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VOLUME 10, ISSUE 2 TEXAS A&M COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES

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BEGINNING

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

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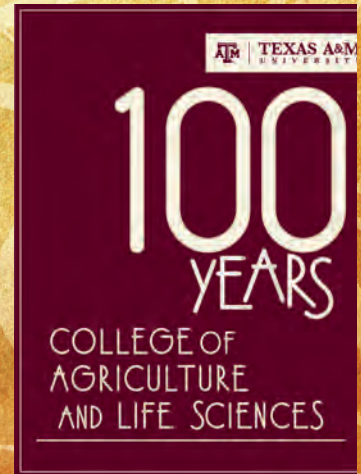


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"Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity."

George Patton



As the editor for the Spring 2012 edition of the AgriLeader, this was the approach I tried to use. As a self-labeled creativity nerd, I understand that, in order for most people to be creative, they cannot be fenced in. I have to say that I believe that method worked. There are many different articles throughout the magazine that not only showcase the creativity and uniqueness of the College of Agriculture and Life Science's, but also the journalists who wrote them.

For example, there is a new building on campus: The Agriculture & Life Sciences Building, turn to page __ to read about its features and the building process. If you are interested in agriculture or policy, or where the two come together, Congress & Crops on page __ is for you. On page __ you will find a fun article about collegiate fishing. And on page __ there is a great article about Dr. Scott Myers '81 who has sculpted some of the bronze heads for the Pro Football Hall of Fame. My favorite story can be found on page __ and is about a professor's first-hand account of some of the nation's most difficult moments, and how these experiences changed him.

I hope you will enjoy this edition of the AgriLeader, and it has been a privilege to serve as the editor-in-chief. Even though the hours were long, it gave me the opportunity to get to know my fellow students better and experience personally the camaraderie that Texas A&M University has been widely known for throughout the generations!

Gig'Em and God Bless,
Maggie Berger '12



Left to Right: Back Row: Cameron Biehle, Audrey Ward, Katelin Bouquet, Hanna Brevard, Alex Lotz, O'Dell Harmon
Middle: Osman Cantu, Jordan Williford, Amy Melzow, Kristen Warner, Sam Nicholson, Michelle Searles, Jessica Kempen, Beau Williams
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Not Pictured: Greg Alcazar, Casey Graham, Christina Lockard, Cody Trimble, Cassie Weckwerth

AGRILEADER

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About the Cover:
The new Agriculture & Life Sciences Building opened for class in Summer 2011.
Photo By: SLyworks Photography

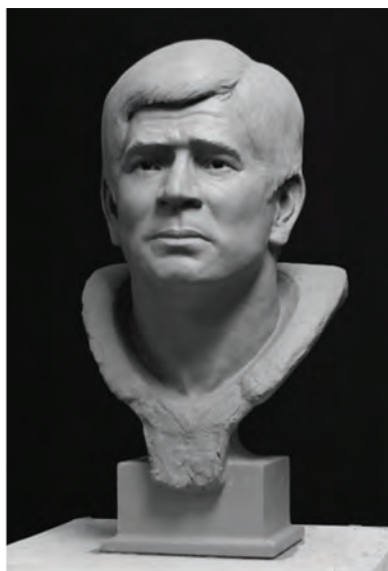
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Building a New Beginning

By: Jenna Gerik

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Texas A&M has more students graduate in agricultural-related fields than any other college of agriculture. The college, comprised of 14 departments and 80 undergraduate and graduate degrees, has an estimated enrollment of 6,800 students. These students, along with an award-winning faculty of more than 400, conduct research on issues such as food sustainability and safety, human and animal health, genetics and renewable natural resources and bioenergy.

While the college is highly acclaimed and one of the largest at the University, students in other majors have been left to wonder why there was a need for the still-in-progress Agriculture and Life Sciences Complex.

"I am curious why it was necessary for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences to build a brand new building. My college is old too," said Caroline Glithero '12, a human resources development major.

If the size and success of the College is not reason enough to help students and the general public understand why there is a need for the new building, then maybe this is, the complex is Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certified by the United States Green Building Council. This means that the building has the ability to capture all roof rainwater into four 9,000 gallon cisterns — which are part of the canopy structure — from which the water will drain into a 40,000 gallon underground tank that will be used for irrigation.

"We achieve optimum energy performance through window glazing to reduce light pollution, through an efficient heating and cooling system, and through high-performance lighting," said Mark Hussey, vice chancellor and dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. "The building site adjoins the Texas A&M University greenbelt, and a community garden will be maintained on the building grounds."



The main lobby area in the new Agriculture and Life Sciences complex.

Courtesy Photo

Not only are the new building's energy-saving structures visually appealing, they also represent what the college is about — focusing on discovering the fuels of the future and working to ensure the safety and abundance of water and food supply.

Additionally, the new complex will allow for further consolidation of Texas A&M AgriLife agencies, administrative functions and the College's academic units to West Campus, which will enhance opportunities for collaboration. With three college departments in the new building, 11 of the college's 14 academic departments are located on West Campus.

"I felt like it was time for a new building since our college has grown so much over the past few years," said Kayla Pfeffer '11, an agricultural economics graduate.

The four-building complex, built at a cost of \$62.4 million, is in its second phase of completion and is impressive in size and visual appeal. So far, the contemporary-style complex includes the main Agriculture Headquarters Building, which is five stories high and 166,000 sq. feet, and the Visitor Center, which is two stories high and 13,000 sq. feet. The Visitor Center highlights the everlasting impact that teaching,

research, extension and service have on the citizens of our state, the nation and the world. It honors the land-grant mission of Texas A&M University and Texas A&M AgriLife, and it shows young people the broad variety of opportunities available that they may not have otherwise learned about.

Recently the third building of the four-building complex, the Public Building, was completed. The date of completion for the fourth building, the Administration Services building, is still being discussed.

As a widely recognized leader in many academic disciplines and the heart of Texas A&M University's start as a College of Agriculture and Mechanics, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is working hard to make changes to shape a better tomorrow.

"Welcome to a new era for agriculture and life sciences at Texas A&M," Hussey said. "The new agriculture headquarters building is the flagship of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences." ■

Curl Contributes To Creativity

PHOTO & STORY BY: DEBBIE W. PRINCE '12

In newsrooms and magazine offices around the world, journalists work late into the night to meet deadlines. They can be found in their offices finalizing layouts in InDesign, recording the final sound bite that puts the finishing touch on a story or brainstorming for the next issue.

Thanks to the generosity of Tom Curl '70 and his wife Lynda, agricultural communications and journalism students are now able to work together in their own professionally equipped media lab. The lab simulates an industry environment by providing access to both Mac and Windows operating systems, a state-of-the-art sound booth and conference space perfect for collaboration and editorial meetings.

Tom graduated from Texas A&M with a degree in Agricultural Journalism. His start in journalism

began as the city editor for The Battalion in the 1968-69 school year.

Driven by his passion for agriculture and journalism Tom worked on the small, student-run publication — the Texas A&M Agriculturalist, which later became the AgriLeader.

Tom said he knew agricultural journalism was what he wanted to major in when he came to Texas A&M

“I found true north for my career and life pretty early on,” Tom said.

Tom said his experience as a student set the stage for everything else that came later in his life. Now, he is helping to set the stage of opportunity for future agricultural communications and journalism students.

Tom and Lynda attended the official ribbon cutting for the media lab on November 4th 2011. Tom said he and Lynda were blessed to be able to donate for the media lab and knows



Tom and Lynda Curl display their centennial Benjamin Knox print at the Tom Curl '70 media lab ribbon cutting

how important practical experience is to students.

