

## Lords of the ring

Students find unique ways to dunk their Aggie rings

By Lyndsey Sage  
THE BATTALION

There are not many places where it is common to see someone chugging a pitcher of beer or diving face first into an ice cream sundae to emerge with a ring between their teeth. Texas A&M, however, is an exception. At a tradition-rich university, where the Aggie ring is one of the most symbolic traditions, ring dunking has joined the list of traditions. Although it is not officially recognized as a tradition by the university, ring dunking has become almost as much tradition as having an Aggie ring.

Kathy Thompson, a senior history major, said although she is not usually excited about traditions she was surprised to see how her feelings changed when she got her ring.

"It was exciting to know that I had finally made it and gotten all my hours that I needed to have," Thompson said. From bowls filled with ice cream to pitchers of beer, from gallons of milk to whip cream pies, students make their ring dunking as memorable as possible. Thompson, along with her fiancé, dunked their rings in ice cream at Swenson's because she thought ice cream would taste good and not make the experience horrible. The two were cheered on by several friends as they dug into their bowls.

"They put the ring in the bottom of the bowl of ice cream," Thompson said. "I only got four or five scoops, and it didn't really make me sick. My fiancé got eight scoops though, and he started feeling really sick. He had to go lay down when he was finished."

Although Thompson said she experienced brain freeze, it did not inhibit

her from finding her ring nestled at the bottom of the bowl.

"My fiancé's ring was so cold when he finally got to it, he couldn't even hold it between his teeth," Thompson said.

Like most seniors, Thompson dunked her ring to adhere to tradition.

Friends threw a party for David Crowder, a senior biomedical sciences major, to celebrate his ring dunking.

"I dunked it in a pitcher of beer," Crowder said. "I have no idea how long it took me."

Some students try to reach the ring in the same amount of seconds as their class year, but

Crowder said he was not concerned about that aspect of the tradition.

"I wanted to dunk my ring because it was an Aggie tradition," Crowder said.

Unlike most students, Jennifer Jose, a senior agricultural business major, had a motive other than tradition for dunking her ring.

"I had a friend who passed away that couldn't, so I did it for him," Jose said. "I always told him he was going to dunk mine for me but when he passed away, I did it for him instead."

Jose and eight other girls dunked their rings outside The Dixie Chicken last spring during Parents' Weekend. She said her parents were hesitant about the dunking because they feared she would get sick.

"I can't stand beer, but they told me if I did it in anything else, I would get sick," Jose said. "I didn't get sick but some of the girls did. They had trash bags in their belt for when they did."

Erin Delcarson, a senior speech communications major, took an alternative approach to dunking her ring.

"I didn't want to do beer, so my friend suggested I dunk it in a cake," Delcarson said. "She baked me a 9-by-13 inch chocolate cake, stuck the ring in it while it was cooling, covered it with icing, and wrote 'Happy Ring Dunking' on the cake."

Set-off with a "ready, set, go" by her friends, Delcarson's hands were tied behind her back and she found her ring with only her mouth.

"I had icing up my nose and, eventually, I just started spitting out the cake," Delcarson recalled. "I couldn't find it for the longest time so my friend gave me a hint. She told me what half of the cake it was in, except she told me the wrong half so it took me even longer to find it. In the end, I looked like a chipmunk."



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