of us, and there were some disagreements.” So, Mother made a sacrifice and bought me waist pants. You don’t know what a big deal that was.”

It’s no wonder, with his farming heritage and limited means, that Turner chose to attend Texas A&M. Here, at last, he found a world where character meant more than clothing.

“We’d never had quite the clothes everyone else did,” he says of his family. “Then I got to A&M. It was absolutely wonderful. I fell so in love with the Corps that you wouldn’t believe it. I was so looking forward to moving up to the sophomore and junior ranks, and the senior ranks, and the boots.” Turner pauses and asks, “You know about the boots?”

The boots. Turner had long dreamed of that coveted senior prize, a pair of tall, mahogany-colored boots custom made by Holick’s Boot Makers in College Station. His sister, Mary Hensey, didn’t earn much as a secretary, but she scraped together enough for her kid brother’s senior boots. When Turner graduated a year later, though, the boots were a liquid asset, and cash was in short supply.

“I sold my boots,” he says. “It was such a trauma. My sister had really sacrificed to pay for them, and a year later old dumb brother sells them. In today’s world, I got so little for them, but you can’t imagine how much $70 was in those days.”

Booless but holding a bachelor’s degree in agricultural education, Turner entered the U.S. Army. He served two years in the Army Infantry, including 14 months in Korea. In 1954, he joined the plant food division of IMC, an Illinois company that produced agricultural fertilizers such as phosphate and potash.

Turner’s first duty at IMC was managing the midnight-8 a.m. production shift. To motivate his “less than sophisticated” crew, he called on lessons learned at A&M—lessons in practical leadership, group loyalty and pride.

“I couldn’t tell them it was potash, because they didn’t know what potash was,” he recalls. “I had to say ‘the red stuff.’ Every time they came on shift, I posted how we ran the night before. Nobody had done that before. I appealed to their sense of pride, and in three months we moved to the top for quality and production.”

For Turner, the move to the top never stopped. He rose through the ranks, becoming chairman, president and CEO of IMC Fertilizer Group Inc. NELL & JAMES D. CARVELL, JR. ’65 William R. Dick McGuolland ’65 Endowed Fellowship in Traffic Engineering
LOUISE & FLOYD W. CHAPMAN, JR. Louise & Floyd Chapman Endowment for Texas History
HAZEL & HARRY J. CHAVANNE Hazel & Harry J. Chavanne Endowment in the George Bush School of Gov’t. & Public Service
JOLINE & WILLIAM B. COOK ’66 Wanda J. & William B. Cook, Jr. ’60 Unrestricted Endowed Fund
SALLY S. & JOHN W. COX ’81 Sally S. & John W. Cox Arts Scholarship
GEORGE W. CROCKETT ’51 George W. Crockett Merit Scholarship Fund
Hagner Center “Pillars of A&M” Gift
ELLEN LLOYD CUMMINS College of Veterinary Medicine Large Animal Clinic
MURL & CHARLES C. DANNA Kent Danna ’83 Memorial Dean’s Endowed Scholarship
ESTATE OF HAROLD W. DAVIDSON C. J. “Red” Davidson Scholarship
JANET S. HARVEY & DAVID M. DUBBELDE Aloha (Sue) & Harold (Bud) Dubbelde ’51 Endowed Scholarship
WANDA J. & LAWRENCE A. DURBOIS ’42 Dr. Lawrence A. ’42 & Wanda DuBois Endowed Scholarship
GARY G. DUBROCK Louis “Doss’ ’50 & Mimi Bustin Endowed Scholarship
JOYCE & DONALD D. DUNLAP ’56 Joyce & Don Dunlap ’56 Endowed Scholarship in Civil Engineering
DEBORAH W. DUNSFORD PH.D. ’86 ’83 & BART R. DUNSFORD PH.D. ’84 ’70 Deborah & Bart Dunsford Endowed Funds for Excellence in Animal Science and Agricultural Journalism
JOY & J. RALPH ELLIS, JR. Joy & Ralph Ellis Scholarship
LOU & JACK FINNEY ’58 Lou & Jack Finney ’58 Aggie Band Endowment
Hagner Center “Pillars of A&M” Gift
JANIE H. & GORDON R. FLACK ’51/CAPITAL CITY A&M CLUB FOUNDATION Endowed Scholarship in Teacher Education
WILLIAM M. FLORES ’76 William H. Flores ’76 Sal Ross Scholarship.
in 1987. Within a year, he successfully took the company public. He served as chairman from 1987-1994 and today is chairman emeritus. Now called IMC Global Inc., the company earned 1997 revenues of nearly $3 billion and is one of the world’s leading producers and marketers of several key agricultural and industrial chemicals.

in 1995 to endow the Billie B. and S. Gloria (his late wife) Turner Production Agriculture Scholarship. And last fall, he gave $100,000 and created a $1 million charitable trust to endow the Billie B. Turner ’51 Chair in Production Agronomy.

