

Deranged drivers

Students struggle to keep their cool behind the steering wheel

By Jena Honeycutt
THE BATTALION

Hell hath no fury like a driver scorned. When Robert Slaughter finds himself behind a slow driver, he said he tailgates to encourage that driver to go faster.

"Road rage can affect me for a moment when I am enjoying the radio or the weather, and someone takes me out of that moment," said Slaughter, a senior journalism major. "If someone cuts off someone else or me or if they rev their engine at a stoplight, it is really annoying."

Slaughter said when another driver's actions aggravate him, he gets right up on their bumper. If the driver is in another lane, he said, he will get ahead of them in their lane and then drive really slow.

Slaughter said he does not flip off other cars because he considers this to be an extreme way of expressing anger. He said he never knows if that driver will notice his car when it is in a parking lot and do something to it to get him back.

"I can tell the difference between an honest mistake and a jerk, but if they are in a showboat car, it doesn't help them," he said.

Slaughter said he occasionally tries to give other drivers the benefit of the doubt in their actions.

"All can be forgiven with a little wave (or any attempt to apologize," he said. "That's what I do."

Senior Trooper Eddie Carmon, safety education officer at the Texas Department of Public Safety, said there are cases of aggressive driving each day in College Station, but

the cases seldom become physical. When most people think of road rage, Carmon said, they are actually thinking of what he terms "aggressive driving."

"Most road rage results in fistfights between drivers," he said. "One event in Fort Worth resulted in one of the drivers pulling a pistol and shooting the other driver."

Carmon said he does not pull drivers over for yelling and waving particular gestures. But, he said, he does stop drivers for actions that could result in injury.

If a driver does something that could be perceived as an act that is breaking the peace, such as flipping off another driver, Carmon said there is little he can do about it.

At most, he said, he can argue "lewd behavior" or "disorderly conduct," which is difficult to enforce.

Carmon said he has not noticed any particular pattern in the age and sex of most aggressive drivers and road rage cases.

"We live in a rush-rush world," he said. "People just fly off the handle because

they are mad at their boss, their boyfriend, their professors."

Carmon said if anybody is involved with an angry driver, it is best to get away from them. If someone does something that has upset another driver, such as accidentally cutting them off, he advises apologizing by waving.

"They are only in your life for a few seconds," Carmon said. "It is not worth getting involved with this person over something so trivial as a car cutting you off."

However, the apologetic wave is not enough

for the Roth sisters. Kathryn Roth, a freshman business major, said shrugging your shoulders and whispering apologies does not compensate for moronic driving.

Clare Roth, a senior math major, said she becomes so angry that she will scream and shake when angered by another driver. Clare said she does not retaliate against the offenders, but instead releases her fury through self-inflicted

minor injuries.

Clare said that while driving in typical Aggie football game traffic this fall, she was cut off numerous times. This, in combination with "dealing with stupid drivers," led Clare to slam her fist into her car's center console. She said her hand was bruised and hurt for days afterwards.

Kathryn said she rates her responses to those of other drivers.

"You have the clenched fist, the hammer and my personal favorite, the classic flip off," she said.

Concerned with her angered response to other drivers, Kathryn said she made a New Year's resolution to give up her aggressive driving.

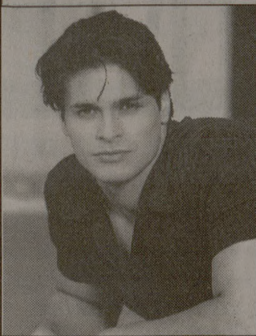
"I just wanted to be a calmer driver, and it's working for me so far," she said.



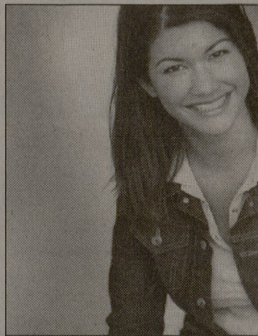
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OPEN TALENT CALL

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The Nikki Pederson Model & Talent Academy is pleased to announce it will be hosting a scouting event in Bryan on Saturday, April 5 at 4:00 pm, and Sunday, April 6 at 2:00 pm for the International Modeling & Talent Association Convention, "Hooray For Hollywood" 2004.

Actors, Actresses, Singers, Dancers and Models are encouraged to audition. The IMTA is a distinguished and legitimate avenue to meet agents and begin learning about a career outside the Brazos Valley Market. If you are selected to attend the LA Convention and Competitions you will have the opportunity to audition for and interview with scores of modeling and talent agents, you might never have the chance to meet otherwise. It is truly a once in a lifetime event for the aspiring model and talented individuals. Nikki Pederson Talent had an Outstanding 95% Agency callback rate at the last International Model & Talent Convention & Competitions.

Stars like Katie Holmes, Elijah Wood, Jessica Biel & Cover Girl Model, Jessica White, along with many others were discovered at an IMTA Convention.

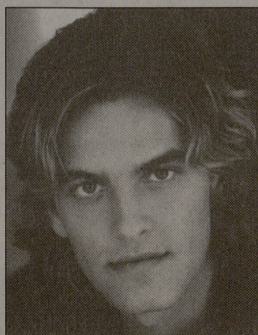
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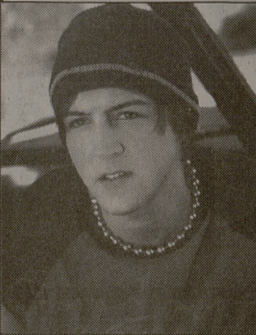
- Open to ages 8 years and older
- No experience is necessary
- A personal photo/snapshot is required!



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Elliot Schrock
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Valarie Renter
Recording Demo with Michael Jay, Jambo Productions, LA

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STARLIGHT BALLROOM • SNOOK, TEXAS

 GARY ALLAN playing at 4:15	 WILLIE NELSON playing at 6:00	 CROSS CANADIAN RECWEED playing at 2:15
 CORY MORROW playing at 12:30	<p>FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.CHILIFEST.ORG</p> <p>TICKETS AVAILABLE AT:</p>	 ROGER CREAGER playing at 11:00

AggieLand Outfitters (George Bush and Post Oak Mall Locations), Inspirations in the Mall, Catalena Hatters in Bryan, The Exchange at Luther St., The Cambridge Apartments, C.C. Creations, Ticketweb.com

USE THE PARK AND RIDE STARTING AT 10:00 A.M. See www.chilifest.org for more info.
 Benefiting: Brazos County Go-Texan • Boys and Girls Club of the Brazos Valley & Other Charitable Organizations in the Brazos Valley

NEWS
THE BATTALION
NEWS IN BRIEF
Coke, Walthall and Williams elected 2003 class agents
The team of Kelly Walthall, Kelly Coke and Cliff Williams was elected 2003 class agents during the March 27-28 student body elections. They received 60 percent of the vote against two opponents. Also on the ballot were the class gifts for the classes of 2003 and 2004. The results will be announced by class officers on April 5 at 5 p.m. Voting in the elections will begin today at 8 a.m. and end at 5 p.m. Thursday. Students can request their ballots at www.tamu.edu.

Correction
In the March 28 page article "Board regents approve tuition increase," University President Robert M. Garza said the new Independent Study Abroad program is assessed only for students participating in approved study abroad program independent of Texas A&M.

TAP
Following on was held on Monday, April 14.
m Keith Knowlton, engineering technology major.

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igh Friday during the fall and spring semesters at University holidays and exam periods at 1840. POSTMASTER: Send address change to 77843-1111.
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