

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

Page 3 • Tuesday, October 21, 2003

Never too late

Older students struggle with balancing school, family in quest for college degrees

By Tori Foster
THE BATTALION

At the age of 52, Valerie Sorenson didn't know what to do when she got fired from her job. Sorenson's employers decided they wanted someone with a bachelor's degree to fill her position.

After a discussion with her husband, she did what many other adults are doing — she decided to go back to college.

Many adults are learning how to adjust as they return to college. With children and work among their many daily conflicts, these "non-traditional" students learn to overcome their fears and take a step back into their past.

After graduating from high school, Sorenson left Corpus Christi, Texas, to attend the University of Houston to pursue her undergraduate degree.

"My dad and I had a deal that if I made below a 'C' I would go back home," Sorenson, a junior education major, said. "I got up there and like many other freshmen I played. I ended up having to go home."

Upon returning to Corpus Christi, Sorenson tried to continue her education and enrolled in a junior college. Soon after, she got married and was forced to put her education on pause.

"I did well there, but I got married and got what they call my 'MRS degree,'" Sorenson said. "We eventually got divorced five years later and I tried to start going back to school and taking classes that interested me."

When Sorenson remarried, she moved to College Station in pursuit of a job opportunity with a local radio station. After losing her job she began to have to look into other alternatives.

"When I lost my job I went through a period where I was down," Sorenson said. "My husband and I sat down and looked at our finances and decided we could make it if I went back to school. My husband knew how important my education was to me."

Sorenson enrolled in Texas A&M to put the finishing touches on her education. As she returned to the classroom her husband took over running her house.

"Since I went back to school my husband takes care of everything," Sorenson said. "He does all the shopping, cleaning, laundry and even cooks meals. Because of expenses we didn't want to pay for parking, so he drives me to school and picks me up. He's my chauffeur."

With the help and support of her husband, Sorenson is able to juggle working part-time and going to school full-time.

"I can't say enough about my husband, he makes it so easy for me," Sorenson said. "I wouldn't be able to do all this without him. I haven't seen the inside of a grocery store in months."

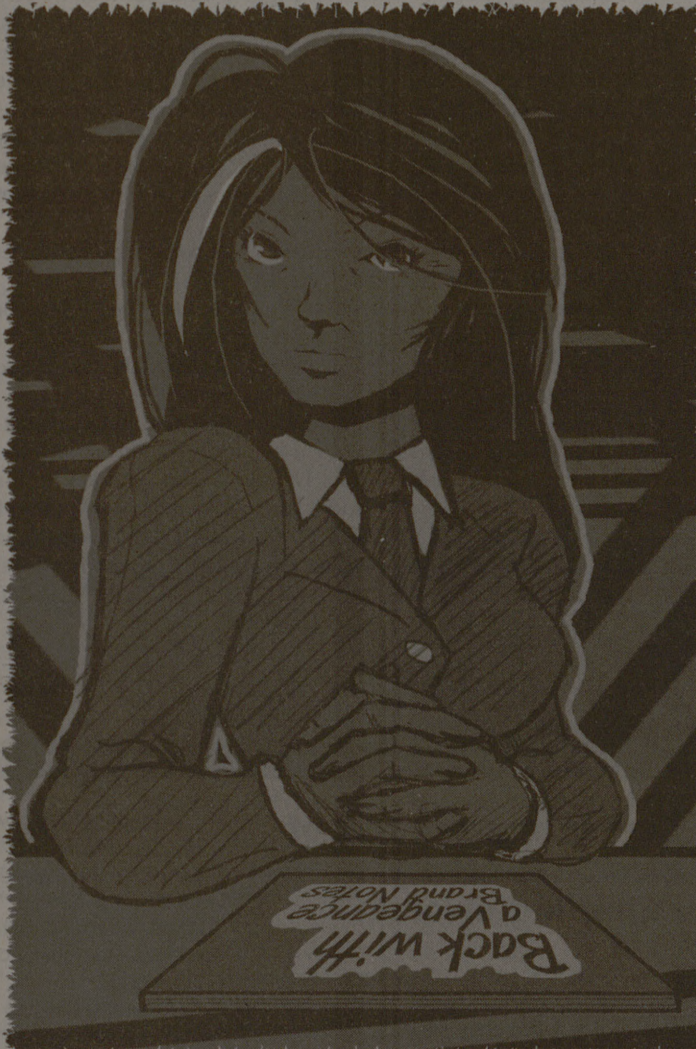
Walking on the A&M campus, Sorenson said she has been impressed with how friendly people are.