Turner also never forgot his boots, and recently he reprinted the part of his Aggie heritage as well. On his birthday last December, Turner opened a large gift from friend Shirley Williams. What was inside made him speechless. “I was in total shock,” he says. “All kinds of memories flooded over me when I saw those boots—memories of the guys I went through A&M with, of the guys I marched with in Final Review.”

The boots in the box, a display pair on loan from Hollick’s, prompted several trips to College Station for measurements and fittings. In May, Turner’s custom-fitted senior boots arrived at his home in Northbrook, Illinois. They sit in his den, where, he says, “I can see them all the time.”

Eyeing the boots, Turner says he hopes all former students will help pass on the Aggie Spirit. “I encourage them at all costs to share the precious experience of A&M with others, and, as they are able, to give financial support,” he says. “Kids in high school today need to feel how unique A&M is in all the world. Auburn, Purdue—those are great schools, but what A&M has is beyond comprehension.”
Bright program spurs chair endowments

Using a $15 million commitment from H. R. "Bum" Bright '43 of Dallas, Texas A&M University President Ray M. Bowen '58 has established a 1-1 matching program to endow faculty chairs throughout the university. So far, the program has prompted commitments for seven new chairs at Texas A&M.

Faculty chairs are endowed positions that carry great prestige and help Texas A&M attract and retain top-flight faculty.

"Endowed chairs not only recognize outstanding faculty," said Dr. Bill Perry, executive associate provost. "More importantly, they enhance faculty programs and enable the faculty to do and achieve even more as teachers, researchers and representatives of the university."

The goal of the Bright matching program is to add 30 new faculty chairs to Texas A&M's already more than 90 chairs. The program allows a donor to fund a chair with a current gift of $500,000. The Bright endowment then supplies the remaining $500,000 required to fulfill the endowment minimum of $1 million. According to Texas A&M Foundation officials, matching programs of this caliber are rare.

The new chairs and their donors are: Chair in Cotton Engineering, Ginning & Mechanization given by the Cotton Ginning Association; Jerry & Kay Cox Endowed Chair in Business given by Jerry Cox '72; TI Chair in Analog Engineering given by Texas Instruments; Dudley J. Hughes Endowed Chair in Geology & Geophysics given by Dudley J. Hughes '51; Edward & Howard Kruse Endowed Directorship Chair in the George Bush School of Government & Public Service given by Evelyn & Edward F. Kruse '49 and Verlin & Howard W. Kruse '52; R.H. Harrison II '47/College of Science Development Council Endowed Chair in Science given by R.H. Harrison III '47 and the College of Science Development Council; and Wiseman, Lewie and Worth Chair in Cardiology given by Charles R. Witseman D.V.M. '57, William H. Lewie Jr. '50, and George W. Worth Jr. '61.
Professor George Bass: diving for knowledge

"Everything that people ever made has been carried at one time or another by water craft," says Dr. George F. Bass, Texas A&M distinguished professor of anthropology and holder of two endowed faculty chairs. "We believe if we excavate ships of every century of antiquity, we will have told the most complete, definitive history of technology that’s ever been written."

Bass has certainly done his part to fill in history’s gaps. His underwater excavations have provided insight into more than 30 centuries of human civilization and technology. Bass is the acknowledged “Father of Nautical Archaeology”—the first archaeologist to excavate a shipwreck in its entirety on the seabed. During the 1960s and 70s, he pioneered much of the technology used to locate and map shipwrecks. He is one of very few explorers to have earned a Centennial Award from the National Geographic Society.

As a specialist in Mediterranean archaeology, Bass has focused much of his career on exploring the Turkish coast, where he and fellow researchers have located more than 100 ancient shipwrecks and excavated enough artifacts to fill several museums.
“Everything we find goes into a local museum. Some people don’t understand the difference between what we do and treasure hunting; but we’re diving for knowledge, not to own things,” he says. “Shipwrecks are proving to be a key that opens more locks to the past than many other avenues of research.”

Funds from the George & Gladys Abell Chair in Nautical Archaeology and the George Yamini Family Chair in Liberal Arts “have given me the ability to do lots of good things I would not have been able to do otherwise,” Bass says. They’ve enabled him to hire assistants, host foreign archaeologists, sponsor student travel, buy equipment and build what may be the world’s most comprehensive nautical archaeology library.

