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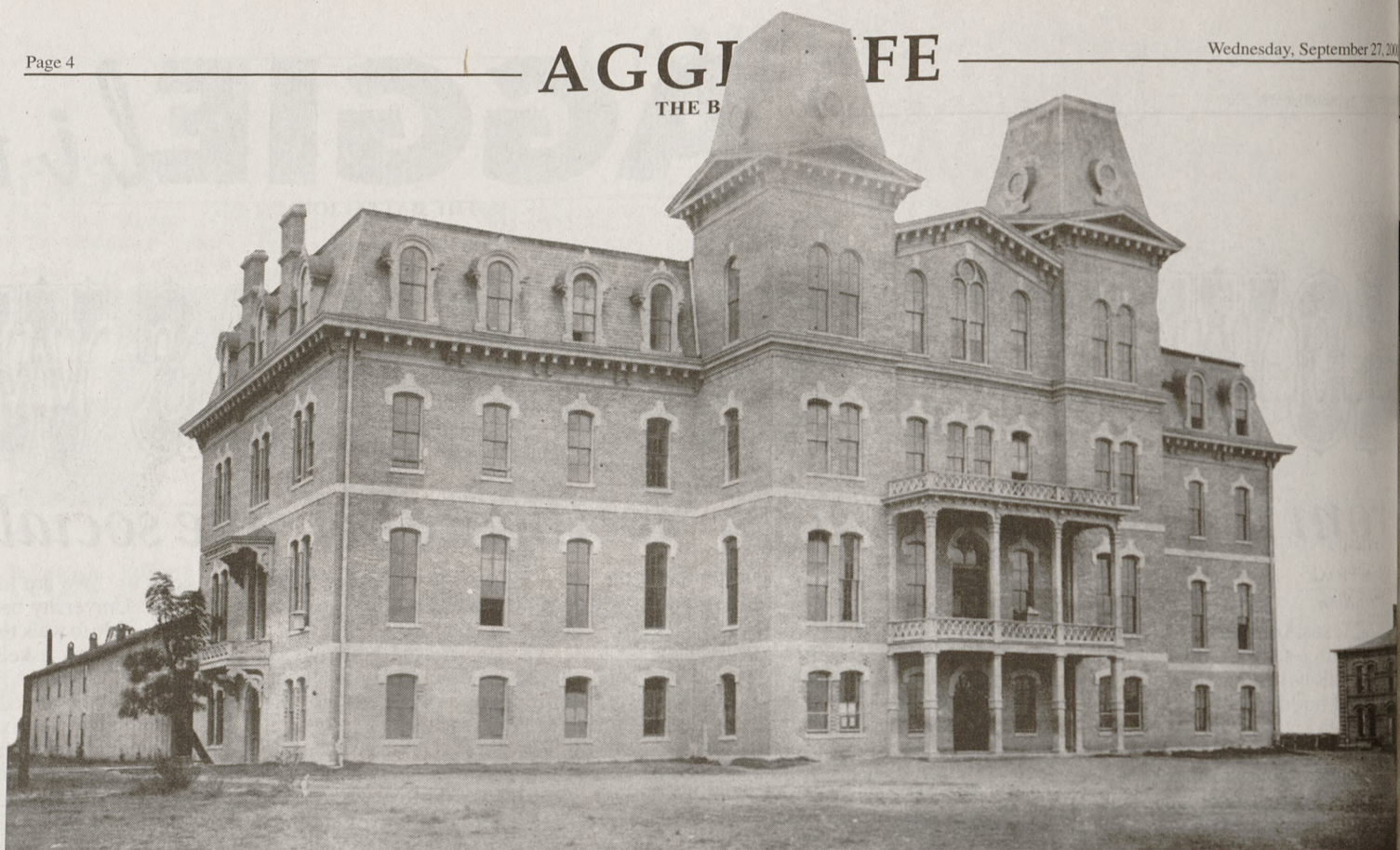
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**The story of A&M as it opened its doors**

**O**n Oct. 2, 1876, the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas opened its doors for registration. Two days later, Gov. Richard Coke dedicated the institution, and the first 40 students and six faculty members began instruction at the college.

Old Main was the first building on campus when it was erected in 1875. Today, the Academic Building replaced Old Main because a fire that destroyed it on May 27, 1912.

