

## Better Knock on Wood

Students incorporate superstition into their daily lives

By Amanda Trimble  
THE BATTALION

Six Cheng, a sophomore biomedical science major, relies on breakfast burritos and fruit drinks to pass her 8 a.m. physics tests. So far, the results have been good.

"I get up at 4:30 or 5 a.m. before the test and go to the same gas station and buy the same breakfast burrito and fruit drink," Cheng said. "Then I go home and study at the dining room table until I have to leave. People think it's weird, but it works every time."

Many people do not realize they are superstitious until they stop and look at some of their everyday habits. The word superstition usually reminds students of black cats or the number 13, but something as simple as saying "God bless you" is a superstition. According to infoplease.com, in the Middle Ages it was a common belief that the devil could enter a person while they were sneezing. Saying "God bless you" was meant to protect that person, and the superstition is still a tradition today.

Although most superstitions are not as common as saying "God bless you," many students say the little things they do may affect their luck.

Jesse-Larou Walsh, a junior math major, has Irish superstitions she acquired from her family heritage.

"I never walk out a different door than I came in. It's an Irish superstition," Walsh said. "If I walk out a different door, it's supposed to bring bad luck."

"Also, anytime I find a penny or a dime on the ground, and only if it's heads, I'll pick it up and put it in my left shoe," Walsh said. "I don't know if it's a game of mind or actual good luck, but I just have a better day."

When it comes to taking tests, Walsh sticks to the traditional Aggie superstition of visiting the Sul Ross statue.

"I always put a penny on Sully's left shoe before I go take a test," Walsh said. "I know it works because before my last two tests, I didn't go do it and I didn't do well on them."

Shannon Ensom, hall director of Lechner Hall, is superstitious when talking about things that have not happened.

"I knock on wood all the time. It just seems like the easiest thing to do," Ensom said. "There's that fear that if you say something before it happens, you'll ruin it."

Superstitions also play an important role for athletes. Tim Petru, a junior marketing major and third baseman for the Aggie baseball team, has a very specific way of entering the batting box.

"The first time I get in the box, I have to smooth out the dirt and make it perfect. Every time after that, I have to hit each shoe and then tap the outer corner and the inner corner of the plate with my bat," Petru said. "Then I'll get in the box, and I'm

ready to bat. Sometimes I don't even know I'm doing it."

Other superstitions are shared by the entire team. Petru said when the count is all twos, players will rub the bills of their caps, then take them off and shake them when the pitcher winds up. Another superstition starts when the team is losing a game. If someone gets a run, everyone will have to stand in the same spot they were in before, Petru said.

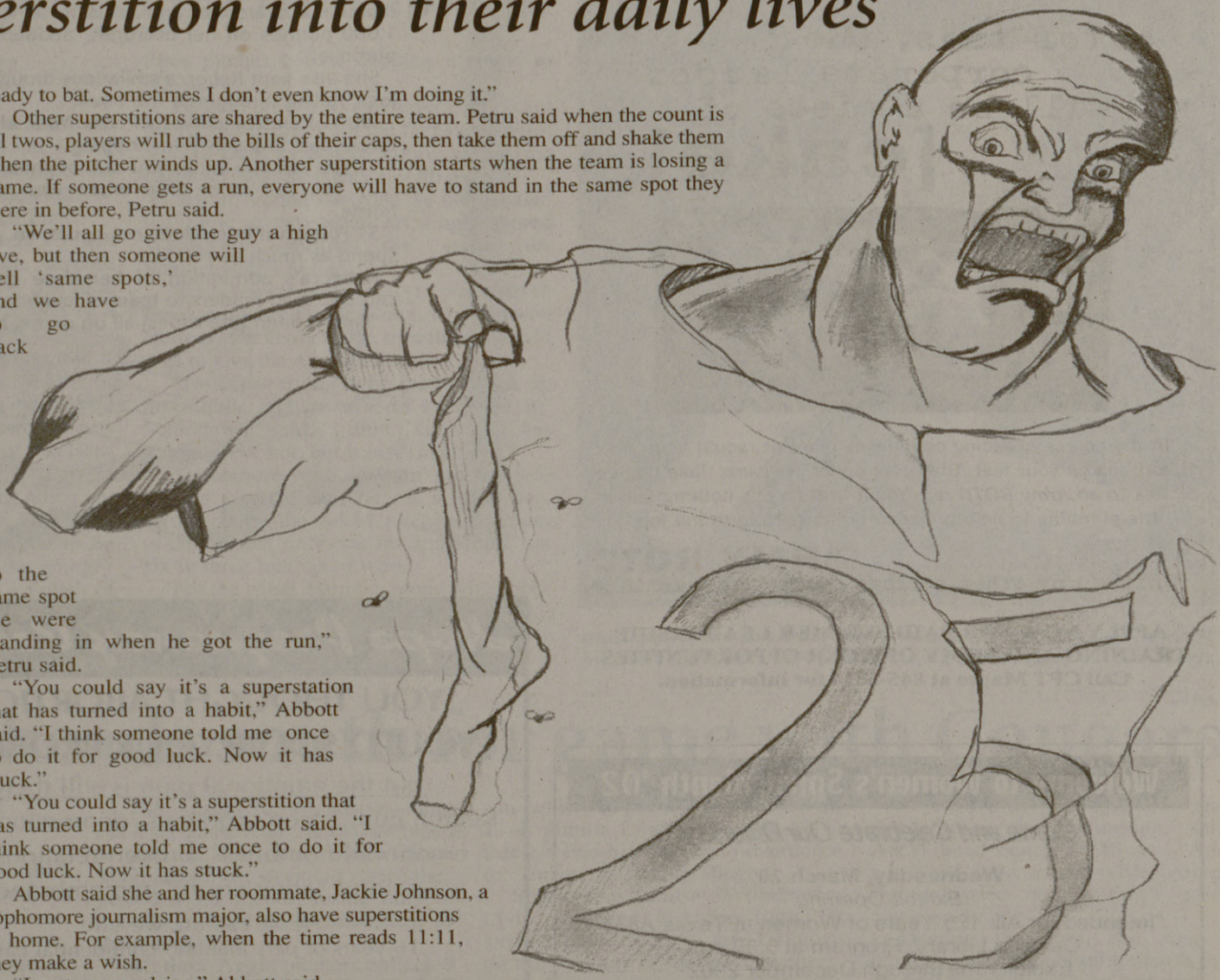
"We'll all go give the guy a high five, but then someone will yell 'same spots,' and we have to go back to the same spot we were standing in when he got the run," Petru said.