“Better facilities equal better products,” Curl said. ■

Aggie



Connection

Kayla Brandenberger '05

Major: Agricultural Science

Current Job: Sales & Production Manager at Jacoby Feed & Seed

What do you miss the most about Texas A&M?

The Aggie family. You take the friendships you create for granted while you're in school. Once everyone graduates and moves, you might be a phone call away but it isn't the same.

What was your most memorable moment at Texas A&M?

The football games. I love how everyone comes together to tailgate, the camaraderie in the stands and the 12th Man. This is something that no other school can offer their students.

How has your degree from Texas A&M helped in your career?

My degree serves me every day. In AGSC you have to take a wide variety of ag classes. At Jacoby's we serve many different agriculture facets and all of my classes have come in handy. From meat science to ag economics, I've used them all. I'm one of few people who have the luxury of using their degree every day.

What advice would you give to current students?

Enjoy every minute you have! You're going to the best university & should network as much as you can. The students you meet will be part of this network one day, along with your friends & professors. You don't realize the opportunity you have until it's gone.

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Building the best facilities in the country

By CAMERON BIEHLE '12

Kyle Field. Photo Courtesy of Kent Kieschnick

July 1, 2012: a date that marks the revival for Texas A&M athletics and a chance for the school to stand on its own.

On that date, A&M will make its official move to the Southeastern Conference. This move has been talked about for a long time due to the chaos surrounding the Big XII and will give A&M new rivals and road games with a new culture. Most noticeably, it will give A&M a brand new look.

A&M already has some of the nicest facilities in the country but is planning to improve them even further.

The first major change will be the creation of a new road beside Houston Street connecting Kyle Field with a new parking garage.

For home games, the football players usually park in the University Center Garage. However, in the near future, they will be parking in a new garage next to Koldus strictly just for the team on game days, which will open up Koldus to more fans.

Currently, for away games, the team parks behind the Bright complex on the tennis courts. When the move becomes

official, the courts and existing parking lot will be completely redone, and a new parking lot will be available for away-game parking.

“[Athletic director] Bill Byrne is always looking ahead. Baseball construction at Olsen Field at Blue Bell Park will be completed this spring,” said Alan Cannon, associate athletic director. “Construction has begun on the athletic player development center, adjacent to the Bright Football Complex and should be complete by the fall of 2012.”

A brand new athletic dining hall will be built next door to Bright with plans to be completed by the 2013 football season.

Shortly after the dining hall is finished, major changes will be made to the current locker room. Netum Steed Laboratory will be expanded with refurbished floors and walls. All the machines will be replaced with new equipment.

Additionally, the renovations -both scheduled and in-progress- to A&M's athletic facilities will be extensive.

In an interview with TexAg Radio,

Bill Byrnes, athletic director, said that the project will be large in its scope.

“There are many areas of the [football] stadium that are out of date or don't meet modern stadium compliance regulations,” Byrne said. “It's not surprising, because the lower level of the stadium was originally constructed in 1927. Our eventual plan is to add a south end zone facility with public seating, club seating and suites, while using other space to improve our infrastructure in support of our student-athletes and coaches needs.”

The renovation plans are not final just yet, but Byrne hopes the work on Kyle Field will begin following the 2012 season.

Texas A&M is about to undergo major renovations for an all-around fresh new look. The move to the SEC is not the reason these changes are being made, but it has certainly picked up the pace at which the changes are being made. By the time A&M is in its third season in the SEC, most of the renovations will be complete and the campus athletic facilities will have a brand new look. ■



Extreme Makeover

PHOTOS AND STORY BY HANNA BREVARD '12

Penberthy Rec Sports Complex undergoes major transformation

Every summer students witness new grass being laid down in an attempt to enhance the intramural fields. All the while knowing that next year the outcome of the fields would end the same, but not this year. This past summer students witnessed the renovation of Penberthy Rec and Sports Complex and the surrounding fields.

Named after W.L. Penberthy, the father of intramural sports at Texas A&M, the complex now includes four artificial turf playing areas, which can be set up for soccer, ultimate Frisbee, rugby, lacrosse and intramural flag football.

The complex also includes five natural grass playing fields and three softball fields. Along with the field additions, a central building, with an outdoor pavilion, has been built. The building includes a meeting room, restrooms with showers and changing areas, and a control room. With the new renovations, more parking is available for students.

These renovations are seen as improvements because, historically, the fields used for intramural games have not been in great condition.

"I've tried to run in for a touchdown on the old fields and fallen in a hole on the 2-yard line," said Zac

Jackson, senior recreational, park and tourism sciences major. "The fields could really ruin a game for someone."

Not only did holes cover the fields, but there wasn't much grass to be seen on them either. The amount of traffic on the fields was a major influence on grass quality. Little grass means much more dirt and when it rained, the fields would not be able to be played on for days until the mud was gone and the holes were dry.

This caused maintenance to work constantly to keep the fields in the best possible playing conditions. It also limited the play that students looked forward to.

"The new fields are so much nicer than the old ones. They give so much more opportunity for leisure time outside of class, work and studying. It is definitely a step up from what A&M used to have," said Lauren Hayes, senior agricultural communications and journalism major.

The artificial turf used on four of the fields is definitely more appealing to the eye, but does come with a few disadvantages according to Soil and Crop Sciences retiree Richard Duble.

"The most serious disadvantages to the artificial surfaces are the abrasions they can cause and the extremely high temperature on the

surface from June thru September which makes them unusable much of the day. Temperatures on the surface may exceed 140 degrees on artificial turf versus 95 degrees on green natural grass."

A majority of students can agree that the advantages that have come along with the Penberthy renovations outweigh the disadvantages that the summer heat may bring.

"We live in Texas; it's going to be hot no matter what field we play on," Jackson said. "Might as well have a nice one that A&M students can be proud of."

According to Duble, all of the natural grass fields on campus (Kyle Field, Olsen Field, softball and soccer) have provided a valuable teaching tool to all of our turf grass students in soil and crop sciences for many years.

In the long run, Penberthy's fields will need newer maintenance techniques, but will not require the extensive renovating every year that it has in the past.

"The artificial surfaces will tolerate all the traffic that natural grass surfaces could not handle," says Duble. "This should hopefully save future students money and provide them with constant playable fields in the future." ■



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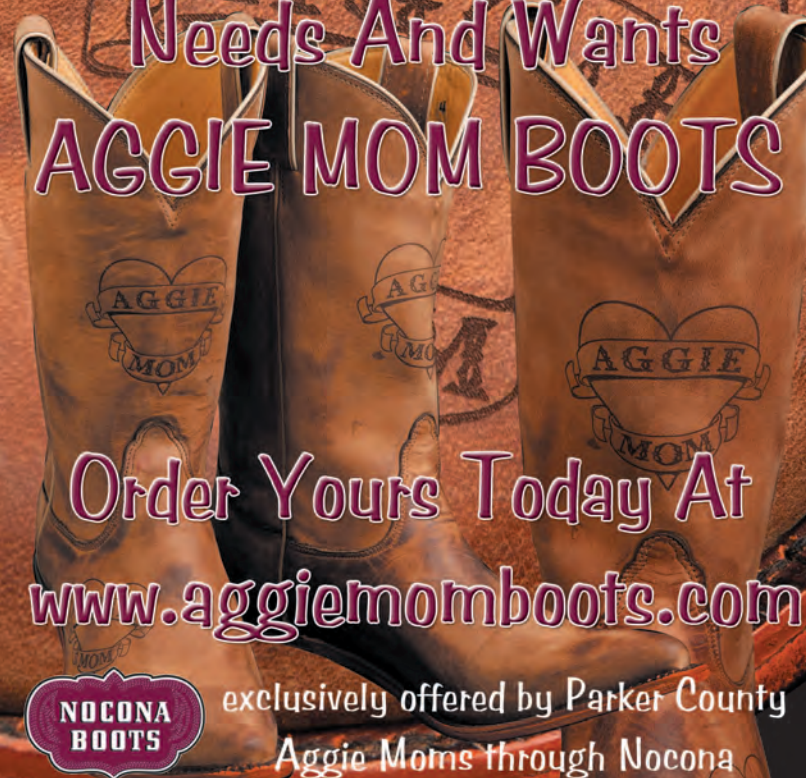
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Game Day Trivia

How much do you know about the Texas A&M Football players? Take this quick quiz to find out! You can check your answers at the bottom of the page.

