Howdy!

Howdy Ags, Happy New Year! Can you believe it? Another year has arrived and with it comes new opportunities. Opportunities to expand the Aggie Family, opportunities for Texas A&M to strengthen its position as a world leader in education and research, opportunities to expand and improve our club and opportunities to continue to honor the heritage and traditions that make Aggieland the very special place we all know and love.

Two of my many character flaws (that I will admit) are a zero tolerance for mediocrity or hypocrisy. They have landed me in trouble before and probably will do so again. Aggies are known for excellence. It is reflected in the culture, academics, research and performance of former students. In short, Aggies are expected to be leaders and excel to the best of their abilities in all they do. But, I’ve gotta admit Ags, I am beginning to wonder if one very high profile program at A&M truly holds to the expected level of excellence. In fact, it’s beginning to peg my mediocrity meter.

Texas A&M joined the premier athletic conference in the nation with its move to the SEC. I applauded the Aggies move to join the best of the best and I’m firmly convinced the change has been beneficial for all involved with one exception.

In addition to the numerous expansion and improvement projects on campus, we elected to spend nearly a half of billion dollars to renovate Kyle Field and the related facilities. We now have the premiere college football facility in the world. The renovated stadium is a source of pride for all Aggies. It offers a tremendous advantage in recruiting new athletes and has become a fantastic source of revenue for the University. Yet, as I reflect upon the recent Aggie football saga, I can’t help but wonder, have we overlooked one of the cornerstones of Aggieism with regard to the football program? There is no doubt money can make things easier, but money alone cannot buy success, hard work and dedication must be a part of the equation. Let’s hope the football program chooses not to be just mediocre in a palatial stadium. Let’s hope it chooses instead, to commit to the standard of excellence expected of all who are associated with a little college on the Brazos, a college named Texas A&M.

Gig ‘em

J. Clay Deatherage ‘84
2016 Abilene A&M Club Calendar

January, 2016

Please Renew Your Memberships & Ads
January 1 - Happy New Year
January 6 - Regular Club Meeting (Elections)
January 21 - Board of Directors Meeting
January 21 - Aggie Happy Hour

February, 2016

February 3 - Regular Club Meeting - Installation of Officers
February 18 - Board of Directors Meeting
February 18 - Aggie Happy Hour

March, 2016

March 2 - Regular Club Meeting - Installation of Officers
March 17 - Board of Directors Meeting
March 17 - Aggie Happy Hour

Happy New Year!
Scholarship Applications Will Be On The Website Soon.
Introducing our January Speaker

Mr. James McBride ‘84

Mr. James McBride is a 1980 graduate of Brownwood High School. He earned a B.S. (1984) and a M.Ag. (1986) degree from Texas A&M University. He was a member of the 1983 Livestock Judging Team and actively involved in the Saddle & Sirloin Club.

James has a 30 year background in finance, banking, and capital markets, including international experience. Upon graduation from A&M, he began his career with Bank of America in Dallas. During the banking crisis of the late 1980s and early 1990s, Mr. McBride worked with the Resolution Trust Corporation to close failed financial institutions, and to manage and liquidate assets taken into receivership.

After the banking crisis subsided, James lived and worked in Sofia, Bulgaria under a contract with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). While in Bulgaria, he worked to analyze and market state-owned banks to the private sector.

Upon returning to the United States, James worked for many years in real estate investment banking for both Morgan Stanley and Merrill Lynch. He originated, underwrote, and securitized billions of dollars of commercial real estate loans throughout the U.S.

With the onset of the most recent instability in the banking industry, he began work as a contractor for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Since 2010, James has worked for the FDIC to manage and resolve assets from failed banks. His recent responsibilities have centered on the management of an $8 billion portfolio of distressed assets in Puerto Rico.

In his spare time, James and wife Allyson ’86 enjoy raising and showing reined cow horses, managing his family ranch at May and spending time with friends and family.
The 2015 - 2016 Abilene Board of Directors, serving as the nominating committee, respectfully recommends the following slate of officers to serve the Club for the 2016 - 2017 term. If you would like to serve on the Board, please contact Clay. As always, nominations may be made from the floor, or submitted as write in candidates in the January meeting.

**Officers**

- President - Andrew Turnbull '84
- President Elect - Marshall Morris '08
- Past President - J. Clay Deatherage '84
- VP Records - Marla Hanks '02
- VP Finance - Trey Todd '07
- VP Activities & Programs - Alice Yates '90
- VP Membership - Laura Millican
- VP Publicity - To Be Appointed
- VP Scholarships - Marta Hollowell '82
- VP Special Events - Roxanne Schoen

**Directors**

**3 Year Term**
- Risha Sanders '91
- Henry Hahn '07
- Leslie Andrews

**2 Year Term**
- Nick Arrott '00
- James Hughes '82
- Bobby Odgee '84

**1 Year Term**
- Charlie Kitchell '51
- Ron Ingram '76
- Allison Cowling '01
Did You Know

Abilene has a NCAA, All American Athlete at A&M? Ms. Kaci Fisher ’17 is Captain of the Aggie Equestrian Team’s Horsemanship Squad. As a sophomore, Kaci led the Horsemanship Squad, earning a spot on the 2015 Horsemanship All SEC Team, the 2015 NCEA All-America Second Team and the 2015 NCEA Academic Second Team.

The Aggie Equestrian Team will compete in 15 contests this year and is comprised of 50 young ladies who compete in different disciplines. The Team is coached by Tana McKay, the only head coach in program history. McKay is in her 17th season at the helm of the 11-time and defending national champion Texas A&M equestrian team.

