

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

Page 3 • Wednesday, March 5, 2003

1 P U Z Z L E

2 H A P P Y

Students reveal addictions to daily crossword puzzles

By Kellie Potucek
THE BATTALION

Field Claytor's obsession with crossword puzzles began his freshman year when he realized that some of his lecturers were not always as thrilling as he would have liked them to be.

"I like crosswords because they are challenging," said Claytor, a senior speech communication major.

Claytor said he found the puzzles to be a productive way to occupy those times when his lecturer was not sharing the most pertinent information. Since then, he has come to dedicate at least one course period a day to finishing the brainteasers. He said that working on them in class has not had any negative effect on his grade point ratio or education.

"I learn more from crosswords than I do in some of my classes," Claytor said.

Whether searching for a way to fill some idle time or appraising one's vocabulary and trivia expertise, Aggies all over campus are finding crossword puzzles extremely entertaining.

Diane Blackwelder, a junior finance major, has not been as fortunate as Claytor.

"I definitely attribute my economics 203 grades to crosswords," she said. "I don't let myself work on them in class anymore, but I still do them in between classes."

Blackwelder said that she enjoys crosswords despite the fact that she is not very good at them. She said she appreciates the rush of accomplishment she gets when she matches a word to its clue.

Blackwelder recently discovered www.oneacross.com, a Web site that can assist frustrated crossword enthusiasts when they are stumped by a clue. On the site, you can type in the hints provided in the puzzle, and it will respond with its analysis of the clues.

Alan Horton, a senior speech communication major, is another fan of the puzzles.

"They get you warmed up for the day," Horton said.

He typically spends an hour a day solving crosswords, usually in class or at work. Horton said that he particularly enjoys the

progression of difficulty that is evident in puzzles published in The Battalion.

"I usually complete the puzzles from Monday through Wednesday. If I need help, I'll do them with friends," Horton said.

Dr. Cynthia Anderson, lecturer and consultant for A&M's Center for Teaching Excellence said that while even she finds crosswords to be very engaging, there are appropriate times to work on them.

"I make an announcement at the beginning of class informing my students that it's time for everyone to close their newspapers just as I would remind them to put their notes away before a quiz," she said.

Even college students can benefit from guidance and structure, and in order to send the message that their student's learning is important to them, teachers need to make it clear that crosswords should not be worked on during class time, Anderson said.

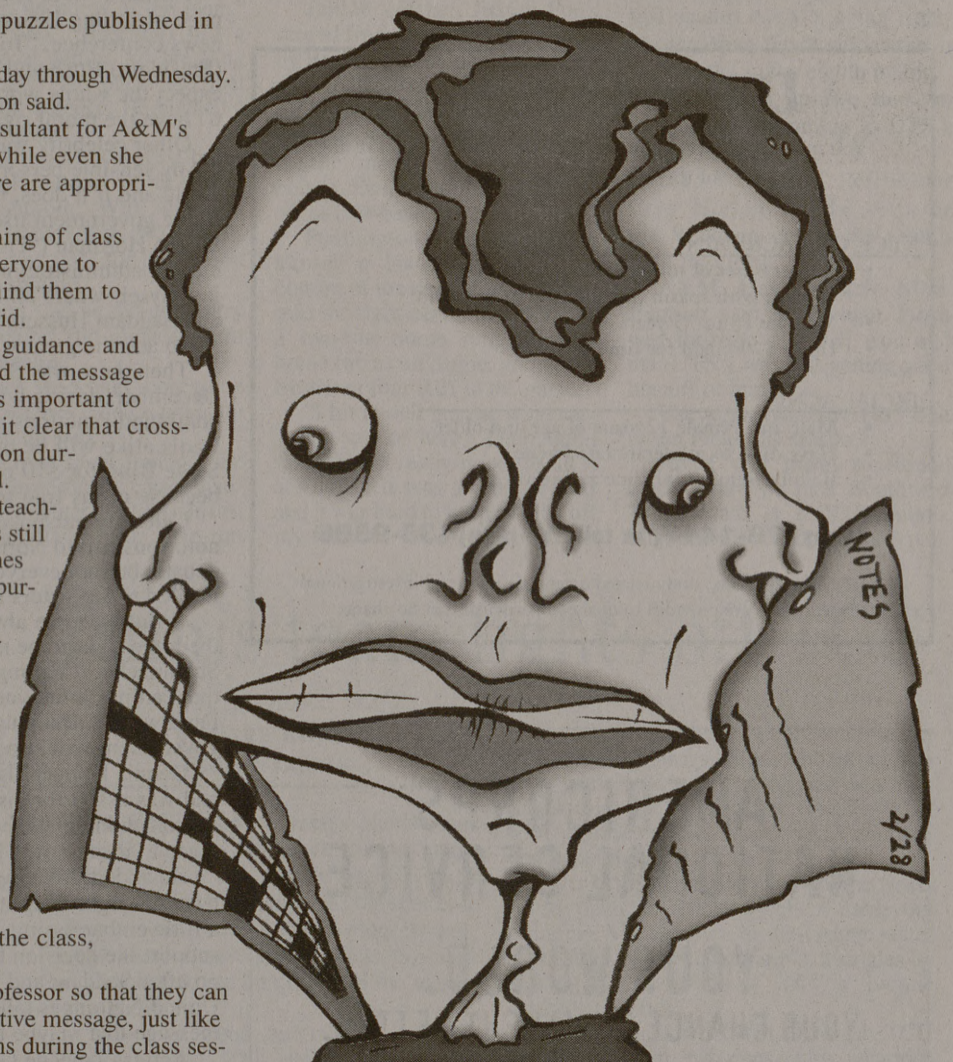
"While I don't believe that teachers have to act like jailors, it is still important for them to sometimes remind their students that the purpose of being in school is not just to warm a chair in a classroom but to really get something useful out of the lesson, hopefully something they'll find useful later," she said.

