



Help A Fellow Aggie

THIS APRIL 21

BY SUE OWEN '94

TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN
MUSTER THIS YEAR

Muster has dual purposes: remembering those we have lost, and getting together in comradeship to “live over the days you spent at the A&M College of Texas,” as this publication wrote in 1923.

After graduation, Aggies often find that local Musters are looser and more informal than the event they knew as students. Very few, in fact, include a lengthy ceremony. These smaller gatherings offer more opportunities to socialize and to get involved.

And each year, many Aggies will learn for the first time how the process of getting a name onto a Muster roll works and where to answer “Here” for a comrade or relative.

You can help.

Muster is about all of us. It continues throughout our lives as an annual touchpoint. It is an affirmation that we are Aggies, and it is like nothing else done by any other school or university anywhere.

Here are ways that any of us can step up and take an active role to perpetuate the Aggie Spirit.

“I proudly promote Muster as our greatest tradition because I believe it distills all of our grand history and tradition into one annual ceremony which epitomizes the very best of our Aggie Spirit!”

PORTER S. GARNER III '79
PRESIDENT AND CEO
THE ASSOCIATION OF FORMER STUDENTS



Dozens line up to hold a candle for an Aggie they don't know at last year's Brazos County A&M Club Muster. Among the more than 150 names called, many had no specific relative or friend on hand at the Club's dinner in the MSC. But for each, an Aggie was found to answer “Here.”

1 Help Someone Navigate the Process

We've all wished we could do more for someone suffering a loss. When they are battling grief, figuring out where to be on April 21 may not be the first thing on their minds. Keep this information handy and share it when needed.

Not all names are called on campus

Many Aggies believe they should head to College Station to answer for their friend or loved one. But in fact the student-run Muster is essentially another local Muster: It has called mostly the names of enrolled students since soon after its inception in 1944 (and from 1969 to 2011, it was merged with the Brazos County Muster). View the student Muster Committee's criteria at tx.ag/criteria and the list of names to be called in Reed Arena at tx.ag/CampusMusterRoll.

Where an Aggie's name will be called

Names are sent to the Muster closest to their address in The Association's database; check tx.ag/rollcall to see if there is a Club listed by their name. You can ask for a name to be added at the Club or off-campus Muster you'll attend. Details: tx.ag/WhichMuster.

How to get an Aggie's name on the worldwide roll

This is something you could help a family or bereaved person with, as easily as sending an email. The Association places a name on the Worldwide Roll Call and in this magazine's “Silver Taps” section upon receiving notification that the Aggie has passed. You can email

SilverTaps@AggieNetwork.com. See tx.ag/AddAName for more details.

Can I answer “Here” for them at the Muster I am attending?

Most likely, yes. This does not apply to the student-run Muster on campus (see tx.ag/criteria), but other Musters have less formalized ceremonies. Contact the local Muster chair (tx.ag/FindAMuster), explain who will be attending, and ask for the name to be added. Doing this as early as possible helps the local Muster volunteers considerably — no need to wait until mid-April.

Help find contact information for a local Muster chair

This is another direct way you can assist a bereaved friend or family: Go to tx.ag/FindAMuster and find the location and contact information for the Muster they want to attend. The volunteer organizers update this list gradually. If you check in February, it might only have a few Musters, but check back toward the start of April and more Musters may pop up closer to you.

Questions to ask if you are attending to say ‘Here’

You will want to let the Muster chair know, as early as possible, that you'll be attending in person to answer “Here.” You may be asked if you wish to hold a candle. Each local Muster is different; some include a meal. You may want to ask how formal or informal the attire will be, or whether there is a cost associated with dinner.



Association To Read Worldwide Roll Call, Answer ‘Here’

There is no single Muster that calls all Aggies’ names.

With more than 1,600 names on the annual list these days, that’s understandable. But even back when enrollment was smaller, there’s no indication that any Muster regularly tried to call all names, even the student-run campus Muster (see story, Page 43).

This year, for the first time, The Association of Former Students will read the entire Worldwide Roll Call aloud and answer “Here” for each name.

Rather than a Muster gathering, the event will simply be a reading over the public address system at the Clayton W. Williams, Jr. Alumni Center, and will be livestreamed at tx.ag/Here.

Names are added to the Worldwide Roll Call (tx.ag/RollCall) when The Association is informed of an Aggie’s passing. See tx.ag/AddAName for details and how to send a name. From there, each name for which there is an address in the former student database is supplied to the local Muster nearest that address.

Since all Musters historically employ their own methods of

selecting names to call, and because there are usually some names with no associated address, there has always been a chance some names would not be called. That is the situation this reading is intended to remedy, said organizer Scot Walker ’90, The Association’s assistant vice president for communications.

