

# AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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## Fall ring fling

Aggies celebrate Ring Day with various traditions



By Teresa Weaver  
THE BATTALION

The day Joshua Gibbon, a senior finance major, was supposed to celebrate Aggie Ring Day, he was studying for two tests scheduled for that afternoon. On a day that should have been filled with anticipation and excitement, he was feeling more pressure and stress than anything else.

Things began to look up when friends spoke to an employee at the Association of Former Students and worked out a way for Gibbon to receive his ring ahead of his assigned time. With his brand new Aggie ring shining on his finger, he went into his second test finally feeling like a member of the Aggie family.

"Once that ring was on my finger I just felt calm and was able to enjoy the excitement of getting my ring," Gibbon said. "It means so much to me, like dedication to my school and continuous service that goes on even after graduation. It reminds me that my service to everyone around me is never done."

Today, almost 3,000 students will receive their Aggie rings. With the rings almost identical to the one designed in 1894, some would say there is more symbolism in the Aggie ring than there is in an A&M diploma.

Sarah Smith, a senior German major, just ordered her ring and will be receiving it in November. She said the excitement had been building since the summer when she had a dream about getting her ring.

"The Aggie ring represents all the stuff you went through in your college career and it ties you to all the generations of Aggies which came before you and will come after you," Smith said.

"It gives people expectations about who you are as a person.

They see the ring on your finger and know you should be able to handle everything."

Along with the prestige and honor associated with an Aggie ring, there is also the unofficial tradition started by students to "dunk" it. Although Thursday night will see hundreds of Aggies throwing their rings into everything from beer to ice cream, the question remains whether ring dunking is an Aggie tradition or just a popular trend among students.

Josh Babb, a senior management major and chair of the Traditions Council at A&M, said the pomp and circumstance of the Aggie ring has only recently become a popular trend.

"Aggie Ring day has only started in the past decade and ring dunking has been around even less (time)," Babb said. "I talk with former students and they think it's funny how big the event has become."

Babb, who will be getting his ring on Thursday as well, said Ring Day should be associated with camaraderie and celebration of the student's accomplishments.

"I hope students think the Aggie ring represents something bigger than just dunking it in alcohol or ice cream," Babb said. "That is only one short moment in your time here, and doesn't have the same meaning to it as other traditions on campus, like Silver Taps or Muster."

Babb said even though ring dunking isn't a tradition, his ring will still end up at the bottom of a bowl of ice cream.

"When I get my ring I want to spend the evening with my family and friends remembering my time at A&M," Babb said. "And if my ring happens to find its way into a bowl of ice cream, so be it, but dunking my ring has no symbolic meaning behind it."

Smith said ring dunking is not a tradition as much as it is a rite of passage for students.

"Anyone who is going to dunk their ring knows it when they enter A&M," Smith said. "So many people do it, I think a lot of students feel they have to do it sometimes."

Jason Brinlee, a senior wildlife and fisheries science major, will also receive his Aggie ring Thursday. He firmly believes

ring dunking is an Aggie tradition.

"When I came to visit A&M, the first tradition I saw was a student dunking his ring. It's just something you do with your friends," Brinlee said. "I'll probably dunk my ring a few times."

To Brinlee, ring dunking is only one part of the overall Aggie ring experience. Brinlee plans to camp out the night before at the Association so he gets an early number the next afternoon — another popular trend started up only in the past few years.

With so many students finding ways to show off and celebrate their Aggie rings, new traditions are bound to start up. Whether students consider them traditions, many will continue on because like Brinlee, they associate them with their ring.

When the September ring delivery is over, there will still be students like Smith waiting impatiently for their spots in line at the Association.

"When it all comes down to it, we're college students and we're looking to make something ours," Smith said. "When you launch a boat the first time you throw champagne on it, and when you get your ring you want to do something to make it yours and make the experience unforgettable."

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— Sarah Smith  
senior German major

### Getting Your Bling-Bling

• Tickets for ring distribution will be available at 7:15 a.m. at Clayton Williams Alumni Center

• Ring distribution is from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Alumni Center

• Bring your ticket and two of the following to distribution: ring receipt, driver license, student ID

SOURCE: THE ASSOCIATION OF FORMER STUDENTS  
INFOGRAPHIC BY GRACE ARENAS — THE BATTALION  
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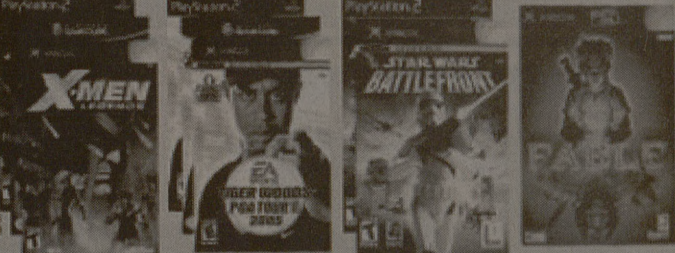
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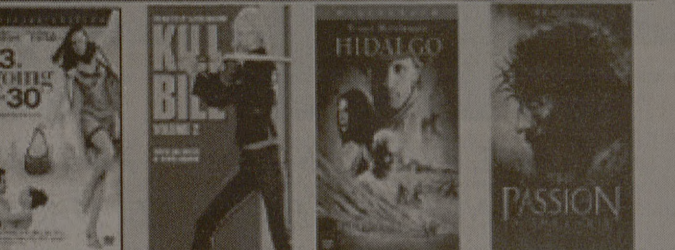
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