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The Association of Former Students

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Add \$8.00 for Class '03 or before and \$20 for shipping

**AUDIT SUBMISSION:** December 15, 2003 **DELIVERY DATE:** April 22, 2004

**ORDER SESSIONS:** 1) Jan. 20-23 2) Jan. 26-29 3) Feb. 2-5 4) Feb. 9-12 5) Feb. 16-19

**UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT REQUIREMENTS:**

- 95 cumulative completed undergraduate credit hours.
- 45 undergraduate resident credit hours completed at TAMU.
- 2.0 cumulative GPR at Texas A&M University.
- Must not be on academic probation, suspension, dismissal, expulsion, or on honor violation probation from the university.

**GRADUATE STUDENT REQUIREMENTS:**

**Master's Thesis Option**

- Defended Thesis
  - Due to ordering deadlines, you may order at the beginning of the semester you will graduate. Your Aggie Ring will be delivered on Aggie Ring Day if you have defended your thesis prior to the deadline set by the Office of Graduate Studies. If you do not defend your thesis prior to this date, your Aggie Ring will be held until the qualification is met.
- Must not be on academic probation, suspension, dismissal, expulsion, or on honor violation probation from the university.

**Master's Non-Thesis Option**

- 75% of coursework completed for degree program at TAMU.
- Must not be on academic probation, suspension, dismissal, expulsion, or on honor violation probation from the university.

**Ph.D. Students**

- Accepted as a Ph.D. candidate at TAMU
- Must not be on academic probation, suspension, dismissal, expulsion, or on honor violation probation from the university.

**HOW TO GET YOUR AGGIE RING ON APRIL 22, 2004:**  
If you meet the requirements after Fall '03:

- Submit an Aggie Ring audit online at [www.AggieNetwork.com/Ring](http://www.AggieNetwork.com/Ring) or visit the Aggie Ring office to complete an audit beginning December 15, 2003.
- The Aggie Ring program will send you an email with the status of your audit and, if qualified, assign you an ordering session.
  - Beginning January 1, 2004: Please allow 1 week to receive your email response.
  - Contact the Aggie Ring program if you do not receive your email by February 18, 2004.
- Order your Aggie Ring during your assigned ordering session.
  - Payment is due at time of order. We accept cash, check or personal credit cards.
  - Ring loans are available to qualified, currently enrolled students at the Short Term Loan Office, Room 230, Pavilion. Please submit your Aggie Ring audit before applying for a Ring loan. Visit <http://faid.tamu.edu> or call 845-3955 for further details.

December 2003 graduates may visit us at [www.AggieNetwork.com/Ring](http://www.AggieNetwork.com/Ring) for further ordering details or call the Aggie Ring Program at 845-1050.

505 GEORGE BUSH DR., COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS 77840-2918 • (979)845-1050 • [www.AggieNetwork.com](http://www.AggieNetwork.com)

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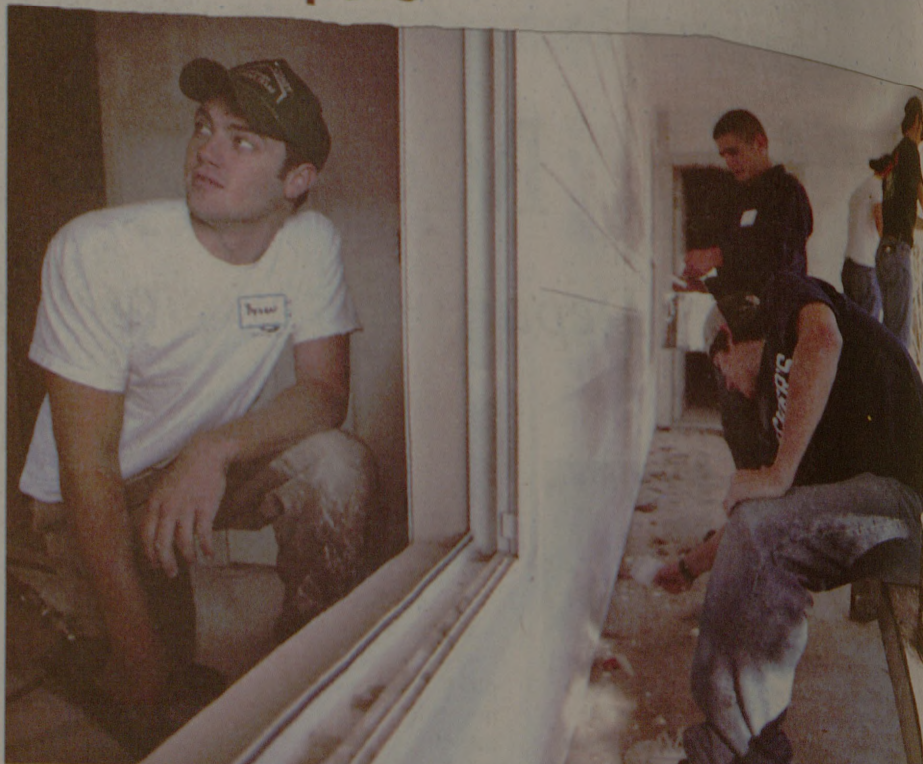
Your Next Move in Life...  
Discover the opportunities available to you as a former student!

