I apologize for the tardiness of this month’s newsletter. Initially, this column addressed the total disregard of the history that made this Nation great, the lack of integrity displayed by our elected representatives in Washington DC and the absence of integrity and abuse of the first amendment rights of free speech and freedom of the press by the media. The format left no room for misinterpretation and compared the current legislative activities to a circus.

Late Friday afternoon I was notified the Association of Former Students censored the article and refused to disseminate our newsletter. In the Association’s words: “Unfortunately The Association cannot send out a newsletter or an email with such strong personal opinions, especially in regards to politics. Our goal for newsletters is to bring Aggies together around A&M by bringing them closer to the motherland in spirit. For business purposes I have to ask that you keep the club newsletters to be focused on A&M club events and what is happening with the university. We need to keep the A&M Clubs communication focused on A&M and historical facts. Due to this, we ask that you lead off the newsletter with your second piece about the history of July 4th and remove the first letter in order to allow us to distribute the email with both our logo and the Abilene Club’s name on it.”

It should be noted, the censored article made no political policy statements nor endorsements, singled out no individual party or organization and acknowledged that there were some to which it did not pertain. I cogitated and ruminated over what would be considered “acceptable revisions”. As the article addressed principles and integrity regarding free speech, I determined that I would not revise it for the sake of appeasement. If you would like a copy of the original content, email me at, mo2se@att.net

History was fresh on the minds of the framers of that magnificent document known as the Constitution of the United States of America when it was drafted. They had experienced life without the freedoms it ensured and sacrificed blood to form a nation for which it would serve as a guide. They also knew from history that in a free nation, citizens must enjoy the right to free speech; and the nation must have a free press with two very important responsibilities; to inform the citizens of the new nation, and also serve as their advocates. Accordingly, they ensured that right in the very first amendment to the new Constitution. They also knew that the single most important factor for the citizens of the new nation and its principles enumerated in the guiding document to flourish and enjoy previously unknown freedoms was integrity.

Ags, I don’t know if this nation has been so great that it has forgotten its history, or if it has enjoyed the freedoms guaranteed by the portion of the document known as the Bill of Rights to the point that it forgot that with rights comes the obligation to exercise them responsibly, or if integrity is becoming extremely scarce in some places. But, I do know we would not be spectators at this circus if Aggies embrace: and all others had learned the core values we learned at a little college on the Brazos, a college named Texas A&M.

Gig ‘em,
J. Clay Deatherage ‘84
**2017 Abilene A&M Club Calendar**

**JULY**

4th - Happy Birthday USA!
5th - Monthly Meeting
13th - Aggie Happy Hour
20th - Board of Directors Meeting

**AUGUST**

2nd - Monthly Club Meeting
10th - Happy Hour Lytle Land & Cattle
17th - Board of Directors Meeting

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**Happy Birthday USA**

**FM 707 Self-Storage**

Paul Graham '43
1 Mile West of US 83-84 on FM 707
Rental Office
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www.fm707storage.com

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**ROBERT G. OGDEE, M.D. ’84**

OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY
BOARD CERTIFIED

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Abilene, TX 79606
Tel: 325-428-4966
Fax: 325-428-4967

**RG Surveying**

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2401 South Willis Street
Suite 110
Abilene, Texas 79605
(325) 437-8118
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Riley Griffith '91, RPLS

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673-1717
TPCL 10547
ANDREW TURNBULL '84
P.O. Box 7908
Abilene, Texas 79608-7908
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Abilene, TX 79606
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Fax: 325-428-4967

**Gig 'em Aggies**

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**Gig ‘em Aggies**
We are PROUD to INTRODUCE the 2017 Abilene A&M Club Class ’43 White Belt Scholarship Recipients

We had 6 applicants for our Class of ’43 White Belt Scholarship for 2017. All of them had excellent credentials and essays which made the selections extremely difficult.

Elizabeth Brown is from Abilene and has decided to eventually go to Medical School either for an MD or to specialize in oncology. She is involved in many medical related organizations as well as a leadership team and Aggies for Christ.

Maggie Branch is from Ovalo and her dream is to own several establishments in her hometown including a coffee shop and feed store. Very diversified! She is involved in many Ag related organizations and, of course, intramural basketball.

Stetson Meek is from Anson and is a recent admit to Texas A&M that fully understands Aggie values. He wants to continue the family cow-calf operation and farming business while also serving others. He is concurrently enrolled in an EMT academy and will complete his BS degree and obtain his paramedic certification next May. He is enrolled in the TEEX firefighter academy that will begin shortly after he graduates. His activities include Ag Systems Management Club, Grace Church, and Breakaway Youth Ministries.

Reading about all of these young Aggies is very inspiring and leads us to believe that our beloved University is in good hands.
COLLEGE STATION, Texas - Texas A&M Baseball announced their annual list of team honors Thursday after the Aggies concluded the 2017 campaign with a 41-23 record, extending their school-record string of consecutive NCAA Championship appearances to 11 seasons, claiming their ninth overall NCAA Regional title and appearing in their sixth College World Series.

MARION PUGH MOST VALUABLE PLAYER
Freshman Braden Shewmake was awarded the Marion Pugh Most Valuable Player Award. He was the only Aggie to start all 64 games. On the year, he batted .328 with 90 hits, 47 runs, 18 doubles, two triples, 11 home runs, 69 RBI and 11 stolen bases. Shewmake logged a .529 slugging percentage. His 34 RBI in SEC play ranked third in the league. He hit .307 with 15 runs, five doubles and seven home runs in conference action.

