

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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Dollar-desperate measures

From donations of plasma to clothes, students earn extra money in creative ways

By Amber-Gray
THE BATTALION

Incredibly, each year college students spend \$5.5 billion on alcohol, mostly on beer, a study by the GL Ness Agency reported. This is more than students spend on books, sodas, coffee, juice and milk combined, averaging \$466 per student. From these statistics, it's obvious most students, like Clint Perdue, are finding creative ways to earn and save extra cash to compensate from all the money they're spending.

"Donating plasma is a great way to earn bar money," said Perdue, a junior agricultural development major. When he started giving plasma, Perdue was unemployed and pocketed all he earned from the donations.

"Once I got a job, I opened a savings account and started putting away all the money I received," he said.

Donating twice a week for about four months with his girlfriend Nina Ricks, a senior recreation, parks and tourism science major, the two saved enough money to pay for their spring break trip last year.

"It paid for the entire week-long trip," he said. "I mean everything from travel to the hotel to our spending money."

In the few months following spring break, they were able to save up enough for a trip to Las Vegas.

Through friends' suggestions, Perdue began donating his plasma, and once he became a regular donor, he promoted the activity to many of his friends.

"It's a great method for earning extra cash," he said. "Plus when you refer people, you earn even more each time they donate."

Over the past two years, Perdue has found a way to conveniently work regular donations into his week's rhythm.

"I just look at my schedule and find a couple of hours twice a week that would work for me," he said. "Then I just stick with it."

In addition to donating plasma, students have found other ways to earn a quick buck around town. From writing other people's term papers to setting up Web sites that ask for each visitor to donate a dollar, any way that can help add spending money to their pockets have become popular.

"Any time I need extra weekend money, it's easy to find a shirt or a pair of shoes that I don't wear very often," said Andrea Waltisperger, a senior journalism major. "And I just take them to

Plato's Closet to see how much I can make off of them."

Recently given the opportunity to sell back clothes, many students have found this option to be quite beneficial.

"I started last semester when me and my roommate were cleaning out our closets," Waltisperger said. "Instead of just throwing away our unwanted clothes we decided to sell

them. And surprisingly, you can make quite a bit of cash."

Another way students earn cash at the end of each semester is by flocking to the bookstores to see how much they can get for their used books. While most can find it frustrating when a book cannot be returned, Waltisperger has found a new way to make sure she gets some money back.

"When the bookstores won't buy back a certain book of mine, I've found that by putting them (on) E-bay, I could still make money off of them," she said. "It's good for students at other universities who are getting these books at a discount and it also helps me out."

While most students are looking for creative ways to earn extra cash, it is also important to save.

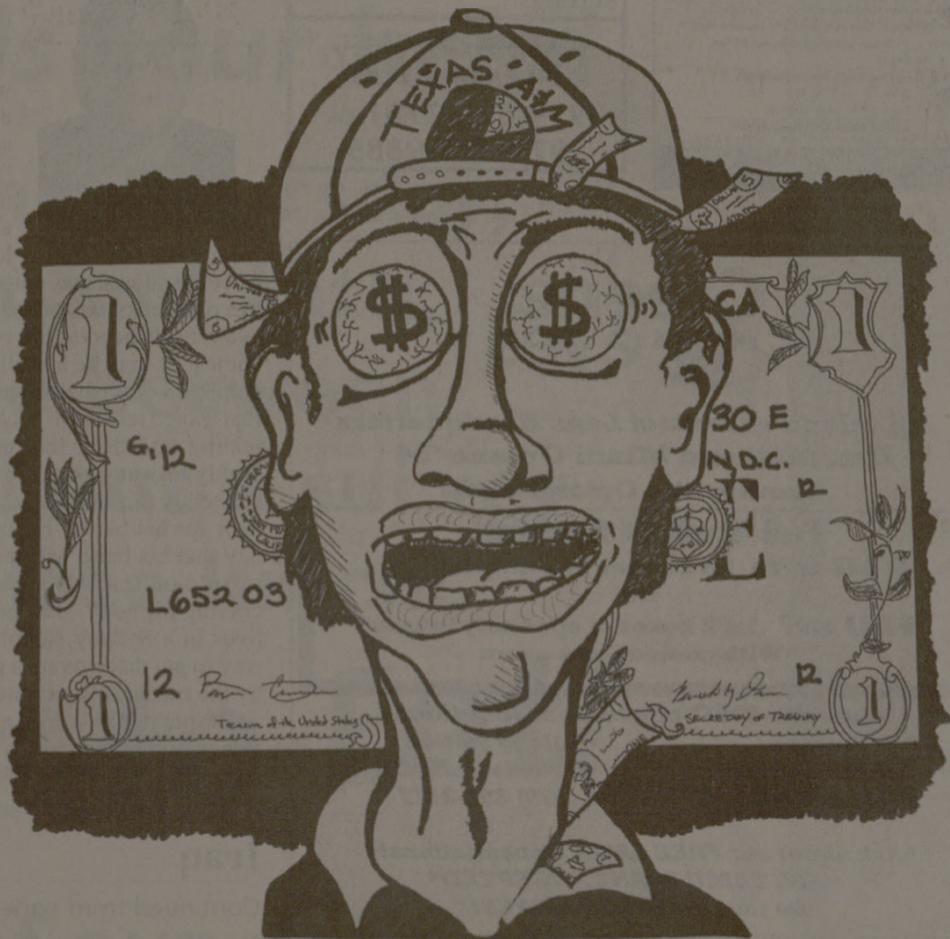
"At the beginning of every semester I find coupons for free items at Kroger and other grocery stores in the local newspapers," Waltisperger said. "If you just take the time to look, you can save a lot of money."

Texas A&M's Division of Finance Web site lists various money-saving tips and suggestions. For instance, it suggests students wait a full 24 hours before buying an item they think they need, or to put all loose change into a jar for laundry and unexpected expenses.

"In order to cut back on utilities, me and my roommate would

"Avoid racking up extra costs needlessly and always set a little money aside for emergencies."

— Nancy Granovsky
Extension Family Economics Specialist



CHRISTOPHER JONES • THE BATTALION

wash dishes as we went versus running the dishwasher everyday," Waltisperger said. "Limiting laundry to once a week can also really lower the bill."

According to Student Watch Campus Market Research, nearly 40 percent of students have more than \$200 of discretionary income a month, and UCity Magazine reports from sources of Student Monitor, The New York Times and Jupiter Communications that students spend approximately \$6,760 a year, excluding tuition.

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