For a learning environment to be successful, an atmosphere of mutual respect between teacher and student must be present. Students should try to focus on the teacher just as the teacher should focus on the students because this is a way for both to show that they care about the class, Anderson said.

When a student chooses to ignore the professor so that they can work on a crossword puzzle, it sends a negative message, just like if a teacher were to ignore students' questions during the class session, she said.

"I learn more from crosswords than I do in some of my classes."

— Field Claytor
senior speech communication major



LEIGH RICHARDSON • THE BATTALION

Mardi Gras continues despite cold, wet weather conditions

By Brett Martel
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW ORLEANS — Mardi Gras revelers hit the streets in force Tuesday, ignoring cold, wet weather and turning aside anxieties over the threat of war with Iraq and the lagging national economy.

Jazz musician Pete Fountain, whose Half Fast marching club is traditionally one of the first of the day, lurched toward the French Quarter ahead of the big parades. It was the 43rd year for Fountain, resplendent in a white, orange and green feather headdress as he led actor John Goodman and others in the dancing, bead-throwing tribe.

"It never gets old," Fountain said. Although heavy rain nearly washed out Monday's celebration, Tuesday's fog and drizzle, with temperatures in the 50s, failed to dampen spirits.

"We weren't going to let the weather stop us, although

I had second, third and fourth thoughts by now," said Donna Lewis of Mandeville. She said she arrived about 2 a.m. to stake out a parade-watching spot along historic St. Charles Avenue, set up a canopy, put out chairs and left two teenagers to guard her group's spot.

The annual festival of elaborate parades, street parties and rowdy excess takes hold of New Orleans, Mobile and other Gulf Coast cities before the fasting and penitence of Lent, the period between Ash Wednesday and Easter.

There seemed to be more costumes than usual.

A dozen maskers calling themselves the Krewe of Homeland Security wore plastic drapes and duct tape, with colored dots representing smallpox. Each carried cans of baby powder "anthrax" and handed out Mardi Gras Alerts, declaring the security status as purple, green and gold, the traditional Carnival colors.

"We figured if Tom Ridge could keep us safe for the rest of the year, we could keep everyone safe for Mardi Gras," said Jane Gardner April of New Orleans.

While the city does not officially release crowd estimates until after Mardi Gras ends, many longtime residents said traffic appeared to be down this year.

