

Branches grow from the tree

Family's history provides inspiration and insight

Since we have already taken care of our traditional Thanksgiving task of beating the hell outta t.u., we can devote our energies to less traditional Thanksgiving pastimes. Like being thankful.

Sometimes we wonder what we have to be thankful for. We're failing every class, we haven't had a date in years and Thanksgiving dinner only brings the family together for a day of energetic fighting over everything from cooking methods to how to set the table. Or even worse - we don't get to go home for the big feast.

MICHAEL LANDAUER
columnist



We always knew to respect these people. Now that we're older we hear more stories about our families that make us respect them for other reasons. I remember my mother's father, who died when I was young, because he looked and acted like Santa Claus. I respected him because of the effect his death had on my mother. I didn't know why my mother cried about her father sometimes when she fought with me or my siblings. But I recently read a letter he wrote to my parents at an important crossroads in their relationship. Now I know.

My middle name is Ehrman, which was my grandmother's maiden name. I was born on her birthday, and my father said I was a gift to his parents who I never knew. I hated the name when I was young. It sounded too much like "Herman," and it required too much explaining. But I have learned enough about my grandmother to make me realize that I am barely deserving of her name.

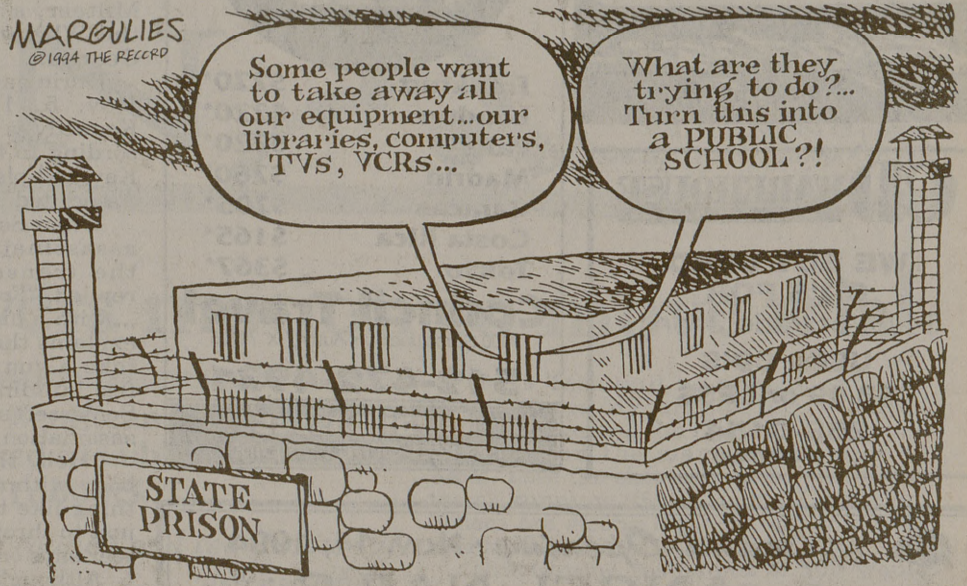
Through stories we learn to respect our family members as individuals. We do not just inherit our grandparents' DNA, we also inherit their values, their caring ways and their love. I am thankful for that.

Unfortunately families do not eat together, go out together, write each other or talk as much as they have in the past. That's a shame because we can learn a lot about our family if we just ask. Our parents will tell us about Uncle Frank's war stories or Grandpa's homemade pizza if we just ask. And these stories aren't boring. They often reveal something about our family tree that we did not know. We find out who the strong branches belonged to on the family tree.

The best part about hearing all these stories is that we have our whole life ahead of us to learn from our family's past. I have a chance to avoid the family bickering that caused some of my ancestors to lose a chance to buy the Chicago Hilton. I also have a chance to learn from Grandpa's basic kindness and Grandma's fighting spirit. We all have a chance to live in ways that would make our families proud.

Let's be thankful for our homes. Let's be thankful for our chances. And let's hope we grow to become strong branches in our family trees.

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EDITORIAL

WALK BY THE RULES

Absence of set policy creates confusion

College students live for walks. To have professors announce that class will not be meeting on a certain day is often better than if they offered to buy the class dinner.

However, a set policy should be made regarding walks on holidays as well as special traditional events such as Elephant Walk and Bonfire.

As it stands now, the policy regarding walks on holidays is quite inconsistent. The current practice where some professors choose to give walks while others don't, results in inconvenience and confusion for students. This procedure for walks prevents students from making travel and holiday plans in advance because they don't know whether they will have classes.

Some students like to plan ahead especially if they have to travel long distances to get home.

The policy regarding walks should be an all-or-nothing matter; therefore eliminating confusion for students and their families.

However, on days when special traditions such as Elephant Walk, Bonfire or Muster take place professors should allow students who are involved, especially upperclassmen to participate. Texas A&M is a tra-

dition-based school, and events such as Elephant Walk happen only once in Aggies' lives.

Professors should keep such events in mind when considering their course outlines and syllabi. Tests and projects should not be given on these days in consideration of those who are participating.

At any other university, this may not be an acceptable policy, but A&M is all about tradition. Being involved in the traditions is one of the most important aspects of attending this University. If students miss out on the traditions, they miss out on Aggie spirit.

