Good Bull Story of the Week

Texas A&M University boasts proudly of its rich culmination of students that come together under the common bond of traditions. Our student body, comprised of people of all different backgrounds and stories, enrich the experience of all Aggies through their unique involvement and contributions to Texas A&M. This is the story of an Aggie and her steadfast dedication to A&M and her continuous Good Bull. As a first-generation Aggie, Kelsey McKechnie’s story begins in 2010 after her first visit to Texas A&M and the plunge into student life as a freshman in her Fall semester.

“Traditions made up my mind. They are what created that sense of home, of family, that drew me to A&M. I always knew I wanted to be an active participant in A&M’s traditions, and it was in the fall of my sophomore year that I found my family within the Aggie Family—Traditions Council,” Kelsey said. Traditions Council is a committee on the Executive Branch of the Student Government Association that is dedicated to preserving and promoting the traditions of Texas A&M through education and awareness, and facilitating events such as Silver Taps, the annual Bonfire Remembrance Ceremony, and Senior Bootline, hosting Run for the Ring 5K, and conducting speaking engagements both on- and off-campus to share our knowledge of and love for Aggie traditions. But the place where Kelsey really found her passion and love was for the tradition of Silver Taps.

Silver Taps is the solemn representation of the 12th Man. It is the link from the past to the present—from the first Silver Taps held in honor of Lawrence Sullivan Ross in 1898, to today’s Taps, held in honor of eight who were taken from us far too soon. Kelsey explained, “To me, being the 12th Man means standing for those who can no longer stand for themselves: those who have left our presence, never to be seen again. It means staying silent through the rain and the cold, supporting the families of those we held so dear. It means never forgetting those who came before, who impacted our lives, who shaped our dreams. Because that’s what the 12th Man is: we’re the gap-fillers, the memory-holders, the tradition-keepers.”

As the Chair of Traditions Council, Kelsey had the opportunity to escort the families during Silver Taps—a moment she will forever cherish. “As I walked down Military Walk with a flashlight in my hand at the head of that most solemn procession, I was hit with a feeling of coming full circle. I was now really and truly a part of Silver Taps, the tradition that made A&M feel like home when I first stepped foot on the campus,” said Kelsey.

Tonight we honor the lives of eight Aggies who are no longer with us. I encourage you to take part of this rich tradition that provides comfort to the families and friends of our fallen fellow Aggies. Let’s be a part of something so much greater than ourselves. Traditions need participants to stay alive—let’s leave a legacy of students who cared enough to give of their time to ensure that future generations of Aggies get to experience the unique thing that is the Aggie Family.

Thanks to Kelsey for all her Good Bull through her service and dedication to Texas A&M and our traditions. Thanks & Gig ‘Em!