Antoni Tsatsoulis, 26, said he has spent Mardi Gras at his family's cafe for about the past 20 years and could not recall smaller crowds.

"Whatever business we did last year, it had to be about twice as much as this year," he said.

Balcony space on Bourbon Street, usually booked a year in advance, was available in spots right up through Monday because of cancellations.

"I think it's because of the threat of war and all the security," said Angelle Blanchard, manager of one business with an open balcony on Monday.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Martha Stewart Living reports first-ever quarterly loss

NEW YORK (AP) — The insider trading investigation surrounding Martha Stewart is taking a toll on her namesake company, which reported its first-ever quarterly loss Tuesday and warned of more bad news ahead.

For the three months ending Dec. 31, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia lost \$2 million, or 3 cents per share, in contrast to a profit of \$5.7 million, or 13 cents per share, in 2001. The results marked the first time the company has reported a net loss for any quarter since it went public in 1999.

Among the fallout at the media and retailing company: an expected 25 percent decline in advertising pages at the company's flagship Martha Stewart Living magazine during the first three months of this year.

"Certain advertisers are opting to wait until they see the resolution of the investigations involving Martha before committing to run pages," company president and chief operating officer Sharon Patrick said Tuesday.

The company earned 6 cents per share in the fourth quarter, putting it ahead of the 3 cents per share that analysts surveyed by Thomson First Call had forecast. But it warned of more difficulties ahead, saying it expects a first-quarter loss of 6 cents to 8 cents per share, when analysts were looking for a profit of 3 cents. Fourth-quarter revenues were \$77.6 million, compared with \$82.7 million in 2001.

While the downturn was driven by declines in publishing, television and Internet/direct commerce divisions, merchandising revenues were

higher, increasing 11 percent to \$11.8 million in the quarter. The company said it benefited from strong demand for a new holiday line and higher royalty rate under its contract with Kmart.

Federal regulators want to know whether founder and chief executive Martha Stewart was trading on insider information when she sold shares of ImClone stock in December 2001. She has denied any wrongdoing, but said the issue continues to hurt business.

Federal appeals court stays decision on Pledge of Allegiance

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A federal appeals court on Tuesday put on hold its ruling barring the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in public classrooms, pending an appeal to the Supreme Court.

The order followed a request from the Elk Grove Unified School District near Sacramento. The daughter of the man whose suit led the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to find the pledge unconstitutional attends school there.

Without Tuesday's stay, public schools in nine western states would have been banned — beginning next Monday — from reciting the pledge, with its reference to "under God." Those states are Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Montana, Oregon and Washington.

The stay gives the school district 90 days to ask the Supreme Court to review the ruling.

In June and again last Friday, the San Francisco-based appeals court ruled that the pledge is an unconstitutional endorsement of religion when recited in public schools.

The Princeton Review
Better Scores. Better Schools.

Hyperlearning LSAT

Classes Starting March 22nd!

- Maximum 8 Students per Class
- 30 hours of Classroom Instruction
- 20 hours of Workshops
- Preparation for the June 9th LSAT
- Guaranteed Satisfaction

Space is limited. Call now to enroll.

www.PrincetonReview.com | 800-2Review

LSAT is a registered trademark of the Law School Admission Council (LSAC). The Princeton Review is not affiliated with Princeton University or LSAC.

AGGIE (ON) 34
Meet the Men behind the masked men
Marv Wolfman Peter David
Comic Guest of Honor Writer Guest of Honor
March 20-23



<http://aggiecon.tamu.edu>

Vietnamese American Student Association

COME ONE...COME ALL

Thursday 3/6/03 8:30pm
Rudder 404

FUN FREE FOOD FRIENDS

Officers nominations this meeting!

Find us on the web at <http://stuact.tamu.edu/stuorgs/vasa/>

Hope Pregnancy Centers OF BRAZOS VALLEY

HOW WOULD A PREGNANCY AFFECT YOUR FUTURE?

Free Pregnancy Test • Complete Confidentiality
Peer Counseling Service
17 Years of Personal and Confidential Care
Open Mon-Fri 9-5 & some evenings & Saturdays
Call for an appointment

695-9193
205 Brentwood
College Station

846-1097
3620 E. 29th St.
Bryan