- get your sticker!
- win door prizes!
- free fajitas!
- get your sticker!! (did we say that already??)
- visit with your friends!

**Wednesday, December 17 5:30 - 7:30 PM**  
**The Clayton W. Williams, Jr. Alumni Center**

The Association of Former Students  
505 George Bush Dr.  
College Station, TX 77840-2918  
979-845-7514  
[www.AggieNetwork.com](http://www.AggieNetwork.com)

**Habitat helpers**



Junior communications major Brian Mitchell, left, and junior biomedical sciences major Brent Josselet, right, and other members of the Sigma Chi fraternity work on a house Saturday in College Station for Habitat for Humanity.

**Seniors face choices in Medicare bill**

By Mark Sherman  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Bush signs Medicare bill**  
President Bush on Monday signed into law changes to the Medicare system. The significant part of the \$400 billion bill adds prescription-drug coverage for the elderly.

WASHINGTON — The new prescription drug benefit signed into law Monday by President Bush as part of major Medicare changes will confront seniors with numerous and sometimes-difficult choices on their health care coverage.

Bush said the new drug insurance "will save our seniors from a lot of worry." But the bill's critics said the worries have just begun for Medicare's 40 million older and disabled Americans.

**Major provisions**

<b>Interim drug card</b> In 2004 and 2005, seniors eligible to purchase a discount card estimated to yield drug-cost savings of 15 percent or higher. Low-income senior would get an annual subsidy of \$600.	<b>Main drug benefit</b> In 2006, beneficiaries could sign up for a stand-alone drug plan or join a private health plan. They would be charged a premium of \$35 per month, or \$420 per year. After meeting a \$275 deductible, insurance would pay 75 percent of drug costs up to \$2,250.	<b>Coverage gap</b> — No coverage for drug costs between \$2,250 and \$5,100. <b>Catastrophic coverage</b> — When out-of-pocket spending reaches \$3,600, insurance covers 95 percent of drug costs and a modest co-payment. <b>Low-income subsidies</b> — The premium deductible and coverage gap would be waived for people earning up to \$12,123 a year. <b>Retiree coverage</b> — Starting in 2006, a \$70 billion in tax-free subsidies to employers who maintain drug coverage for retirees.
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The government will spend nearly \$400 billion over the next 10 years to subsidize prescription drug coverage, which begins in January 2006. At the same time, the government will encourage insurance companies to offer private plans to millions of older Americans who now receive health care benefits under terms fixed by the federal government.

"Medicine has changed but Medicare has not — until today," Bush said, explaining that prescription drugs and outpatient care have replaced hospital stays over the past two decades. "Our seniors are fully capable of making health care choices, and this bill allows them to do that."

Republicans generally hailed the signing as a political triumph they could use in next year's election to neutralize Democrats' historical advantage on issues regarding the elderly.

"Democratic leaders have lashed out at us, at the president and AARP," House Majority

Leader Tom DeLay of Texas said. "But Democrats have no one to blame but themselves for their abject failure on health care. We wanted a bill, they just wanted an issue, and now the American people know who took their concerns seriously."

Democrats pledged to fight in the Republican-controlled Congress for changes in the law, principally for measures to bring down the price of prescription drugs. "You sold us out, so we're going to go all out to repeal what you've done," Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., said.

The first tangible result of the Medicare law will be prescription drug discount cards that the president said would take effect in June. He said seniors will receive a mailing in the spring to explain the card, which will cost no more than \$30 a year. It will offer discounts that Bush said will range from 10 to 25 percent off retail prices. Critics say the promise of savings is wildly inflated.

The president sought to ensure seniors Monday that the choices will be explained to them in detail and that they can keep the health care they have.

"If you don't want to change your current coverage, you don't have to change," Bush said.

But that option may not exist for some seniors. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that 2.7 million retirees will lose the drug coverage they now receive from former employers, although other projections are much smaller.

And those seniors who rely on supplemental insurance to defray the cost of prescription drugs will be forced to make change, as these so-called Medigap policies will be barred from offering a drug benefit beginning in 2006.

Some Medicaid beneficiaries, among the poorest of seniors, also could see restrictions placed on their drug coverage, several health analysts said.

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**Northgate** 601 University Dr. 979-846-3600  
**Post Oak Square Center** 100 Harvey Rd., Suite D 979-764-7272  
**Rock Prairie** 1700 Rock Prairie 979-680-0508

**Sunday: 11 a.m. - midnight**  
**Monday - Wednesday: 11 a.m. - 1 a.m.**  
**Thursday: 11 a.m. - 2 a.m.**  
**Friday & Saturday: 11 a.m. - 3 a.m.**

OPEN LATE

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THE BATTALION