

Jackopierce, Jack Ingram make Aggie Final a tradition

By Michael Landauer
THE BATTALION

When Jack O'Neill thinks of College Station, memories come flooding back of past performances.



(from left) Earl Darling, Jack O'Neill, Cary Pierce and Clay Pendergrass of Jackopierce are performing at the Aggie Final.

He remembers one time when his girlfriend picked him up from ROTC training in Arlington, and they drove to Carney's Pub in Bryan.

He made it just in time to join his friend Cary Pierce on stage for an acoustic set. Without even pausing for one drink, he drove home, got a couple hours of sleep, and then took a final at the University of Texas at Arlington.

"It was just a show that couldn't be missed," he said.

But finals will be over, and Jackopierce will be ready to take part in another show that "can't be missed" next Wednesday at the third annual Aggie Final.

O'Neill said he is looking forward to being part of the post-finals celebration.

"That totally puts it in perspective," he said, noting that Wednesday also will give the group reason to celebrate. "It's the last show of our tour, and we will totally be in sync."

While on the road, O'Neill said, the members of the band jump from town to town without taking much note of where they are. They usually get on the bus and move on when the show is

over. But O'Neill said College Station is different.

"We're gonna be back in Texas with old friends," he said. "Something like that we'll get prepared for mentally — it's like a homecoming and we're gonna be ready to rock."

One old friend O'Neill is looking forward to seeing is Jack Ingram, a Texas-style country singer who has opened for the folk-rock group the last three years at the concert.

"I just know that every time I go to A&M, there will be people there to welcome me — kinda like a second home," Ingram said. "It's not like we have to

prove anything to anyone there."

Ingram said he enjoys the Aggie Final because it gives him and his band a chance to be part of something big at A&M, a far cry from the days when Ingram performed in College Station by himself with one guitar.

"It's always such a blast," he said. "I love playing at A&M, anyway. But there always seems to be a zillion people there (at the Aggie Final)."

Mark Shaberg, one of the show's promoters, said the crowds keep getting bigger, making the concert a sort of tradition at A&M.

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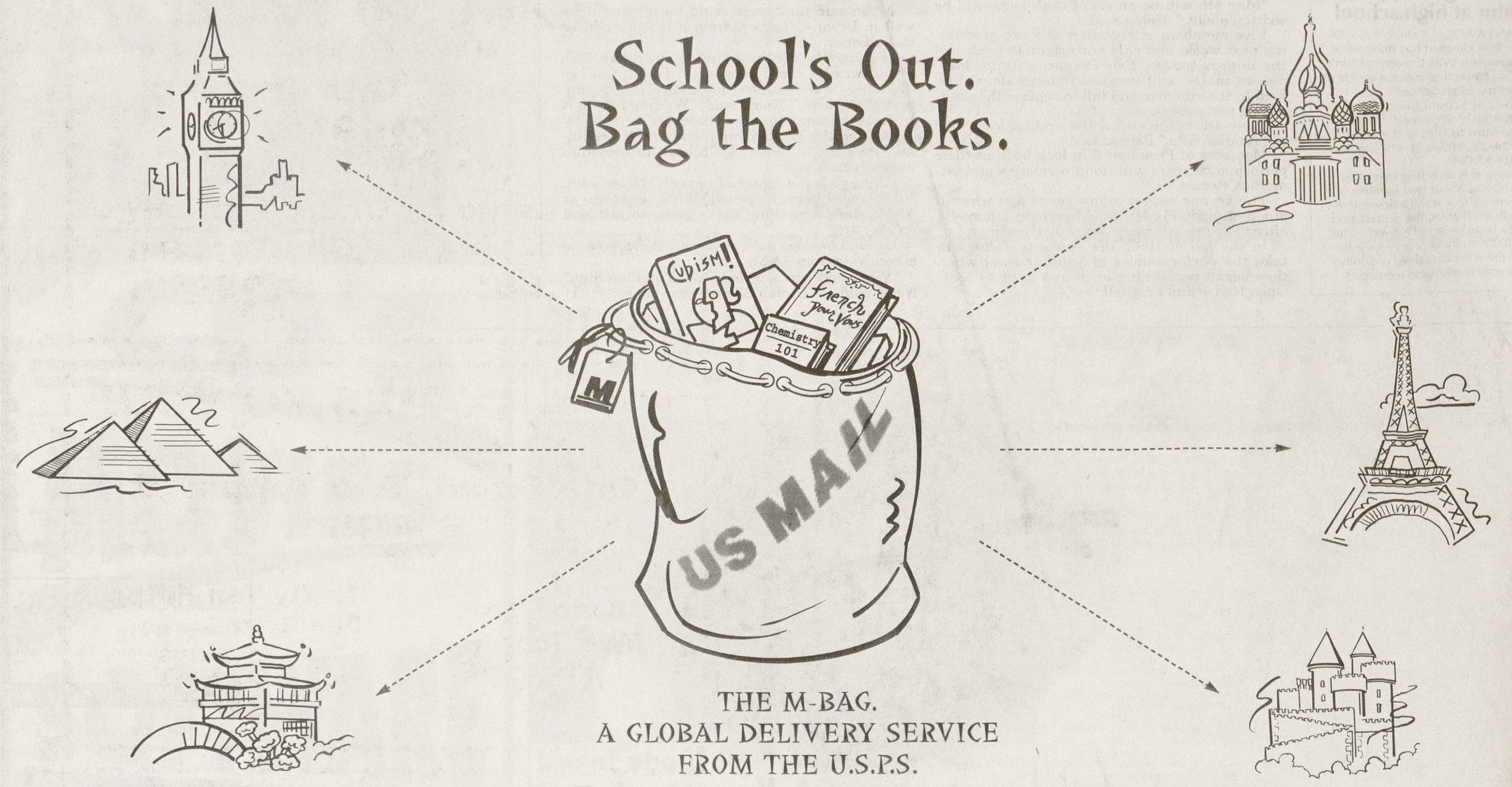
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