Bass is founder and president of the Texas A&M-affiliated Institute of Nautical Archaeology. Headquartered in College Station, the institute has a major overseas center in Bodrum, Turkey, and has sponsored work in that country as well as Israel, Egypt, Eritrea, the Azores, Kenya, Italy, Jamaica and the United States.

While Bass has trained some of the world’s most prominent archaeologists, he also enjoys sharing his knowledge with Texas A&M undergraduates. “There’s this debate that goes on about how much time professors spend on their own research versus teaching,” he says. “But students enjoy my course because it’s being taught by someone who actually does this kind of work. Being a researcher enhances your teaching, and I love to teach. My wife says the happiest I am every week is when I come out of my undergraduate ‘Introduction to Archaeology’ class.” — by Molly Glentzer
Lee Tillman: not your average donor

Texas A&M scholarship donor Dr. Lee M. Tillman '84 might fit in better with fellow donors if the numbers in his class year were reversed.

It's not that unusual for a class of '48 Aggie to endow a $60,000 President's Endowed Scholarship, but Lee Tillman is ahead of his time. Our of college for just nine years, this young Aggie is endowing not one, but two, of these prestigious undergraduate scholarships.

Tillman grew up with parents who greatly valued education. NASA employees Marion and Beverly Tillman filled their home with books, and they filled their children with a love for learning.

"Everything that I've accomplished in life I can trace back to the guidance, love and coaching I received from my mother and father," Lee Tillman says. "My dad instilled in me an appreciation for education and knowledge and taught me that it was an experience you continued through your entire career, through your entire life."

Tillman graduated as valedictorian of Teague High School, an honor his sister had earned four years earlier. Though he had family ties to Baylor University, the University of Houston and the University of Texas, he chose to attend Texas A&M. "I think I knew the minute I walked on campus that A&M was where I was going to go to school," he says.

Youth has not been wasted on Tillman. Texas A&M awarded him the Mr. & Mrs. Donald H. Niederer '33 President's Endowed Scholarship in 1980. After receiving his bachelor's in chemical engineering in 1984, he bypassed a master's and earned a doctorate in chemical engineering from Auburn University in just five years.

He began his career with Exxon in 1989. Exxon has sent Tillman all over the world: Indonesia, Malaysia, Norway and the United Kingdom. He now lives in New Orleans and oversees some 100 employees as an Exxon offshore operations superintendent. Wherever he is, Tillman says, he searches out fellow Aggies.

"The atmosphere and tradition at A&M—it's something that gets into your system," he says. "You can't leave A&M without feeling such a kinship with everyone who wears an A&M ring. I instinctively look for it everywhere I travel."

Tillman also uses the Internet to stay in touch with his alma mater. "The Internet is a wonderful tool," he says. "Many Aggies in New Orleans keep track of A&M through its Web sites, and you can do that anywhere in the world. As
long as you have access to the Internet, you can stay plugged in to what's happening on campus.”

Surfing the Web ultimately led Tillman to the Texas A&M Foundation Web site in January 1998. That visit launched the realization of a goal he had set years before: endowing a PES. Using Exxon’s 3-to-1 gift match and a Texas A&M 1-to-1 match, the 36-year-old will endow two scholarships, one named for the Tillman family and one for his father, who died last year. “The scholarship is a great way to honor my dad,” Tillman says. “If he could tell me to do anything with my money, it would be to give someone else the same experience I had at A&M.”

Exxon and many other corporations match their employees’ charitable gifts with equal or greater corporate contributions. Matching programs can double, triple or even quadruple a gift. Tillman encourages Aggies to use these programs.

“If you believe in higher education and if you believe that education is important for life success, here is a great way to leverage your money and influence profoundly a young person’s life,” he says. “I could have used these funds for other pursuits, but there is something to be said about leaving a legacy. I have done well because I benefited from someone else’s generosity. I certainly wouldn’t want to be the one to break that chain.” — by Rose Ann M. Thomas ’90  +
Capper & Chris Fund saves precious family pets

The old adage about "all dogs go to heaven" was nearly realized by the Brunson family of Wheelock, Texas. But thanks to a unique gift from Mary "Capper" Thompson, heaven for one beloved pet can wait.

After examining the dog, Spangler relayed a good-news/bad-news situation. The good news: Skipper's multiple pelvic fractures could be repaired surgically. The bad news: The operation would be expensive, more than the Brunsons, both schoolteachers, could afford.