Robert Gardner • Jeff Fuller • DeAndre Thompson • Jared Jaroszewski • Tony Jerod-Eddie
Joseph Cheek • Uzoma Nwachukwu • Cyrus Gray • Christine Michael • Eddie Brown Jr.

1. This player's name means "the road is good."
2. His father was a standout safety for the Aggies in the early 80s before moving on to a six-year NFL career with the San Francisco 49ers.
3. He broke his leg in 2010 in the Aggie's win over Texas Tech.
4. Finished 2010 with 1,133 yards on 200 carries to become the first A&M player since 2003 to reach this millennium mark.
5. Was the primary 12th Man for the 2010 season.
6. While playing for Blinn College, he helped lead the Buccaneers to the national championship.
7. His father was a standout offensive tackle for the Aggies under Jackie Sherrill from 1984-87, played on three Southwest Conference Championship teams and played four seasons in the NFL.
8. Changed his jersey number from #19 to #39 for his senior season.
9. Finished the 2010 season with 49 tackles, including 22 solo stops and 2.5 for loss.
10. His great uncle, Charlie Milstead, was quarterback for the Aggies from 1957-59 and played for the Houston Oilers.

All information from Aggieathletics.com



Answers: 1. Uzoma Nwachukwu; 2. Jeff Fuller; 3. Christine Michael; 4. Cyrus Gray; 5. DeAndre Thompson; 6. Jared Jaroszewski; 7. Joseph Cheek; 8. Eddie Brown Jr.; 9. Tony Jerod-Eddie; 10. Robert Gardner

Congress & Crops

Agriculture's Journey from

Agggleland to Capitol Hill

Story and Illustration by:

Callie Whitworth '12



Bart Fischer's life was changed — from Texas to Capitol Hill — with one phone call. Fischer, an Aggie, went to Washington, D.C., to assist in constructing the 2012 Farm Bill.

"I was definitely surprised," Fischer said. "It was always a dream of mine to be the chief economist of the agriculture committee."

Before Capitol Hill

Fischer was working on his doctorate in agricultural economics at Texas A&M University when he received a call from Frank Lucas, House Agriculture Committee chairman, asking him to work for the House Agriculture Committee.

Fischer graduated from Oklahoma State University in 2003 with bachelor's degrees in agricultural economics and business administration. He continued his studies at the University of Cambridge in England where he received his master's degree in environmental policy.

"My rationale for going to Cambridge was because so many regulations come from environmental

conservation groups," Fischer said. "I wanted an outside perspective to apply to what we're doing."

Time at Texas A&M University

Fischer chose Texas A&M University because of the Agricultural and Food Policy Center (AFPC).

"My passion is how policy affects the farm level, and that's what AFPC does," Fischer said. "It is a highly respected organization."

AFPC conducts policy research analysis to determine the effects

"I love production agriculture, and I am doing what I can to help producers," Fischer said. "There is no better opportunity than drafting the next Farm Bill."

of policy on agriculture. The main constituent of AFPC's research is the U.S Congress, particularly the Senate and House Agricultural Committees.

Joe Outlaw, co-director of AFPC, said AFPC was created in 1983 when Representative Charlie Stenholm came to the dean of Texas A&M University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and said Congress needed somebody to do unbiased research and who was outside the political arena.

Fischer worked at AFPC before going to Washington, D.C.

"I got a lot of calls from people who had heard rumors that the chief economist was from Texas and everyone assumed it was me," Outlaw said.

"Bart told me he was offered the job. For us (AFPC) to have someone to understand what we do is a lot of help. He is really smart. Even though he isn't from Texas, he has done well for our state and Texas A&M," Outlaw said.

Working on Capitol Hill

Life on Capitol Hill is different than at Texas A&M University. Fischer works 80-90 hours a week, including weekends, helping to construct the 2012 Farm Bill.

"I love production agriculture and I am doing what I can to help producers," Fischer said. "There is no better opportunity than drafting the next Farm Bill."

Fischer said the current budget



crisis puts a lot of pressure on composing the Farm Bill.

“Most years the Farm Bill is about what we want to try to do with policy,” Outlaw said. “This year it is not about what is the right policy but what is the best policy if a lot of money is cut. What do you do with less and still provide a safety net?”

Fischer said he evaluates the economic impact of various policies. Analysis is very complicated, detailed work. He does his own analysis and also relies on others around the country, including AFPC and the Food and Agriculture

Policy Research Institute at the University of Missouri.

“AFPC provides objective and unbiased information and is a long standing tradition. I highly respect the faculty and staff, and highly value their work,” Fischer said.

Fischer said he has every intention of finishing his Ph.D.

“The bottom line is, for a farm kid who grew up in southwest Oklahoma, it is a tremendous honor to be asked to work on policy and it is something I committed my life to,” Fischer said. ■

Bart Fischer on Capitol Hill.



Farm Bill

Quick Facts

- The Farm Bill is more than a \$100 billion package.
- Farm Programs account for less than one half of 1% of total federal spending.
- It's about 1,200 pages and takes approximately a year and a half to construct.
- There are two main components of the Farm Bill: Food Programs and Farm Programs.
- Food Programs make up about 80% of the Farm Bill.
- The crop industry has experienced a \$12-15 billion cut during the past five years.

Information acquired from Joe Outlaw, Ph.D., Co-Director of the Agriculture and Food Policy Center, Texas A&M University.



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“Pork. The Other White Meat.” This is one of the most common phrases associated with an agricultural commodity. Some would argue that this could be changed to: “Pork. The Other Pink Meat.” Confused?

For five years, the pork industry has been conducting research to determine the best temperature to cook pork. Until very recently, that temperature was set by the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) as 160 degrees Fahrenheit. Pork that is internally cooked to this temperature can be compared to a well done steak.

When pork is cooked to 160 degrees, the result has caused a misconception for many people. They believe that it is dry and, therefore, not enjoyable to eat. It is because of this recommended overcooking that the pork industry, funded by the Pork Checkoff, began conducting research in 2007.

As part of Ohio State University’s project to measure consumer eating preferences, researchers tested how

various end-cooking temperatures affected eating preferences. However, they needed to know if an internal pork temperature below 160 degrees would be safe for consumers. The results showed that

cooking pork to 145 degrees did produce a juicier, more tender and flavorful piece of meat — something the industry was striving for.

This finding turned into a Checkoff funded project with Exponent Inc., an engineering and scientific consulting firm. Their job was to conduct risk assessment to evaluate any food-safety issues that arose when cooking temperatures ranged from 145-160 degrees.

Their results showed that cooking

This led to the FSIS agreeing to lower the recommended cooking temperature for pork.

Because pork is completely cooked 15 degrees lower than previously recommended, home cooks might notice the finished product displaying a little pinker color than what they are used to. Think of it as a steak that is cooked medium, no one worries about the pink they see there.

The pork industry takes this change as a huge victory for the industry.

“It will be beneficial. Consumers who prepare pork to 145 degrees with a 3 minute rest time will have a positive eating experience,” said Steve Larsen, director of Pork Safety with the National Pork Board (NPB).

He also said that it might even affect the market price for hogs due to a higher demand. This is something the industry has been hoping to achieve for a long time.