"My first day here I was lost and didn't know where I was," Sorenson said. "I had a map in my hands and I was surprised how

many people stopped and asked me if they could help."

Sorenson said she benefits from visiting with the younger members of the student body.

"I enjoy the experience of talking to younger people and hearing their thoughts and ideas," Sorenson said. "I sometimes see myself in their eyes the way I was when I was their age — so naive, so unworldly and even a little scared in some cases."



IVAN FLORES • THE BATTALION

Lea Price-Jeter's hands are also full with a husband, five children and running her family's ranch business. As her children got older, she decided to return to college.

"I decided to go back to college because I had always wanted to complete what I had started," said Price-Jeter, a sophomore English major. "I was unable to finish (originally) because of extensive travel requirements with my career."

Late nights and early mornings are study time. With her family supporting her endeavors, she manages to keep up with the grind of being a mom and a student.

"My family comes first, and I try to keep my class schedule within the time that they are at school or work," Price-Jeter said. "My husband is great. He helps out with breakfast and lunches. Everyone helps in the mornings."

Despite taking classes with them, Price-Jeter tries to remain apart from the younger students and not interject her life experiences.

"I know I am at a different stage of life than most students," Price-Jeter said. "I would not want to hamper their exploration on life, which is one of the things that the college experience is all about. I am here to further my education and younger students are here for the whole package. You attend college to receive an education but also for the social life."

Geography professor Jan Bertness said she admires older students because she understands the hardships they experience.

"I admire them for many reasons," said Bertness. "On top of a very busy schedule, they are often scared they won't be able to compete. It is a real act of courage to come back to school."

Bertness said students whose ages are higher than the typical college age face disadvantages when they add school to their daily schedules.

"With families, jobs and households to run you have a high demand of time and energy," Bertness said.

Even though these students face high obstacles, Bertness says these obstacles do not seem to affect their performance in the classroom.

"They are some of my best students," Bertness said. "They are always in class and attentive, even on Fridays. They have more maturity and seriousness and see class as something they need."

Sorenson said she is happy she is continuing her education.

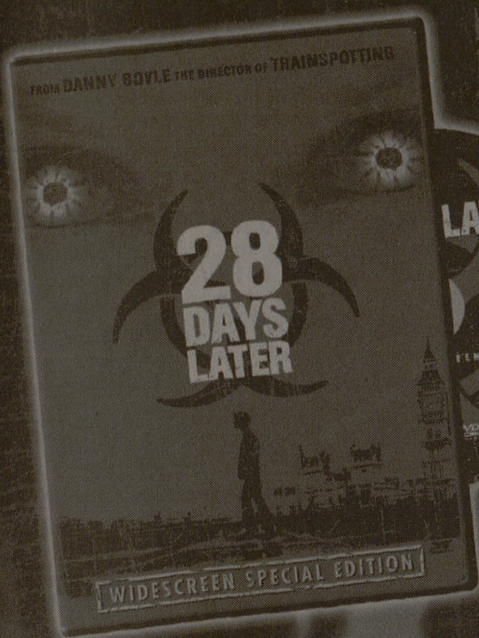
"When you go to college, take advantage of all the experiences, but study," Sorenson said. "Don't wait until you are in your 50s to go back. You need to have the college experience when you are young. That's when you get the most out of it."

Sorenson said anybody who has a second chance at a higher education should definitely take advantage of it.