During her time in Aggieland, she has taken the team from club sport status -- overseen by the animal science department -- to arguably the most decorated athletic-department-sponsored equestrian program in the country. The Aggies have won nine western riding team national championships in addition to capturing the overall NCEA National Championship title in 2012 and the first-ever overall Varsity Equestrian National Championship in 2002. McKay guided A&M to four consecutive western national titles, and her squads won four of the five western crowns awarded in the history of the Varsity Equestrian National Championships. Under her watch, Aggie riders also took home four individual national titles in the three seasons they were contested (2008-10). A&M captured the program's first conference title in April 2011 and took the Big 12’s runner-up title as the conference began sponsoring equestrian for the first time in the fall of 2011. The team entered the Southeastern Conference in July of 2012.

2015 saw the Aggies finish with an 8-7 record and advancing to the SEC Championship Finals after the first full season competing in their new home, the Hildebrand Equine Center. Five Aggies earned spots on the All-SEC teams and Texas A&M had six riders named NCEA All-Americans. After earning a bye in the first round of NCEA Championship competition, the Aggies fell to SEC foe Auburn and ended the season with a top-five ranking. Currently the Aggies are ranked fourth in the nation. As the reining coach, her squad has racked up 73 wins in the seven seasons under the varsity equestrian umbrella. In addition, one of McKay's riders-Maggie Gratny-took home the school's first individual reining national championship in April of 2011. The western team secured its ninth national championship in 2012, alongside the Aggies' second overall national championship. Her leadership is not limited to the western discipline, as the well-rounded and highly-successful Texas A&M program earned reserve overall national champion honors at four of the five VENC competitions and the team grabbed the overall title in its first year in the NCEA.

McKay arrived in College Station in the fall of 1998 to begin work on a master's degree in agriculture with an emphasis in equine behavior. She guided the Aggies as a graduate assistant during that season. A year later, the Texas A&M athletic department picked up the team as a fully-funded varsity athletic sport and McKay was named co-head coach. Following a highly successful inaugural season which saw the western team place fifth nationally and take home three individual national titles, McKay was named the program's first full-time head coach on June 29, 2000.

Roxanne Schoen ’74
GOOD BULL

It is a new year Ags. Please take the time to renew your Club memberships and newsletter ads. Our Club is one of the top A&M Clubs in the world. It is well renowned for its long standing commitment to A&M through its scholarships and innovative programs. Ags y’all are the backbone of the Club. Your dedicated support, commitment and generosity allows the Abilene A&M Club to stand above the rest.

Billy Berny will not be able to serve as VP of Publicity this year. This is a very important position within the Club as it deals with ad sales and memberships. If you would like volunteer to assist by serving in this critical role, please let Andrew or me know.

Moving from Good Bull to Best Bull, I would like to express my gratitude to the Club for allowing me the privilege of serving as your president for the past 2 years. It has certainly been an honor and I thank you for your encouragement and support.

We have seen some changes in the newsletter, expanded the scholarship program, brought back Coach’s Night and started a new program to benefit high school counselors, prospective students and their families. None of this would have happened without the commitment and hard work by the Board members. Each of you will never truly know how much I appreciate all you have done for our Club and for me personally. Thank you very much.

Clay
Abilene A&M Club Silver Taps

Holly Nash Spencer ‘82
Mr. Raymond A McDaniel, Jr. ‘55
Mr. Robert Adams ‘75
Mr. James Harold Hughes ‘52

Prayers and Concerns

Steffi Overton, widow of Wallar Overton ‘61 is currently battling breast cancer.
The men and women who selfless serve to protect our Nation and the freedoms we enjoy.

Please keep these Aggies and their families in your prayers.

Memorial Contributions

There are many ways to honor departed family members and friends.
Should you select a memorial contribution that embodies the Aggie Spirit as
a method to celebrate the life of a loved one, the Abilene A&M Club will
consider it an honor to help ensure your wishes are met.

Local Club options include the Senior Ring & Boot Fund, the Freshman
Scholarship Fund and the Class of ‘43 White Belt Scholarship Fund.
If your preference is one of the numerous organizations on campus or an
affiliate of the Aggie network, please do not hesitate to contact us for
assistance.
Membership
Change of Address
Mail Newsletter to
Home
Work

Name (please print)
Class

Spouse’s Full Name (if Aggie)
Spouse’s Class

HOME Address
City & State
ZIP

Home Phone
Home Fax
Cell
Home E-mail

WORK Address
City & State
ZIP

Work Phone
Cell
Work E-mail

Annual Dues:
$35/yr Individual
$35/yr Aggie couple

I want to help with:
Scholarship Selections
Muster
French Fry Booth
Golf Tournament
Board of Directors

Optional Reveille Donations:
(above & beyond dues)
$25
$50
$100

Golden Reveille Donations:
$250
$500

I wish to be acknowledged:
in the Newsletter $75.00/yr
on Aggie Football Radio $400.00/yr
at the Golf Tournament

Total Paid: $______________

Statement of Purpose: Primary functions of the Abilene A&M Club are serving as the focus of all organized alumni activity in the Abilene area, and providing scholarship funds for deserving area students who are attending Texas A&M. The Club currently offers scholarships funded by your Membership Fees, Reveille Donations, Newsletter Sponsorships, the Aggie French Fry Booth at the West Texas Fair, A&M Football on radio and the annual Golf Tournament. Donations may also be made directly to the Abilene Community Foundation Texas A&M University Scholarship Fund (tax-deductible) which is a perpetual fund using only the income generated for scholarships.