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Abbott said she and her roommate, Jackie Johnson, a sophomore journalism major, also have superstitions at home. For example, when the time reads 11:11, they make a wish.

"It gets compulsive," Abbott said.



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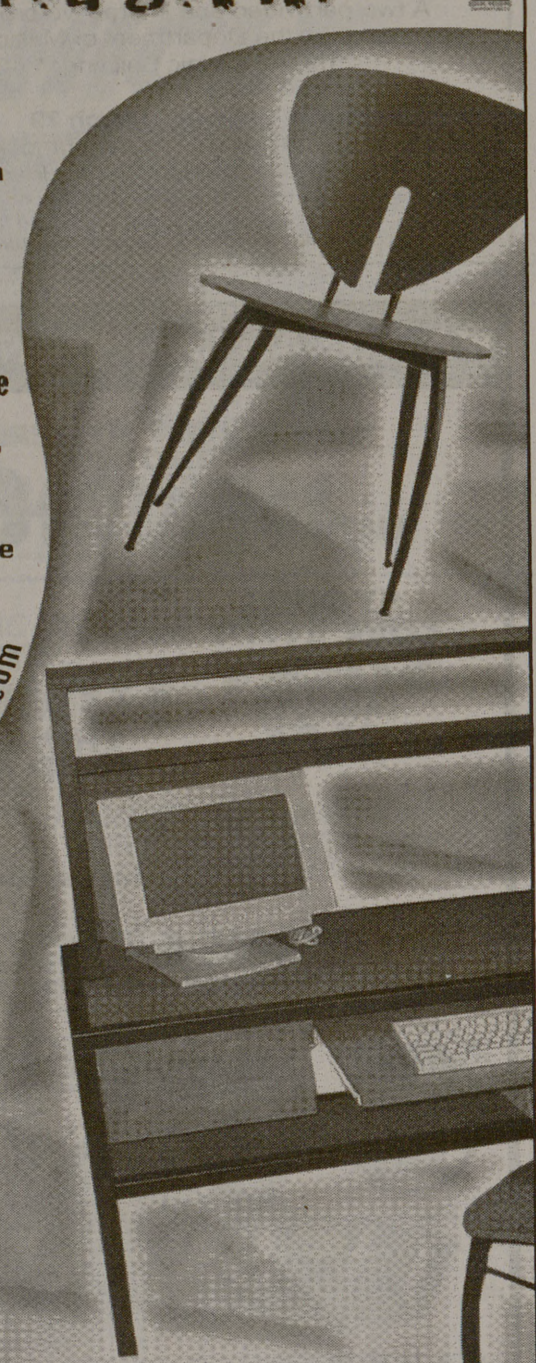
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