“It is fundamental to the Aggie Spirit that every Aggie’s name is called on Muster after they pass,” Walker said.

The reading is expected to take about two hours and will begin at 6:51 a.m. — sunrise in College Station — on April 21. Walker said part of the reason for the early start is that the Alumni Center will quickly fill up that day with Muster visitors and events, and staff will fan out

for those events and to help with Musters elsewhere. The readers will be teams of Association staff and volunteers joined by invited student leaders and some university faculty and staff.

A scrolling video of all the names is produced each year by The Association; it is shown at the Muster in Reed Arena and on the Alumni Center’s Huddleston Video Wall. The Association also makes this video available publicly; it will be posted on AggieNetwork.com by 1:22 p.m. Central on April 20, which is the estimated time that Muster Day will dawn in Sydney, Australia, home of the easternmost Texas A&M Club.



Jakarta, Indonesia

VOLUNTEER OR HOST YOUR OWN

Some are dinners, some are picnics, some are held on beaches or in barns. Yours could be a blue-jeans and beer event, or have a featured speaker.

But every local Muster is put together by Aggies just like you, in their spare time or after work.

You can lend a hand. Find the Muster chair's contact information at tx.ag/FindAMuster, and offer to help!

Each gathering needs a location, some publicity, some setup. You might unfold chairs, bring a flower arrangement, assist with social media or clean up plates after a potluck dinner.

At some Musters, you could be asked to hold a candle for an Aggie you don't know.

If you don't see a Muster in your area on tx.ag/FindAMuster, you can put one together with The Association's toolkit at tx.ag/HoldAMuster.

Don't forget: Any gathering of two or more Aggies is a Muster. Register these at tx.ag/HoldAMuster, too! Last year, The Association heard from three Aggies gathered at the Acropolis in Greece, one recent grad who cooked dinner for a group of buddies, and two Ags serving on the Navy destroyer USS Michael Murphy. See a photo gallery at tx.ag/album2017, and send us your photos at tx.ag/MusterPhotos.



MOST-ASKED MUSTER FACTS

Q
Which Muster calls an Aggie's name?

A
tx.ag/WhichMuster

Q
Can I answer 'Here' for them at the local Muster I am attending?

A
tx.ag/WhichMuster

Q
Notify The Association of an Aggie's passing:

A
tx.ag/AddAName

Q
Criteria for names called at campus Muster:

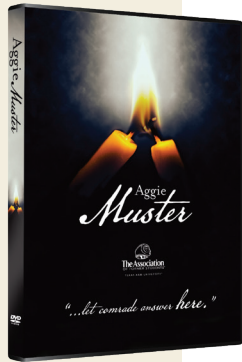
A
tx.ag/criteria

Q
Find your nearest Muster:

A
tx.ag/FindAMuster

New Muster Film Traces History

"Aggie Muster," a new film by The Association of Former Students, explores the origin of this hallowed tradition from its roots in Texas history to over 300 worldwide Musters today, through interviews, historical photos and video from modern observances. On sale April 21 at tamuvideo.com, A&M Clubs may offer the video and retain part of the proceeds as a fundraiser.

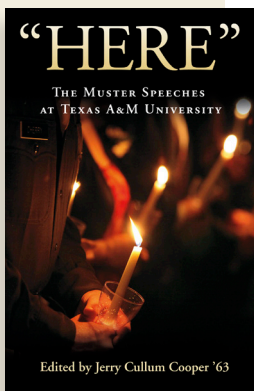


Videos Free To Use At Your Muster

The history of 1942's legendary Muster at Corregidor and more videos produced by The Association that can be used for your Muster are at tx.ag/MusterMedia, which also has traditional Muster readings and Aggie music to download.

Book Collects Muster Speeches

Rudder. Gill. Gates. Slocum. Eisenhower. Their words are preserved among 73 speeches delivered at the student Muster on A&M's campus from 1946 to 2017, collected in a new book by Jerry Cooper '63. Part of The Association's Centennial book series with the Texas A&M Press. Available on Amazon.com and tamupress.com.



Whose Names Are Called On Campus?

Every year, dozens of Aggies contact the student Muster Committee and The Association of Former Students heartbroken to learn that their loved one's name will not be called at the Muster in Reed Arena.

It's commonly believed the campus Muster calls the names of all Aggies, everywhere.

But this doesn't appear to have ever been the case.

Some San Jacinto Day gatherings on the A&M campus in the 1920s incorporated a list of former students known to have passed away. A&M's 1924 San Jacinto Day events included the dedication of a monument to Aggies killed in World War I.

But during the 1930s, most April 21st events were held off-campus by former students.