“It’s great news that home cooks can now feel confident to enjoy medium-rare pork, like they do with other meats,” said Guy Fieri, chef and

host of several food television shows, in a news release.

This temperature revision applies to pork whole-muscle cuts, such as loin, chops and roasts. Ground pork, like all ground meat, should be cooked to 160 degrees. Regardless of cut or cooking method, the USDA and NPB suggest using a digital cooking thermometer to ensure an accurate final temperature. ■

Cooking pork to 145 degrees produced a juicier, more tender and flavorful piece of meat, something the industry is striving for.

pork to an internal temperature of 145 degrees followed by a three-minute rest time was equivalent to cooking it to 160 degrees. Research conducted by Texas A&M University supports the fact that meat temperature continues to rise after being removed from the heat source. The reality is that the appropriate rest time between cooking and eating is at least three minutes long.

Turn the page for a great pork recipe!



Pork loin cut through the middle showing that it is safe for pork to have a pink center.

Bring on the “Mojo” Pork Chops

Prep Time: 15 minutes

4 Servings

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Marinating Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients

4 bone-in pork rib chops, cut 1 1/4 to 1 1/2-inch thick

1 1/4 cup orange juice

3/4 cup lime juice

1/4 cup apple cider vinegar

1 tablespoon kosher salt

1 1/2 teaspoons garlic powder

1 1/2 teaspoons onion powder

1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin

1 1/2 teaspoons dried oregano leaves

1 1/2 teaspoons paprika

1 1/2 teaspoons black pepper

2 tablespoons olive oil

1/2 red onion, chopped (1/4 cup)

2 cloves garlic, chopped (about 1 teaspoon)

1/4 cup white wine

1 cup watercress

1 Roma tomato, chopped

1/2 avocado (ripe), sliced

Cooking Directions

Place pork in large, resealable plastic bag. Add 1 cup orange juice, 1/2 cup lime juice, and the vinegar; close bag to seal. Turn bag to evenly coat pork with

marinade. Marinate in refrigerator for 30 minutes, turning bag occasionally.

Meanwhile, in small mixing bowl add and combine all dry spices.

Lightly oil cold grill rack; preheat gas grill to medium-high. Remove pork from marinade; discard marinade in bag. Rub both sides of chops with spice mixture.

Grill chops, uncovered, over direct heat for 12-16 minutes or until internal temperature of pork reaches 145 degrees F, turning chops over halfway during grilling. Transfer chops to cutting board. Loosely cover with foil; let rest for 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a medium sauté pan,

over medium heat, heat olive oil, add onions and sauté for 2 minutes; then add garlic, continue to cook about 1 minute more or until garlic begins to brown.

Remove sauté pan from heat. Add remaining 1/4 cup orange juice, 1/4 cup lime juice, and the white wine. Bring to boil; reduce heat. Simmer, uncovered, until liquid is reduce to half of the amount.

To serve, pour sauce over chops. Garnish with watercress, tomato and avocado.

For more great recipes like this, go to <http://www.porkbeinspired.com>.



Pork Facts

Pork. The Other Lean Meat.

Today's pork tenderloin, ounce for ounce, is as lean as a skinless chicken breast.

Excellent Source of...

Pork is an excellent source of protein, thiamin, vitamin B6, phosphorus and niacin and a good source of potassium, riboflavin and zinc.

What is the Pork Checkoff?

The National Pork Board is responsible for Checkoff funded research, promotion and consumer information projects and for communicating with pork producers and the public. Through the Pork Checkoff, producers invest \$0.40 for each \$100 value of hogs sold. The Pork Checkoff funds national and state programs in advertising, consumer information, retail and foodservice marketing, export market promotion, production improvement, technology, swine health, pork safety and environmental management.



The Art & Science of Gardening: *An Appealing Pastime with Wholesome Benefits*

BY JORDAN WILLIFORD '12

Gardening is a beneficial hobby for many reasons; not only does a garden add beauty to an area, but the act of creating a garden is also said to be relaxing for those who do it.

Gardening is an art, and there is a science to learning the ins-and-outs of what goes in to successfully growing plants and making a landscape environment beautiful.

An attractive garden, and the basis of landscaping, is created by a combination of softscape and hardscape. Softscape is gardening with the goal of creating a beautiful plant palette within the landscape; hardscape is the addition of human elements such as buildings, fences and walkways, according to a lecture by the faculty of the horticulture department.

In addition to softscape and hardscape, there are many other visual elements that factor into planning a garden. These elements, known as the Principles of Design are scale, balance, harmony and unity, rhythm and repetition and simplicity and accent. The use of these five elements

ensures the visual appeal of a garden.

While the visual appeal of a garden is important, it is also necessary to provide the proper conditions for maximum plant health and growth.

In order to make sure plants are healthy and grow properly, there are three important aspects of landscape maintenance: fertilizing, irrigation and mulching. By mastering these three elements, the basis for a healthy garden will be underway.

Fertilizing trees and shrubs is important, and the AgriLife Extension Service offers an Urban and Homeowner Soil Sample Information Form for those who want to perform a soil test on their yard.

Matt Kent, horticulture professor, said irrigation can represent 30-50 percent of urban water usage. It is best to water gardens less frequently, for longer amounts of time. Mulching is the protective covering over soil and is beneficial for many reasons: it conserves water, reduces weeds and moderates the soil temperature.

There are many important factors

that go into selecting where to place a garden. The “ideal” garden site would have full sun, — at least eight hours per day — available water, high quality soil and be protected from wildlife. Also, it is best to avoid placing plants close to buildings.

Adopting gardening as a hobby leads to many mental, physical and monetary benefits. Not only do the gardeners get exercise and a sense of accomplishment, but they can control when best to harvest plants, grow what they choose and control the chemicals applied to their plants.

“When you grow your own food you get to choose your varieties, pick them when they are ripe, eat them without them being preserved and know how they were grown,” said Betsy Pierson, horticulture professor.

With gardening, you can choose what food you grow and eat, and control the quality of that food. Gardening is mentally stimulating as well as visually appealing. It is a hobby that involves thought and education, but the fruit of your efforts will be tasty! ■

TRIUMPH

DESPITE

TRAGEDY

TEXAS A&M PROFESSOR LIVES EVERYDAY TREASURING
PRECIOUS PEOPLE AND MOMENTS IN HIS LIFE.

BY ALEX LOTZ '12



Oral Capps, Ph.D., leaned back in his leather chair as he glanced out the window of his new office in the Agricultural & Life Sciences Building. His office is rich with baseball memorabilia, including a Babe Ruth plaque proudly displayed to the left of his desk. The dark furniture and warm light streaming into the room welcome his students who visit him about his agricultural economics classes.

Behind Capps' dark eyes stirs history, including his personal experiences in events that will be forever etched into the memories of most Americans. The 2004 Fish Camp Namesake and Regent Professor at Texas A&M University was present in the Oct. 17, 1989, San Francisco earthquake,

a Washington, D.C., sniper attack and was at Ground Zero on September 11, 2001,

Capps said the events he survived in 9/11 gave him faith in his religion, in which only God is in control.

"As good as a relationship I have with my family, that gets really sharpened because of 9/11," Capps said. "The repercussion of this is that every day is really important and every day is special."

Capps was in New York in a meeting in one of the World Trade Center Towers when the first plane hit.

"If Al Qaeda wanted to destroy the economic elite, the reason I was there was [because of] the National Association of Business Economics," Capps said. "We had top economists from the world there."

Capps says he and his wife had evacuated and were in the next block when the second plane hit the south tower. He says the Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY) told the evacuees to not look back at the towers and to not look up either as they were leaving the scene.

"It was raining glass, but also people were jumping because they knew they were going to perish, but the question was

how," Capps said.