"If you do like me and don't do (college) when you're young and you get the chance to go back you should take advantage of this and go (back)," Sorenson said. "Don't think that because you are 50, 60 or 70 that you can't do this. You can."

OWN THIS "ABSOLUTELY TERRIFYING" DVD.

—Access Hollywood



Includes
KILLER ALTERNATE ENDINGS
That Will Haunt You For DAYS,
Plus A Host Of Shocking Extras!



"VISIONARY AND SCARY."

—ROLLING STONE

MSC CIA presents...

Cults

on Campus:
**The Appeal;
The Danger**

Heaven's Gate. Branch Davidians.
al-Qaeda. Satanism. Ritual abuse.
Mass suicide.

Their link? **Cults.**
Think you're safe on campus?
Think again.

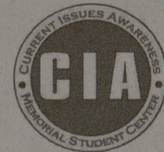
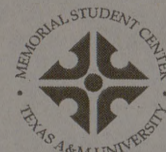
Featuring The American Family
Foundation's Ron Loomis

Tuesday, October 21,
Stark Galleries, 7:00 pm
FREE

Questions? call 845-1515,
ask for MSC CIA



Persons with disabilities, please
call (979) 845-1515 to inform
us of your special needs.



NEW

THE BATTALION

Money

ued from page 1

when he visited Dem...
where he was refered...
"former dictator...
by airport personnel...
oke of Canada's relat...
h America, specific...
e Canadian-U.S. Fra...
Agreement that has...
the North Atlantic Pa...
Agreement betwe...
Mexico and the Uni...

e between Canada and...
States generates \$7...
Mulroneysaid.

ards to the addition...
to the Free Trade...
ent, Mulroneys...
the improvement...
economy.

ico's economy is on...
of Japan's," Mulrone...
t, it beat out Japan...
e second highest tra...
with the U.S."

ney also said he wa...
d with the state of in...
security. He spoke...
2001, saying it wa...
affected the entire...
ld.

appalling atrocities...
er 11 must be seen...
on of war, not just...
but on all civilized...
economy said.

goal of the governme...
e to ensure that some...
e this never happen...
Mulroneysaid.

resident of the United...
ust take whatever...
to protect America...
ck so it will not be...
0 years from today...
leep at the switch...
time in history," he...
urged the importanc...
g good relations...
ntries.

ica greatly needs in...
allies, now more...
Mulroneysaid.

vised the United States...
e involved with all...
ld inform the coun...
actions were strong...
elsewhere. He...
ed the importance...
g current President...
lan to maintain...
the state of the nation...
racies have limited...
," Mulroneysaid.

is becoming a lonely...
ver, frustrated and...
should not give up...
admap to peace."

ouncement of the...
of Canada's two...
parties would push...
toward more conser...
Mulroneysaid. He...
ner leader of the...
e Conservative Party.

"I know whether they...
ext election and I don...
," Mulroneysaid. "But...
step they will win...
the future."

WS IN BRIEF

man craft docks...
ce Station

OW (AP) — A three...
w docked with the...
nal Space Station...
the second time...
Soyuz has visited...
U.S. shuttle program...
nded after disint...
Columbia.

LION

ief

y during the fall and spring...
sity holidays and exam periods...
840. POSTMASTER: Send address...
TX 77843-1111.

University in the Division of Student...
ed McDonald Building, New...
http://www.thebattalion.net

sement by The Battalion. For...
vertising, call 845-0569. Advertis...
day through Friday, Fax 845-2678.

student to pick up a single copy...
60 per school year, \$30 for the...
by Visa, MasterCard, Discover.

ould wear a favorite...
rts jacket and tie...
should wear their...
will be provided by

and 2004

www.28dayslaterdvd.com

©2003 Warner Home Video. All rights reserved.

www.28dayslaterdvd.com

©2003 Warner Home Video. All rights reserved.

www.28dayslaterdvd.com

©2003 Warner Home Video. All rights reserved.

www.28dayslaterdvd.com

©2003 Warner Home Video. All rights reserved.

www.28dayslaterdvd.com

©2003 Warner Home Video. All rights reserved.