Shewmake filled up his trophy case in 2016. In addition to earning the Aggies' first SEC Freshman of the Year honor, he was named All-America First Team by Baseball America, Collegiate Baseball and the NCBWA and All-America Second Team by ABCA and D1Baseball.com. Collegiate Baseball named him National Freshman of the Year and the NCBWA christened Shewmake the District VII Player of the Year.

LORAINE B. AND WILLIAM B. "BREEZY" BREAZEALE RBI AWARD
Shewmake was the Aggies' best run-producer, earning the Loraine B. and William B. "Breezy" Breazeale RBI Award. The Wylie, Texas-native drove in 69 runs, the most among NCAA Division I freshmen in 2017. The tally was the most by an Aggie since 2008.

Excerpts from 12thman.com
Just a little reminder of history

On **July 4th**, we will observe one of the most important holidays in the world, **American Independence Day**. It will only be celebrated in America, and in fact be viewed with disinterest to disdain in the rest of the world. However, I do not think we would recognize the world today if it did not exist.

Everyone loves a national holiday, but what are we really celebrating? The original 13 colonies had been at war with Great Britain for over a year, and on July 2, 1776, the Continental Congress passed a resolution declaring the colonies to be sovereign and independent states that had formed a new nation, the **United States of America**. The resolution declared the colonies and newly formed nation were no longer a part of the British Empire, nor were they subject to rule by the Crown or Parliament. Two days later, on July 4, the congress voted to ratify and publish the text of a document that explained why the colonies declared independence. That document would later be known as the **Declaration of Independence**. It was primarily authored by Thomas Jefferson, and contained one sentence that for over 200 years has influenced and shaped our world. It says, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

That single, simple sentence identified Americans as citizens, not subjects, and has served as the foundation of freedom around the world. That sentence was the cornerstone on which the greatest nation in the world was built and has served as its guiding principle from its beginning. Sadly, freedom is not free. It was bought then and continues to be paid for with the blood of men and women who are willing to die so that others may be free. I take great pride in the fact that many of those who have risked their lives and shed their blood for freedom around the world hail from a land grant college that was established in Texas a short 100 years after 13 colonies declared independence. I take a greater pride in knowing the men and women of that college stand willing to answer the same call of patriotism that was born in the 1770’s. I take the most pride in being an American who had the freedom to attend a University where excellence, commitment, honor and duty are ways of life, a University defined by students willing to defend American values instead of protesting those who do, a University named **Texas A&M**.

Gig ‘em,
J. Clay Deatherage ‘84
Did You Know?

DID YOU KNOW—That the oldest known Aggie ring was made in 1889? According to the Association of Former Students there are two 1889 rings in existence, however the oldest in the Ring collection is from 1890. The 1890 ring was recently found for sale on Etsy and was purchased and donated to the University to be part of the Ring collection.

The Aggie ring has been changed and redesigned several time over the years as each class chose their own design. In 1894 Edward C. Jonas ’94 (1894) designed a “new” ring that was then made by a Bryan jeweler. The jeweler used lead to weight the rings instead of pure gold.

In 1899 the ring design was adopted for the classes of 1900 through 1902. This ring was made by Linz Brothers Jewelry in Dallas and was available to all students for $10.50. This same year the students decided to perpetuate the basic design.

In 1933 the class of ’31 petitioned to restrict purchase of the Aggie ring to students who have attained at least the second semester of their junior year. In response to the petition, Texas A&M President T. O. Walton appointed an official Senior Ring Committee tasked with standardizing the ring design, creating control over distribution and manufacture, and eliminating some of the “undesirable practices” connected with handling class ring orders. Some of the decisions made by the committee included that rings would average 12 pennyweight, there would be no stones, and would have a more modernized design while retaining essential features of the 1899 version, and the words “Texas A&M College-1876” were added around the crown.

When the legislature changed A&M from a College to a University in 1963 the classes of 1963 - 1966 had the option of College or University on their rings. This was also the year that J.B. Josh Sterns ’99 (1899) suggested the idea of a permanent ring collection.

The Aggie ring has seen flags added then moved from one side to the other and back again, the crossed Texas and US flags over the cannon added in 1935, "finish" options of rose gold, white gold and antiquing came in the 1970’s. Although there have been many manufacturers over the years, Balfour has been the exclusive supplier of THE Aggie ring since 1948.

Over the years there have been many designs, colors, and manufacturers but there is still ONLY ONE Aggie Ring.

Roxanne Schoen ‘74
We want your feedback!

Is there anything that you would like to see in the next issue of The Abilene Aggie?

Do you have any ideas for events or fundraising?

We would love to hear about it! Please send any feedback to andrewmoto@suddenlink.net or 325-673-6707.

Prayers and Concerns

As we celebrate American Independence Day please pray for our Nation’s leaders. Pray that they honor those who have sacrificed to make this the greatest Nation in the history of the world by setting aside personal ambition, petty bickering and extreme partisanship and simply work with America’s best interest at heart.

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.
<table>
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<th>Membership</th>
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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

Co

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
- 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 Dues, 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.