Capps and his wife later helped officials evacuate a nursery school away from the disaster zone before they left New York City to their next destination of Washington D.C. Capps said he knew it would be difficult getting there, but that he was determined to get home. They were trying to get to their hotel in D.C. when they came across a roadblock with a guard stopping all cars from crossing the Potomac River.

"As I approach the guard he had an Aggie Ring, so I whip out my faculty ID and he says, 'GO!'" Capps said. "Because of the Aggie connection we got across the Potomac when nobody else was crossing.

"There were many scenarios that could have happened that day. What God said is that it wasn't our time," Capps said.

God looking out for you, right?"

Capps pulls out a gold badge out of his briefcase. It is the badge that the FDNY Firefighters of Engine 3 Ladder 12 on 150 19th W Street in New York gave him after 9/11.

"The fire house that saved us out of New York — we got to know them real well," Capps said. "I am an honorary member of the fire team."

Capps' family was deeply moved by the devotion of FDNY. As a result, they started The Capps Family Firefighters Education Foundation at the Brayton Fire Training Field in College Station.

"We got real close to the Brayton Fire School," Capps said. "We would give \$500-\$600 to one member of the graduating class that was picked out by the chief."

Ten years after the September 11th attacks, Capps is focused on his family, students in his agricultural economics classes and the Agribusiness, Food, & Consumer Economics Research Center he started.

"There were many scenarios that could have happened that day," Capps

said. "What actually happened for us was the best scenario. What God said is that it wasn't our time."

Senarath Dharmasena works closely with Capps as his "right hand man" at the Agribusiness, Food, & Consumer Economics Research Center. Dharmasena fills in for Capps when he has to miss his agricultural economics lecture classes for economics meetings. Dharmasena also had him as a professor when he took his class as a graduate student in 2005.

"Working with him has always been really rewarding for me," Dharmasena said. "He has always been appreciative in whatever a person does to help him. He says we are a team, we always work together."

Rachel Taylor, junior agricultural communication and journalism major and one of

Capps' students in his agricultural economics 105, said she appreciates Capps' approach to teaching alongside his colleagues.

"Dr. Capps is one of the most genuinely caring professors I have ever had the pleasure of meeting at A&M," said Taylor, who plans on getting an economics minor after taking his class.

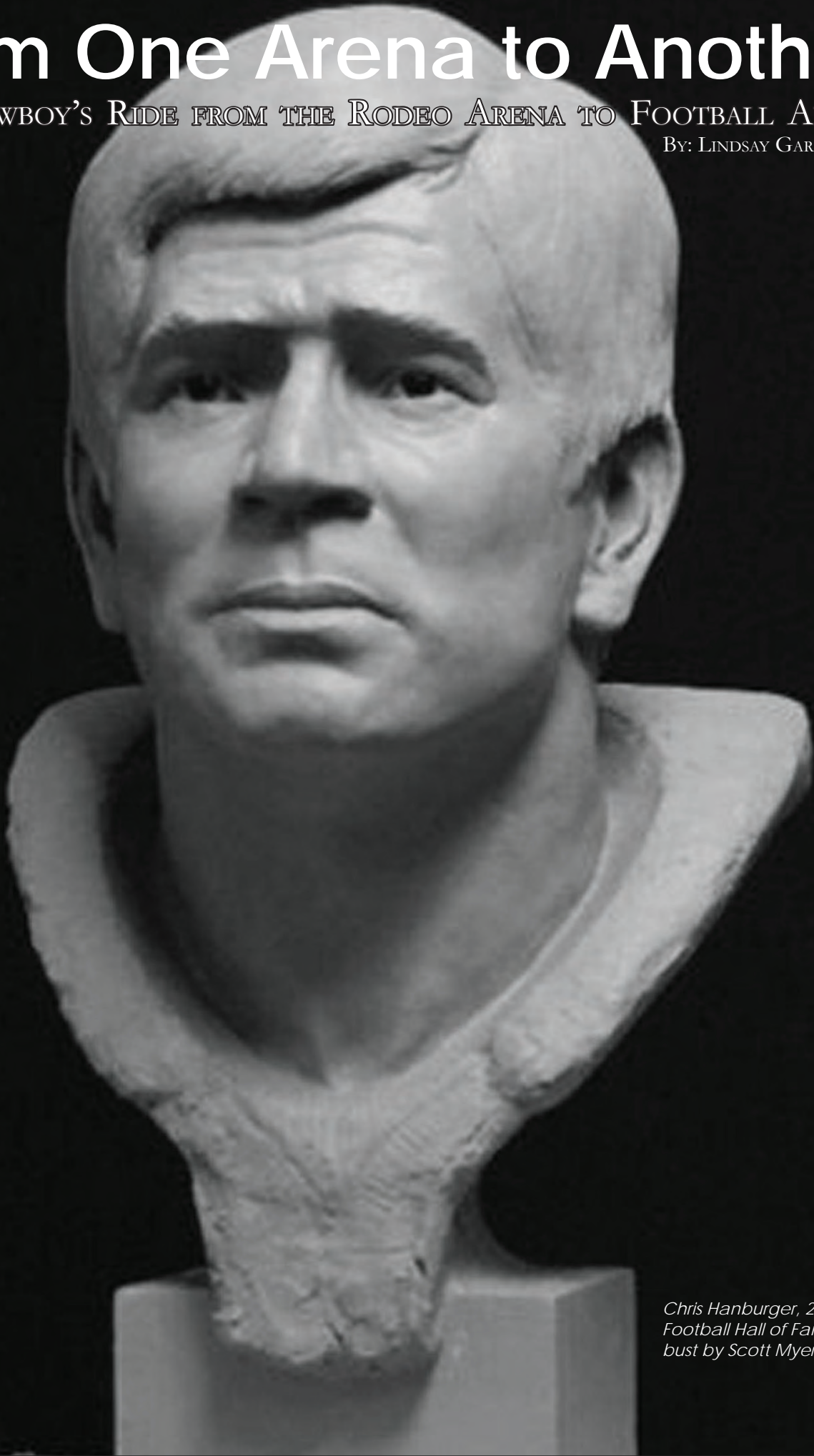
Despite the hardship he's witnessed, Capps says that he is truly blessed. He has been married for 35 years to his best friend, who is also the reason he went into agricultural economics. He genuinely believes his primary mission from God is to interact with students, ultimately to stomp out economic illiteracy and to give students a framework to think for themselves.

"You think things are bad," Capps said. "I can show you bad: 9/11 taught me that. I know what it's like where the only thing on your back is your shirt and what you are wearing. We know bad. Bad days will always come, but they will go. The question is how you deal with it." ■

From One Arena to Another

ONE COWBOY'S RIDE FROM THE RODEO ARENA TO FOOTBALL ARENA

By: LINDSAY GARRETT '12



Chris Hanburger, 2011 Pro Football Hall of Fame inductee bust by Scott Myers.

Dr. Scott Myers '81 uses knowledge gained through anatomy class in a very practical way, his veterinarian practice and art. He uses his knowledge when sculpting busts of many recognized players in the National Football League.

Myers, animal science major and veterinary school graduate from Texas A&M University and a Fort Worth native, remembers himself as the artist in his classes. That creative side, combined with his appreciation and understanding of agriculture, first produced drawings of western scenes. He is now one of three bronze casters for the Pro Football Hall of Fame, located in Canton, Ohio.

Growing up, Myers enjoyed his time in the rodeo arena, participating in calf and team roping events. His love for horses and western life was also evident on paper.

Myers is bringing his art back to Texas A&M, and is working with Russell Cross, Ph.D., Animal Science Department Head, to create a bronze relief sculpture of Howard Hesby, Ph.D., to be displayed in the Howard Hesby Student Atrium located in the Kleberg Animal and Food Sciences Center. A relief sculpture gives the impression that the sculpted material has been raised from the background.