It is often asked, "How did A&M become such a friendly school?" When A&M first opened its doors, the first faculty members and students had one building in which to live, teach, learn, dine and, make their home for the school year.

One could only imagine what life would be like today if the student body lived with the entire faculty. Students and faculty had close-knit professional and personal relationships.

Over the years, A&M grew. The college was in a pasture far from any town or civilization. It



soon occupied 5,200 acres and was the largest campus in the country.

In the early 1900s, students were referred to as "farmers," and the name "Aggie" was picked up in the 1920s.

Students would arrive at the college via a train that picked up and dropped off at a local depot. Today, that depot has a historical marker across the street from Albritton Tower.

A&M was founded as an all-male military institution. Because many of A&M's early years were during times of war, few students finished their degrees. Many left in the middle of their college days to serve our country in battle — many did not return.

For this reason, A&M has several forms of remembrance to Aggies who gave their lives defending the country.

One of these well-known memorials is the Memorial Student Center (MSC). In 1951 the MSC was originally dedicated to 55 Aggies who gave their lives in wartime.

Today, the MSC has almost quadrupled in size and serves as a "home for students" while they are participating in student organizations, between classes, or when meeting friends in the Flagroom.

Fifty-five flags fly over Kyle Field before each home football game. The flags are hoisted in the early morning hours by members of the Corps of Cadets so that when Aggies begin to flood the stands, those flags will be flying proudly in reverence. Fifty-five trees surround the O.R. Simpson Drill Field, with a memorial located at the West Gate. On the side of the MSC is a plaque that reads, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13."

A&M is a school committed to excellence in all areas. Through the course of attending A&M, a bond is built and an unspoken truth is formed. No matter what, no matter where and no matter why two people should ever meet — if Aggies sit on their fingers, they have been friends and will always be friends.

One may disagree with me on this, but one could disagree with anything. I am not making an overall assumption and forming an opinion for all current 44,000 students or the hundreds of thousands that have come before us — I am simply stating the obvious: "Aggies are we ... true to each other as Aggies can be."

— Justin Taliaferro is a senior finance major

**HIV/AIDS education lacking**

**Researchers suggest schools expand sexual education courses**

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP) — A girl in Matthew Wentzel's class of ninth-graders at Minnie Howard School wanted to know who gets HIV/AIDS. "Gay people do," said a 15-year-old classmate in the back. When Wentzel told them no, statistics show that among adolescents, heterosexual females are at highest risk, the class was silent.

"That's the basic introduction," Wentzel told a reporter later. "The realism of this epidemic hasn't really sunk in."

Wentzel says he doesn't sugarcoat the issue. "If you ask, I'm going to give you an honest answer," he tells his human development class, which includes this northern Virginia district's coursework on sex education.

But nationally, sex education lessons might not be as informative, a new report suggests.

A survey of 1,501 students and their parents, plus 1,300 educators, found that students learn in school

the "birds and bees" basics of how babies are conceived. Most also learn how sex partners can contract diseases. And — because of state policies — many teachers stress abstinence as a way to prevent

gone too far, leaving parents out of the process.

"Parental control or lack of it is the basic problem, rather than what just happens in schools," said Liz Alston, the pro-abstinence-only chair

of the Charleston County, S.C., school board that's battled over teaching abstinence only or including lessons about birth control.

But the report, conducted by non-profit health researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation and released Tuesday, found that parents want their children to learn more about birth control and safe sex, more than their children reportedly learn.

Others say sex education has

Now reluctant school officials should be more willing to expand their programs, said Ramon Cortines, a former superintendent who now directs a school reform research project at Stanford University.

"We tend to be responsive to the politics of rhetoric," he said. "We now have better information than who can yell the loudest."

For instance, 97 percent of parents want their children taught how to deal with sexual assault; just 59 percent of students said they covered that in their most recent class. Nine in 10 parents want their children to learn about birth control; eight in 10 students say they do.

"Sex education is often debated at the political and advocacy kind of levels, but rarely does it get down to real world discussions," Tina Hoff, Kaiser's chief public health researcher. She said the study is meant to further research on the issue, not invoke changes in any particular state or school board's policies.

**"If sex education is to become part of the curriculum, it has to evolve."**

— Matthew Wentzel  
Ninth grade school teacher

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