The first student "Muster" at A&M was in 1944. That year and in '45 and '46, the names called were mainly those of Aggies killed in World War II.

News stories for several individual years in the 1950s and into the 1960s indicate the campus roll call was limited to current students who had died in the previous year.

In the late '60s, they added names of Aggies killed in Vietnam; this practice returned in the 1990s and 2000s for Aggies killed in the Persian Gulf, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Also, from 1969 to 2011, the campus Muster was merged with the Brazos County A&M Club Muster, and so local Aggies' names were called along with those of students.

Faculty, staff and special requests were sometimes honored, as were the members of the 50 Year Reunion Class, who are hosted at the campus

Muster (this first occurred in 1945 with the Class of 1895).

And, in 1997, the student committee formally added two categories: Aggies who were immediate family members of enrolled students and of local Aggies.

Overall, then, the campus Muster has historically been like all "local" Musters: calling primarily the names of Aggies who lived in that area at the time of their death.

This is echoed by the students on the Muster Committee, who try to stress that the campus Muster is no more important or more prestigious than any other Muster.

It's also worth noting that there are actually two "campus" Musters, since the Brazos Aggies returned to their 1940s-vintage practice of holding their own Muster on A&M's grounds. Starting in 2012, this has usually been a dinner in the MSC, and the Club makes every effort to include names requested by those who attend.

Current criteria for the student Muster include (please see tx.ag/criteria for the exact wording):

- Enrolled students
- Former students who are immediate family of enrolled students
- Former students who died while deployed on active duty in the military
- Current and recently retired faculty and staff
- Members of the 50 Year Reunion Class

You can view the list of names currently slated to be called at this year's Muster in Reed Arena at tx.ag/CampusMusterRoll.

A Muster May Be Closer Than You Think



Last year, Aggies reported Musters at more than **150 locations in Texas**, plus Musters in **42 other states**, the District of Columbia, and **26 foreign countries:**

AFGHANISTAN
AUSTRALIA
CHAD
CHINA
GERMANY
GUATEMALA
HONG KONG
HUNGARY
IRAQ

IRELAND
ITALY
JAPAN
KAZAKHSTAN
KUWAIT
MACEDONIA
NETHERLANDS
NIGERIA
NORWAY

QATAR
RUSSIA
SAUDI ARABIA
SOUTH AFRICA
SPAIN
TAIWAN
UAE
UK

Find a Muster: tx.ag/FindAMuster | Put yours on our map: tx.ag/HostAMuster

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SPREAD THE WORD

Beforehand, invite fellow Aggies to attend Muster. Perhaps you can reach out to somebody you haven't seen in a while. Or help someone find the Muster in their area by sending them this link: tx.ag/FindAMuster.

If you're active on social media, you can inspire others to go by sharing your Muster's location (many A&M Clubs are on Facebook; see AggieNetwork.com/social).

Share a photo afterwards, to show the character of your local event. Grilling on a patio or playing horseshoes? That's the kind of good bull that could encourage someone to attend next year. The Association welcomes these photos as well (submit at tx.ag/MusterPhotos). Use the hashtag **#AggieMuster** and take a look at how other Musters turn out!



From 1947 to 1970, the student Muster was usually held outdoors on a lawn: either at the MSC, as here in 1955, or the Systems Administration building. Candles first appeared at the student Muster in 1980, after it had moved permanently indoors. From 1971 to 1997, it was in G. Rollie White Coliseum — except for 1974, when it was in Kyle Field. From 1998 to the present, it has been in Reed Arena.

4 Most Importantly: Attend

This sounds simple, but then again it may not be. Muster is often on a weeknight, and it can be hard to get there after work. This year it's on a Saturday, which can raise a different set of conflicts for a lot of families and others. It's not uncommon for local Musters to be held on a day other than April 21, to work around those scheduling conflicts.

But what makes these gatherings fun and friendly? You.

So: Put April 21 on your calendar, and look up the nearest Muster to you at tx.ag/FindAMuster.

Again, the closer to April 21 you check that site, the more Musters will be listed — one nearer to you might pop up. Last year in the Houston area alone, there were at least seven Musters around the city's outskirts in addition to the central Houston A&M Club event.

Shine up your Aggie Ring and go say "Howdy" to some folks!

(A note for next year: If your Ring is sitting in a drawer because it's too tight or too loose, you can have it resized — for free, in most cases —

and get it back in four to six weeks: tx.ag/ringresize).

What difference does it make if you attend your local Muster?

For many Clubs, Muster is their largest meeting of the year, and some elect officers or present scholarships. It's often the first event that Aggies new to an area seek out to start meeting people. You can greet and meet and share your Aggie stories.

And of course: There are always fellow Aggies to remember and for whom you can answer "Here."