"Dr. Hesby was my freshmen adviser and the first person I showed my art to in college. He was an important person in my life and always supported me," said Myers, "When Dr. Hesby would take students on tours across Texas and the nation, he would hand the tour site hosts one of my drawings as a token of appreciation."

Cross said he appreciates the way Myers captures the cowboy. "I love his color contrasts and his beautiful scenes. He makes it so real," Cross said.

After hearing Myers' idea about a bronze relief of Hesby, Cross said, "He described it with such passion, we were sold. He indicated that he would make Hesby come alive." Until the relief is finished, a sketch by Myers has been prepared to hang in the atrium.

"I sold my first art in 9th grade. A

drawing was due every week in art class and my teacher began taking my art to the teachers' lounge, selling it and bringing me back the money," Myers said.

Word of his work spread locally and in the Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association (PRCA) bull riders and bronc riders began requesting him to draw them. The budding, young artist was able to support himself in high school by drawing portraits of the champion riders and selling art to his teachers and at the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo and Mesquite Championship Rodeo.

"As I got older, I became more interested in livestock and western art, which is a perfect blend for me," Myers



Howard Hesby sketch for Kleberg Animal and Food Sciences Center by Scott Myers.

said. "I am able to take my two interests and put them on a canvas or paper. In college I was studying animal science and I took what I saw in class and made it into art."

At Texas A&M, Myers would draw an original piece, and sell it with the agreement that he could make prints. He would use money from the original sale to fund copies of the drawing and then sell prints. This enterprise enabled him to pay his way through both a Bachelors and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree.

He also continued developing his interest in western art and honing his craft. In 2002, he sold the veterinary clinic he had opened in 1984 to make more time for his art.

He credits his anatomy class in veterinary school with helping him to accurately sculpt, draw and paint.

"I was doing a large sculpture of a horse and was under the abdomen when I realized, I have seen this a million times. I was sculpting based on what I see when I am under a horse checking for hernias," Myers said. "When I am describing conditions to clients at the clinic, I always draw a picture for them."

In junior high, he completed a three-dimensional piece of art. This sparked an interest in sculpting that was shelved for years because he didn't have the finances to pursue it. In 1990, he decided it was time to start creating bronze sculptures so he took evening classes for sculpting and casting.

"I have always searched for and found people who I believe are the best in their art and asked them to mentor me. In 1992, I met Blair Buswell, who at the time was sculpting for the Pro Football Hall of Fame, and he agreed to help me develop my sculpting," he said. That relationship not only developed his art ability, but created a much bigger stage for his work.

In 2003, Myers began sculpting bronze heads for the Pro Football Hall of Fame inductees.

"When drawing people, the muscles and bones are the same and named the same as animals, so I am still using my animal anatomy education," Myers said, and he adds he feels this is one reason his work has been so readily accepted.

Myers spends two weeks sculpting the inductees cast before he ever meets with them.

"It is tough, because you have 25 pounds of wet clay sitting on a metal armature and the slightest slide or bump can alter the appearance greatly," Myers said.

Chris Hanburger, 2011 inductee to the Pro Football Hall of Fame and former linebacker for the Washington Redskins from 1965-78, worked with Myers to complete his bronze cast for the induction ceremony.

“He is a true professional, there is no question about it,” Hanburger said.

Myers said that the way a player looks from his rookie year versus the mature look at the end of his career can be very different, and he encourages inductees to choose a more current look, so that when standing by the cast, it is a more true representation.

Working with Myers, Hanburger chose a photograph from mid-career requesting modifications, to make his hair shorter in the cast, since that is how it is currently cut.

“He was working on my sculpture and called me to ask if I had ever broke my nose. I had in fact broke it twice and he could tell from the pictures and my bone structure,” Hanburger said.

Hanburger said his measurements were taken at the 2011 Super Bowl in Arlington, Texas, and given to Myers

along with the pictures. When he arrived at Myer’s studio, most of the bust was already finished. When a player comes to the studio, he will sit for four to six hours the first day, go home and rest, and return the next day for another six hours of sitting.

“Sculpting for the Pro Football Hall of Fame has been above and beyond what I imagined. Every year around April 1, things get in high gear as everything with the sculptures have to be done by August for ESPN,” Myers said. “It is a special feeling to see your work on television and Monday Night Football.”

Sports Illustrated named Myers’ bronze bust of Bruce Matthews, who played 19 seasons for the Oilers/Titans franchise, as “Best of the Hall of Fame” in August of 2011. Matthews was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2007.



Myers sculpting Russ Grimes of the Washington Redskins, Pro Football Hall of Fame inductee class of 2010. Photo

For Myers his education at Texas A&M not only served him well in his professional career, but also served him well in developing his passion. ■

For more information on Myers visit his website at www.scottmyersstudio.com

Aggie



Connection

Renee Williams, '98

Major: B.S. Poultry Science & M.S. Food Science '00

Current Job: Technical Services Supervisor at Cargill

What do you miss the most about Texas A&M?

The close relationships with my friends and being around so many people with similar interests. The people I went to class with, that were in my major and hung out with were all the same.

What was your most rewarding moment at Texas A&M?

Getting my masters degree. There was more thinking and technical skills involved than getting my bachelors.

What was your most memorable moment at Texas A&M?

I have lots of good memories, but the most memorable was when Bonfire fell. It was a unique experience that showed how close the Aggie family really is and drew everyone together in such a short amount of time. It was surreal.

What advice would you give current students?

Take everything in and learn the people skills as well as the book stuff. Take the time to get to know people and respect everyone you work for and with. You can't come out of school expecting to know everything and being able to work with people will help with that.

My Time Abroad

By: KRISTEN WARNER '12

Like most college students, I have listened to many friends debate whether or not going on a study abroad trip is right for them. We all know studying abroad is a ton of fun and offers students the chance to see the world, but most students do not realize that studying abroad can actually benefit them by giving them a distinct advantage in today's job market. ALEC's seven Study Abroad opportunities offer students a chance to gain a perspective that you won't find anywhere else.

As a Costa Rica Study Abroad Alumni, I learned just how special these ALEC opportunities truly are. During my time spent in Costa Rica in January 2011, I not only developed an idea of the career path I would like to follow, but I also was able to interact

with and get to know a culture foreign from than that of my own on a personal level. ALEC Study Abroad Programs are designed to teach students the course material not only through classroom academia, but also through hands on work experience and exciting cultural excursions.

After my time abroad, I have continued to cherish my time spent in Costa Rica. The three hours I took caught me up academically and I will now, thankfully, be graduating on time. During recent interviews, potential employees are constantly impressed that a study abroad experience is listed on my résumé and I love when they ask about my experience. My study abroad experience is not just fond memories, it continues to play a part in my life everyday.

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Aggie



Connection

Mark Johnson, '78

Major: Animal Science and Agricultural Economics

Current Job: Public Relations for Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative

What do you miss the most about Texas A&M?

Being a member of the corps. Coming from a small 2A school, this organization had a big effect on me. It made me grow up quickly because your options were sink or swim. But mostly I miss the camaraderie that comes with being part of the corps.

What was your most rewarding moment at Texas A&M?

Graduating in four years and walking across the stage in my senior boots.

What was your most memorable moment at Texas A&M?

I was in Company B1 and along with Company C1, we erected the center pole of bonfire.

How has your degree from Texas A&M helped you in your career?

One of the most obvious advantages is being part of the Aggie Network. When I go to meetings or functions, it's a distinct advantage because the Aggies recognize each other immediately. I'm always meeting other Aggies this way.