If professors find it necessary to hold class, students who are not participating in these events should attend. However, for the others who are directly involved, all classwork should be able to be made up and absences should be excused.

Creating a set policy for walks regarding holidays and special traditional events would get rid of the current problems. Such a policy would eliminate confusion and create more organization.

The current walk policy is not clear or consistent; therefore, it calls for new actions and procedures.



"How many times have I asked you NOT to slam on the brakes like that?!"

MAIL CALL

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Plant theft disheartens horticulture students

Sometime between the evening of Monday, Nov. 14 and the afternoon of Wednesday, Nov. 16, a greenhouse operated by the undergraduate students of the Department of Horticultural Sciences was broken into and about \$400 of plant material was stolen.

The material removed included mostly large and exotic tropical stock plants which are used as a source to propagate more plants.

These crops are sold at public sales to raise funds for students to make field trips, sponsor community projects and pay for the maintenance of our facilities.

Many of the plants removed do not belong to the student club but were on loan for use as stock plants.

The members of this organization devote a great deal of effort and valuable time in order to learn about the operation of commercial plant production, arrange and manage plant sales and contribute to the local community.

The theft of these plants creates a considerable set-back. And the real loss in terms of the crops that could have been potentially produced from them is indeterminable.

If you have any information that could help in the investigation of this matter, please contact the Texas A&M University Police.

David M. Hamada
Class of '95
Greenhouse Manager,
TAMU Floriculture and Horticulture Society

Dorm residents deserve right to protect home

Recently a proposal was passed by the Resident Hall Association stating that Law and Puryear Halls should move into Legett Hall next fall. The reasons given for the proposal were (1) to rectify an alleged housing discrepancy and (2) to preserve their community.

To address the first point, the Housing Office is paid to rectify discrepancies, residents are not.

To address the second, by preserving the community of Law and Puryear, that of Legett would be lost forever. Legett Hall has the highest retention rate of any female dorm on campus, as well as having almost one-third of freshman female students. Who has the right to decide which community is worthy of preservation?

I have no animosity toward the men of Law and Puryear. Their homes are being destroyed and their community altered. This makes it all the more unbelievable that they have chosen to do this to another dorm.

Finally, a dangerous precedent has been set. The RHA of Texas A&M University has shown, in a democratic fashion, that any residence hall on campus can arbitrarily choose to take over another residence hall simply by claiming to be better Ags. Law and Puryear are victims of the University's failure to maintain its dormitories.

However, Legett stands to be a victim of fellow Aggies.

That is Bad Bull.

Ali Fuller
Class of '98

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor and will print as many as space allows. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class, and phone number.

We reserve the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy.

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4-step plan puts stress in perspective

End-of-the-semester strain ties Aggies in knots of frustration and anxiety

AJA HENDERSON
columnist



scathing Mail Call letter. Sheez, folks. Lighten up a little, will you.

OK - I'm for real now. Here are a few tips to keep your sanity during these particularly stressful days:

1. Cry. That's right, go for it. Let that wetness flow. This goes for both guys and girls. By the way, don't worry about your roommate laughing at you, either. I can almost guarantee that when he or she walks in and takes one look at you, the whole thing will become contagious, and you'll both break down. But, most importantly, you will both be releasing some

your body and mind feeling looser and more relaxed.

4. Laugh. Don't take every little thing seriously. Save your energy for the big things, and in doing so you might cut a significant amount of stress out of your daily routine. In other words, don't sweat the small stuff.

Aja, why ever did you write this column? Hmmm? Well, dear reader, I will put it to you like this: I am sick and tired of passing S.A.D. stricken Aggies, because it increases my S.A.D. level. I mean, just last week I passed countless stressed out Ags who gave me a terse Howdy as they walked by looking all constipated or something. Yes, this is a really stressful time for all of us.

After we finish inhaling turkey tomorrow, we will start to ponder finals and all the other stressful end-of-the-semester wind-down activities. Still, that does not mean that we have to walk around on edge, looking all dried up and beat. We are Aggies, daggummit.

So your I.D. is rejected in front of the millions of people in line at Sbsa. So you trip and fall flat on your face while walking through the lobby of the Commons. So you walk into Blocker with your skirt in your panties. What are you going to do? Are you going to stress about it? NO!

You are going to look at this column (of course, you could post it up for quick reference), read my stress busting tips once again, breathe out, and smile.

Go on, with yo' bad self!

Think about how stress enters our lives on a daily basis...the sleepless nights...the late night cramming at IHOP...the harrowing hours of designing a degree plan.

of that stress and tension that has built up all week. Oh, to bond!

2. Hit something. Not another person, though. Well, we might make an exception if that person is from t.u... Anyway, make a large stack of pillows and just punch, punch, punch away to your heart's content. Can't you feel the stress just oozing away, already?
3. Engage in some sort of physical activity. It could be rollerblading, dancing or...something else. The point is that all of this exercise will leave

the lobby of the Commons. So you walk into Blocker with your skirt in your panties. What are you going to do? Are you going to stress about it? NO!

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Aja Henderson is a sophomore finance major