"We had to make a horrible decision," says Jeneane Brunson, recalling the tears her family shed. "It seemed our only choice was to put Skipper to sleep." Shortly thereafter, Spangler brought them news that was nothing short of miraculous. Surgery was possible after all because of Texas A&M's Capper & Chris Save the Animals Fund. Capper Thompson had given $10,000 for the fund, which helps financially-strapped families get medical care for their pets. (Chris was Chris Stehouwer '98, a pre-vet student who died in a tragic accident and the son of Capper's close friends, Ronald and Lenore Stehouwer.)

"The fund's goal is to save animals who might otherwise have to be euthanized," says Thompson from her home near Boerne, Texas. "Skipper was the first animal saved. I just hope the fund will grow, because the need is there." In addition to Thompson's gift, Stehouwer family members and friends and other donors have added more than $28,000 to the Capper & Chris Fund. The Brunson family also plans to give back.

"As nice as it was to be on the receiving end, we can't wait until we are in a position to donate to the fund ourselves," says Brunson, whose daughters sent a touching thank-you letter and drawing to Thompson. "Our girls have learned how important it is to help others." — by Reith Randall
King Foundation: short-term loans with long-term benefits

The Third International Mathematics and Science Study released last March was the largest study of student achievement ever completed. In both math and science, American high school seniors scored well below the average for their peers in other countries.

Some say one reason for these poor results is that lucrative professions are luring potential math and science teachers away from teaching.

“Many students who would consider a career in teaching math or science are discouraged by the lack of incentives,” says Dr. Bryan R. Cole, head of Texas A&M’s Educational Administration Department. “This trend must be reversed if we are to maintain economic viability as a nation and intellectual competence as a society.”

The university’s College of Education is helping meet this challenge through a program funded by the Carl B. and Florence E. King Foundation of Dallas. The King Foundation Math/Science Scholar Loan program recruits and supports top students who plan to teach math or science.

“The program at A&M exceeded not only our expectations but our hopes as well,” says King Foundation President Carl L. Yeckel. More than 50 Aggies have received math/science loans. The newer Foundation English Scholar Loan endowment has benefited some 20 students. Loans are forgivable if graduates teach one year of math, science or English for each year of assistance received. Almost all scholars have chosen to teach, says a university official.

Texas oil man Carl King and his wife, Florence, established their foundation in 1966. The King Foundation has given Texas A&M more than $1.2 million for programs in education, bioengineering, veterinary medicine and the Bush Library. Yeckel says the King family has a deep, abiding love for education.

“They were hip pocket philanthropists from day one,” he adds, “They felt that if you have something, you ought to be thankful for it and share it with others.”

Yeckel says he hopes King Foundation Scholars will likewise share their talents. “I’ve often thought, ‘Who was the teacher who inspired Thomas Jefferson?’” he says. “Just look at the influence that individual had, not just on Thomas Jefferson but on generations to come. Our hope is that King Scholars inspire two or three generations. You don’t know where the next Thomas Jefferson will come from. He may be sitting in a classroom taught by a graduate of Texas A&M.” — by Rose Ann M. Thomas ’50
Jesse Curlee '67 Joins Foundation Board

Arizona executive Jesse W. Curlee '67 joined the Texas A&M Foundation board of trustees on Sept. 1. Seven trustees govern the foundation, each appointed for seven years by the Association of Former Students. Curlee replaces outgoing trustee W. Mike Baggett '68.

Curlee is president of the Supima Association of America, which promotes American Pima cotton and licenses the name and trademark to companies worldwide. He is a member of the 12th Man Foundation board of directors, member of the Texas A&M President's Council of Advisors and past president of the Association of Former Students.

A&M Launches New Campaigns

Mini-campaigns for Texas A&M's departments of Geology & Geophysics, Chemical Engineering and Fine Arts kick off this fall. The Department of Geology & Geophysics will begin its "Expanding Excellence" Campaign to raise $11 million for student and faculty support.

"Higher...Greater...Bolder" is the Department of Chemical Engineering's first campaign. The $30 million campaign will raise funds for student and faculty support and for a new building. A key campaign component is the C.D. Holland Scholars Program.

The College of Liberal Arts has launched its "Campaign for the Arts." The $5 million campaign seeks to endow a new department housing music & theater arts.

Mini-Campaigns Bring Success

Texas A&M has made significant progress in four ongoing mini-campaigns. Currently the Bush School of Government & Public Service has received $12 million in commitments toward its $20 million goal. In another campaign, donors committed $2.6 million for the Cushing Memorial Library, which reopened this fall.

The Corps Endowment Campaign has exceeded its $25 million goal.
goal, raising $27 million so far. A new matching gift program funded by a $5 million gift from H.R. "Bum" Bright '43 will match gifts of $25,000-plus that establish new Corps endowments and gifts of $10,000-plus to existing endowments.

