



Baby bull conveyed crimson love for Moos



AP/Dickensen

By [the staff of Cougfan.com](#)

Posted Feb 24, 2010

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IT WAS CLEAR FROM the moment Jim Sterk's plans for San Diego State were made public that the crimson faithful hoped Bill Moos would succeed him. But the depths to which the Cougar Nation wanted Moos back on the range can't be explained any better than this -- a tale that could only be written in Palouse country.

BABY BULL GOOD KARMA?

Back in December, when Moos was simultaneously being courted by UNLV to be its athletic director and by Sterk to be a fundraising consultant for WSU athletics, a group of Cougar partisans tried to sway his thinking by taking a page right out of Moos' own playbook. They got creative.

How could they make a real statement on behalf of WSU, they asked themselves.

With Moos ensconced on his cattle ranch in Valleyford, they struck upon the perfect holiday gift.

So they called Greg Rathbun, the tall hat behind Rathbun Angus Ranch in Moses Lake.

The Cougar loyalists explained to Rathbun that they wanted to buy a baby bull and have it delivered to a ranch outside Spokane in time for Christmas. Said one of the gift organizers, "When we said it was for a guy named Bill Moos, Greg Rathbun responds, 'THE Bill Moos?'"

Rathbun and his wife Jennifer, you see, are loyal Cougars themselves and WSU football season ticketholders.

And, yes, we're talking about THE Bill Moos.

The timing for a real-life baby bull to be delivered wasn't quite right, so the generous Cougar loyalists had to settle for a gift certificate for a 600-pounder to be delivered in spring.

The certificate was hand-delivered to Moos, along with Cougar memorabilia and a card that encouraged him to follow the path of legendary Bear Bryant. Bryant was an Alabama grad who was once asked why he left a great situation at Texas A&M in order to take on a rebuild at his alma mater: "When Momma calls, you have to come runnin'," he said.

Moos had been talking with Sterk about becoming a paid consultant for some time and was about ready to start rockin' and rollin' for WSU until UNLV entered the picture and offered him the chance to be AD. Had it not been for complications related to his non-compete with Oregon, Moos would in fact now be UNLV's athletic director.

"Our cow didn't stop Bill from talking seriously with UNLV, but it clearly communicated to him that the Cougar Nation had never stopped loving him," said the gift organizer, who asked not to be identified.

As fate would have it, Oregon's meddling in the UNLV deal kept Moos from taking that job. "But you have

to figure the baby bull at least put some good karma on our side," quipped the Cougar loyalist.

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