Leading The Way

To Collegiate FFA

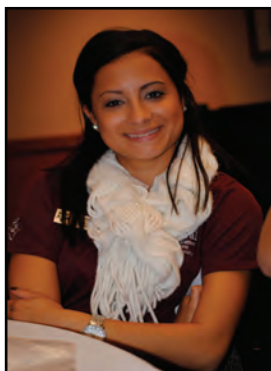
By: DEBBIE W. PRINCE '12



Devin Felger '12



Amanda Hight '10



Alex Lopez '10



Shiloh Perry '14



Jeff Reed '11

On October 16, 2011 Devin Felger '12, Amanda Hight '10, Alex Lopez '10, Shiloh Perry '14 and Jeff Reed '11 climbed into a 15-passenger van and set out on a road trip to the 2011 National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana with one goal—re-chartering a Collegiate FFA (CFFA) chapter at Texas A&M University.

Along with 13 other students and faculty members from the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications, Felger, Hight, Lopez, Perry and Reed began a nearly 3,000 mile road trip, the first step in their journey. The high impact learning experience was led by Billy McKim, Ph.D., and Shannon Lawrence and Holli Leggette, graduate students in the department.

A CFFA chapter at Texas A&M is not a new idea. Texas A&M was the first charter chapter for CFFA in 1931. Through the years the Texas A&M CFFA chapter went through structural changes that resulted in the formation of the Agricultural Leadership Society, which disbanded in 1994. Now, Felger, Hight, Lopez, Perry and Reed are ready to bring CFFA back to Texas A&M.

While the idea of yet another student organization on campus may seem threatening to existing organizations, Hight said that Texas A&M's CFFA will have its own goals, objectives

and missions. Jack Elliot, Ph.D., Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications department head also said he hoped others would see CFFA as a complimentary and not competing group.

"I wish it was happening yesterday," Elliot said in reference to how soon he'd like to see the chapter up and running.

Elliot said he felt that a CFFA chapter would bring a broader perspective for the university by getting more exposure nationally and internationally and he is supportive of CFFA at Texas A&M.

While at the convention the students networked with members of other CFFA chapters to identify the best practices implemented at successful CFFA programs, to investigate strategies to establish a successful CFFA chapter at Texas A&M, and to move forward with their mission.

The students also attended a CFFA networking workshop along with the agricultural communications and journalism students who were also on the trip. The workshop was facilitated by Marty Tatman, educational specialist in collegiate programs. Tatman introduced a three-year plan that will give a new vision to CFFA. Tatman said that in the past CFFA has been focused on career success and it was now time to shift the focus to the other parts of the mission statement.

The hour and a half workshop was spent brainstorming and working with existing and new CFFA chapters. Input and ideas were exchanged between established chapters like the University of Wyoming and a three-week old chapter from Purdue University. From established to new chapters alike, the common theme was openness and partnership.

"It's [CFFA] not just for agricultural education majors," Tatman said.

The best practices emphasized by Tatman at the workshop were recruitment, fundraising, innovative ideas, community involvement, and working with school/university officials. As part of the brainstorming process Tatman had the students ask themselves three key questions; "Where will your chapter be in three years?" "What challenges are you facing?" and "What resources do you need?"

After returning from the trip the students met two days later to discuss their plan of action and responsibilities. Over the next six weeks they worked together to develop a two-year plan of action for CFFA at Texas A&M with each student taking on a separate responsibility.

As part of their two-year plan of action, the students contacted professors within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences for recommendations of

elite students in an effort to establish a diverse CFFA founding committee. Taking the recommendations from the professors, an application was sent out to those students inviting them to apply to be a founding member of CFFA at Texas A&M.

After reviewing the applications, the students met with the selected committee members on December 7th and 8th for a briefing on the committee's duties and expectations. During the meeting, new committee members were encouraged to voice their opinions on what they envision for CFFA at Texas A&M.

The students at the meeting all shared in their excitement to be part of CFFA and emphasized their desire for CFFA to be open to all interested persons, regardless of their major or agricultural background.

Brett Aulbaugh '14 said when he came to Texas A&M he was disappointed to learn CFFA wasn't active on campus, so he was looking forward to the opportunity to be a part of bringing it back to Texas A&M.

"I look forward to getting the Corps involved," Aulbaugh said "I can be a good tool to bridge the gap between the two organizations."

Daniel Murski '12 said he feels that CFFA will benefit not only the students, but faculty, staff and the community. Murski said he is most excited about spreading the word about agriculture and what it does for the community and people involved, while helping students develop a sense of leadership.

"Leaders of tomorrow depend on role models of today," Murski said "And I look forward to serving as one of those role models."

All committee members will meet two weeks after the start of the spring semester to begin their work on CFFA recruitment and activities. Opportunities to learn more about CFFA and join this semester will be available through Facebook, Twitter, flyers on campus, Parents weekend kick off events and informational speeches during COALS classes. ■



If you are interested in joining the CFFA chapter, please contact tamucffa@gmail.com for more information on how to join.



(Photo Courtesy of Devin Felger)

Texas A&M students present their CFFA recruitment ideas during the workshop at National Convention

Back Row (L to R): Jeff Reed, Katlin Wanke, Cory Epler, Oz Cantu

Front Row (L to R): Chelsea Watts, Kassidi Click, Shiloh Perry, Amanda Hight, Alex Lopez, Devin Felger, Marty Tatman and Christen Wilson

Casting toward a Championship

By AUDREY WARD '12

At 5 a.m. on a Saturday, most college students might become violent if their alarm clock dared to disturb their REM cycle. However, some Aggies are not as concerned with sleep as they are with getting to the lake for peak biting time. These early birds are not concerned with catching the worm, but instead, using the worm to catch trophy-worthy bass.

Courtesy Photo

The Aggie Anglers competitive college fishing team members spent the fall polishing their lures and warming up their boats in anticipation of the spring semester and its prime fishing season, and four of their members are casting their lines towards an even larger prize... a national championship title.

Two Aggie Angler two-man teams, Weston Brown and Andy Schafer and Cody Collins and Kyle Bates, qualified to attend the FLW College Fishing National Championship after placing second and third respectively in the Texas Regional tournament on Lake Somerville in October. Combined, the teams caught roughly 100 lbs. worth of bass at the Southern regional tournament.

“Fishing can be fun, but we take it pretty seriously,” said Cody Collins, Aggie Anglers vice president. “We don’t get up early in the morning and stay out on the lake all day to just goof around. It’s for a purpose. We’ve got to get in enough practice to be competitive at the National Championship in April. Other teams aren’t taking a break, and we’re not going to let them get the competitive edge.”

If the Aggie Anglers win the tournament they will reel in \$100,000 worth of money and prizes, and bragging rights for the year.

The National Guard FLW College Fishing National Championship is a three day tournament beginning April 13 on Lake Murray in Columbia, S.C. The University of South Carolina will play host to the tournament.

The entire FLW College Fishing National Championship field will compete for the first two days. However, only the top-five college angler teams will advance to the third and final day of competition. Ranking is based on

the overall accumulated weight of each team’s catches.

Teams are permitted to bring as many as five fish to the scales during each weigh-in. After the conclusion of the final day’s weigh-in, the weight will be tallied and the tournament title will be awarded to the college team that has recorded the most combined weight over all three days of competition. The winners of the tournament will then go on to compete for the Forrest Wood Cup, the world championship of bass fishing.

“Some of the lakes are going to be tougher. But you want that because it makes you better.”

The Aggie Anglers have fished well and been successful in several tournaments this year, however, not without difficulty. The fishing team has faced oppositions from more than just anglers from rival universities. Mother nature was particularly unkind during the summer, draining many of the Angler’s favorite practice spots.