Lastly, donors have committed more than $13.5 million to the Petroleum Engineering "The Leader Today/The Leader Tomorrow" campaign, which has a goal of $20 million.

HAGLER CENTER
CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

Construction began in May on the Jon L. Hagler Center, the new, on-campus home of the Texas A&M Foundation. The center is named for Jon L. Hagler '58, the project's lead donor and a foundation trustee. The architect, HKS Inc., and contractor, Turner Construction, are both of Dallas. Construction will cost approximately $13.8 million; donors have committed more than $10.6 million for the project. The center is scheduled for completion in fall 1999.

EXXON AGGIES
ACCEPT CHALLENGE

In 1997, Texas A&M placed third among U.S. universities for matching funds received through Exxon's 3-to-1 matching gift program. First and second place went to Louisiana State University and Rice University.
respectively. A nucleus of Exxon Aggies has decided to challenge their colleagues and fellow Aggies to change those rankings. Many companies match their employees' charitable gifts with equal or greater corporate contributions. Exxon's 3-to-1 matching ratio is one of the most generous in the nation. Exxon gives $3.00 for every $1.00 an Exxon employee or retiree gives to Texas A&M.

The "1998 Exxon Aggie Challenge" has a goal of raising Exxon's matching fund portion to $800,000. This would require Exxon Aggies to give $266,667 from April 1998 through March 1999.

GIFT ANNUITIES MAKE GIVING EASY
Donors can get a financial return on their gifts through "gift annuities" now offered by the Texas A&M Foundation. This type of gift is common nationally but new to Texas A&M. Gift annuities don't require huge donations, are relatively easy to create, and often result in charitable tax deductions.

A donor creates a gift annuity by transferring at least $10,000 in cash or securities to the Texas A&M Foundation. The donor and foundation sign a simple, one-page contract that guarantees the donor a fixed payment for his lifetime. This contract is backed by the full faith and credit of the foundation and all its assets. When the annuity terminates, 75 percent of the assets supports the university program the donor designated, and 25 percent supports the Texas A&M Foundation.

A gift annuity is an irrevocable gift, so U.S. laws allow a current charitable tax deduction. The deduction varies depending on the gift amount, payout percentage and ages of beneficiaries. Part of the annuity payments may also be tax-exempt. Because of varying state regulations, the foundation offers gift annuities only to Texas residents and residents of certain other states.
Frequently Asked Question

Why does Texas A&M, a state university, need private gifts?

Texas A&M receives less than one-half of its total budget from state of Texas general revenues. Because this status is unlikely to change, the public-private partnership that exists currently must be strengthened. Only then can we continue the quality education, research and service programs that have distinguished Texas A&M since 1876.

Find it on the Internet

Learn more about stories in this issue of Spirit by visiting these Web sites. While some are maintained by the Texas A&M Foundation, others are not. In the latter case, we try to refer you to quality sites, but we cannot ensure the accuracy or appropriateness of all content.

A&M's pioneering faculty:
www.tamu.edu/foundation

A&M's Institute of Nautical Archaeology:
http://nautarch.tamu.edu/INA

Turner's IMC Global Inc.:
www.imcglobal.com

All Faiths Chapel:
www.tamu.edu/buildings/images/chapel.jpg

Matching gift calculator:
www.tamu.edu/foundation/MethodsOfGiving

Third International Math and Science Study:
http://timss.eric.org

Exxon charitable giving:

A&M's new mini-campaigns:
www.tamu.edu/foundation/GivingOpportunities
Requests & Comments

Spirit is published to keep you informed about Texas A&M fund-raising efforts. If you have a comment or question, take a moment to fill out this form and mail it postage-free. Thank you.

FIRST NAME

LAST NAME

STREET ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

HOME PHONE NUMBER

DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER

E-MAIL ADDRESS

Check here if: □ New home address

□ New business address

I have a comment/question:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

□ Please contact me about making a gift to Texas A&M.

□ I’d like to know more about making an estate gift (trusts, life insurance, bequests).

I’d like to know more about supporting the following area(s):

COLLEGES

□ Agriculture

□ Architecture

□ Business Administration

□ Education

□ Engineering

□ Geosciences

□ Liberal Arts

□ Medicine

□ Science

□ Veterinary Medicine

OTHER:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

You can contact the foundation at the following:

postal: 1501 Texas Ave. S.

College Station, Texas 77840-3398

voice: 409-845-8161 or 1-800-392-3310

e-mail: thomasra@devfnac.tamu.edu

Internet: www.tamu.edu/foundation