

...ni haurt zloof

Students celebrate April Fools with pranks and practical jokes

By Jesse Wright
THE BATTALION

T.S. Eliot's poem "The Wasteland" begins with the phrase, "April is the cruelest month." Although this may seem to be an exaggeration for the entire month, it can start in a slump for some. April 1 is a day when even the wisest may run the risk of being deemed a fool.

According to infoplease.com, April Fools Day dates back to the 16th century, when Pope Gregory VIII introduced the Gregorian calendar. Before that period, the Julian calendar was used, which marked New Year's day as April first. Many die-hard conservatives, as well as those who did not hear of the change, still continued to celebrate the New Year on April first. These people, who were behind the times, were regarded as fools.

As the Gregorian years rolled by, April 1 evolved into the day of pranks and practical jokes that celebrated today. Thus anyone is susceptible to become an April Fool, despite their calendar of choice. Pranks can range anywhere from the simple to the extreme.

Rebecca Harrison, a senior recreation, parks and tourism sciences major once played an April Fools joke on her roommate.

"I took a bunch of bubble wrap and lined her bathroom floor with it," Harrison said. "Then I unscrewed the light bulbs so she couldn't turn on the light and see the floor. She woke up early on April Fools day and went into the bathroom. When she walked in, the bubble wrap started popping as she walked on it. She screamed, I laughed."

Some April Fools jokes go far beyond the popping of packaging material. Robert Parr, a graduate student in the department of mathematics, remembers some April Fools pranks from when he was an undergraduate student at Southwestern University.

"I was in a fraternity, and every year someone would do something crazy on April Fools Day," Parr said. "One year, a guy found a dead deer carcass and put it in another guy's bed. It stunk up the entire frat house so bad that we couldn't even go inside."

Parr said that, much to the chagrin of many on campus, several of the pranks pulled by his fraternity brothers involved roadkill.

"Another time, one of my fraternity brothers mailed a dead raccoon to another frat member. The campus post office called him and said, 'Sir, you have a package here, and it's really starting to smell,'" Parr said.

The pranks and practical jokes that Parr remembers that did not include roadkill were still not pleasant for the April Fool who fell victim to them. He said one of the more common pranks played was a practice called "Breakfast in Bed." In this practice, eggs, syrup, ketchup, and any other messy or gooey substance would be smeared, dripped and spread all over the unsuspecting April Fool's bed.

Parr said retaliation was common from April Fools day victims. Often, the person doing the



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fooling would become the fool himself.

"People would get mad at some of the pranks sometimes. But once they got the person back, it was all okay, and we could all laugh about it," Parr said.

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Kayak Open Practice	Now-April 8	April 9

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