During the fall 2011 semester, Aggie Angler president Weston Brown said Lake Livingston was about four and a half feet low, and Lake Limestone was completely closed. All of the area lakes have been suffered from the summer’s heat wave and the shortage of rain.

Any lakes the Aggies will still be able to fish during the spring semester will be “whatever still has water,” Collins said.

The state’s total freshwater capacity sat at about 60 percent as of December 2011, according to the Texas Water

Development Board. This means that anglers have had to change up their game plan in order to be successful and fish unfamiliar areas to stay competitive.

“Some of the lakes are going to be tougher,” Brown said. “But you want that because it makes you better.” You learn different tactics and respond better to different situations when you fish tougher lakes. It’s difficult to do well in competition if you don’t have a wide range of experience.

The water and habitat for the bass remain scarce, therefore causing the fish to act and congregate differently. This has been challenging and frustrating for the Aggie Anglers as some of their favorite and most productive spots are no longer producing.

“Sometimes you just have to tell yourself that the fish are there,” Brown said, laughing. “I just fish a couple of areas really hard. There might only be five fish there, but eventually you catch them if you fish it hard enough.”

Boasting a club with more than 30 due-paying members, the Aggie Anglers possess some of the most passionate and respected anglers in the competitive college fishing community.

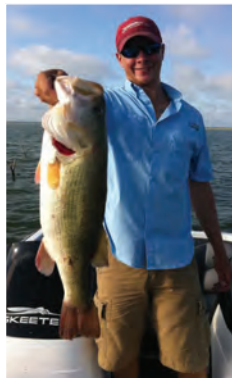
“Other universities cap their clubs at around 16 members,” Brown said. “I guarantee that if we’re not the biggest, we’re one of the top five largest clubs in the country.”

As the waters warm and the fish begin to grow, the four qualifying Aggies will rise and shine once again in the early hours of the morning, pack up their rods, lures, and gear and tackle the waters of South Carolina.

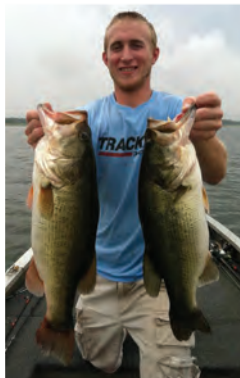
“That’s the goal — to bring it to Aggieland, to bring home a national title,” Collins said. ■



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Born to Follow Rodeo ...

BY: CASEY GRAHAM '12
Courtesy Photo



Jodi Sharp '12



Cole Cameron '10



Jacobs Crawley '11

Boots, hats, amazing livestock and the cowboy spirit is what you will find annually in Casper, Wyoming during the month of June. The College National Finals Rodeo (CNFR) is where the cream of the crop compete. Dedication, effort and a heart for rodeo are what these cowboys and cowgirls have. They are

NIRA's 11 regions qualify to compete at the CNFR. More than 400 students from more than 100 universities compete during the year hoping to be one of these top competitors.

Texas A&M University had three rodeo club members qualify for the 2011 CNFR: Jodi Sharp '12, Cole Cameron '10 and Jacobs Crawley '11.

They competed in goat tying, steer wrestling and saddle bronc riding respectively. All three contestants were very successful in Casper, Wyoming.

Jodi Sharp is a senior agricultural communications and journalism major from San Augustine, Texas. "I chose goat tying because it was my most natural event," Sharp said. "I honestly don't remember when I learned to goat tie, it feels like I've done it since I

says she feels proud to be a member of the Texas A&M rodeo team and loves representing her family and carrying on the legacy her sister started.

"Prior to this year, I honestly did not think the CNFR was too hard to qualify for in goat tying. But this year has been nothing but challenges for me and my horse," Sharp said.

Her horse Pat, a 13-year-old, bay quarter horse has been nominated for Horse of the Year at the CNFR several times. Sharp believes that this is the year Pat will win. Sharp finished 4th in the second round at the CNFR in June 2011. After graduation she plans to seek a professional rodeo career that also includes breakaway roping in the Cowboy's Professional Rodeo Association (CPRA) and the United Professional Rodeo Association (UPRA.)



Photo courtesy of Devin Felger

"...practice makes perfect," said Sharp.

not only talented athletes but also college students.

The Texas A&M Rodeo Club, founded in 1949, is part of the Southern Region in the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA.)

Qualifying for CNFR is extremely competitive. There are nine events: Saddle bronc riding, bare back riding, bull riding, tie-down roping, steer wrestling, team roping, barrel racing, breakaway roping and goat tying. Only the top three individuals in each event, and top two men's and women's teams from the

could walk."

Goat tying is a unique event. It is the only event that uses goats, is a female-only CNFR event, requires a horse and a fast-paced competitor. Tie-down roping is the most similar event with goat tying.

"I practice every single day. I can never practice enough" Sharp said. "My sister, Casi, is hard on me and even makes me run the distance my horse has to run."

The event requires, agility, precision and pure talent to succeed. Sharp

"I think positive and I'm constantly focusing," said Cameron.

Photo courtesy of Emily Huskinson



Cole Cameron is an agricultural development masters student from Scottsdale, Arizona. He graduated with his undergraduate degree in Agriculture Leadership and Development in 2010. Cameron started rodeoing in high school. It was something his dad, Craig Cameron, renowned clinician, taught him. "I chose steer wrestling because of my athleticism.

Cameron plans on pursuing a law degree and continuing to rodeo. He says he chose his undergraduate and graduate program because of his ability to communicate well and write effectively. "If law school is in my future, then I would like to make the circuit finals while in school, if I don't go to law school, the NFR is my goal," said Cameron.

because not only is A&M not known for rodeo, but Texas, as a state, is not known for saddle bronc."

Crawley has done a fine job of disproving that myth. Not only did Crawley succeed at the CNFR, he has also been traveling to compete in the Professional Rodeo Cowboy's Association (PRCA) events all over the country.



Photo courtesy of Jacobs Crawley

"Muscle memory is the key to success in bronc riding," said Crawley.

I felt I had an upper hand on this event compared to roping. Since I did not start competing until I was older, I felt that I could catch up a lot quicker and I think it's the most fun event, too," Cameron said.

Steer wrestling is unique because it relies a great amount on the hazer, the other horse-mounted rider. Without a reliable hazer, the steer wrestler has a lesser chance of being successful.

"When I'm in the box I focus on the steer and nothing else. I think positive and I'm constantly focusing," said Cameron.

Qualifying for the CNFR was a great accomplishment in Cameron's rodeo career. "The CNFR is awesome. When I backed in the box for the first time, I was nervous. I was shaking, but it was so fun. It's truly the college version of the NFR," Cameron, said.

After graduating with his masters,

Jacobs Crawley is an Industrial Systems Engineering senior majoring in from Stephenville, Texas. He started rodeoing when he was four-years old.

"Bronc riding worked the best with my size and it came easier than other events for me," Crawley said.

Saddle bronc riding packs excitement and surprise into eight seconds of man versus horse. Crawley believes that staying fit and muscle memory is the key to success in bronc riding. He normally practices every two weeks and on occasion weekly. Crawley has qualified for the CNFR twice and took home first place in 2011.

"Riding at the CNFR is really cool, because you're riding against kids your age, who you went to school with. Everyone is representing their school and its neat

Crawley's efforts have paid off. He is currently ranked ninth in the PRCA, which qualifies him to compete in the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo (WNFR) in Las Vegas, Nevada December 1-10, 2011. "I get back from the NFR Saturday night and graduate from Texas A&M University the following Friday," Crawley said.

Crawley is a third generation aggie and loves the tradition here in Aggieland. The world has only begun to see what this young man will do in rodeo.

The Texas A&M rodeo club continues to have quality competitors that are eager to qualify for the CNFR every year. Members hope to make this a new Aggie traditon. ■

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