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Membership is **FREE**, but registration is required each year to ensure that our records remain current.

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The HAMC is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization recognized under section 501(c)(3). Our Federal Tax ID# is 76-015741.

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Submissions are encouraged and should pertain to news/information relevant to Houston Aggies. Send to:  
**Houston Aggie Magazine, c/o Deborah Lawson '92,  
P.O. Box 940082, Houston, Texas 77094-7082  
[deborahlawson@aggienetwork.com](mailto:deborahlawson@aggienetwork.com)**

Submissions may be edited for length, grammar, accuracy, or for any other reason. Articles may also appear on the HAMC's website. Please contact the editor for additional information, including deadlines.

**Important reminders:**

Please ask your employer about matching your contributions to the Houston A&M Club.

Because the Houston Aggie Magazine is sent via bulk mail, it is not forwarded or returned. Please remember to update your address on the website: [www.HoustonAgs.org](http://www.HoustonAgs.org).

Editor: Deborah Lawson '92  
Designer: Adriana Dean '06

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## Editor's Corner

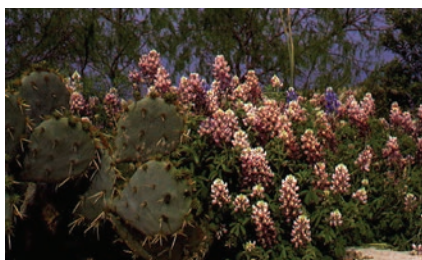
Deborah Lawson '92



**T**here are defining moments in every life. Moments you will always be able to look back and remember vividly. Where were you when...?

The other day, I met a young Aggie and we fell into that familiar game. For the first time, however, I was on the receiving end of: "I wasn't born yet." Ouch!

But it got me thinking. I know where my grandmother was on December 7th, 1941, and where my mother was on 21 November 1963 (yes... the day before...), and where I was on 28 January 1986 and 19 November 1999. I can't, however, remember my best friend's birthday or where I was when the Aggies beat 'Bama or Johnny won the Heisman. So why is it that we remember the tragedies and not all the amazing days in between?



I've decided it's time to start a new tradition. Let's remember all the wonderful days that we spend with the Aggie Network in 2014. I'll start:

**Where were you when the first maroon bonnets bloomed?**



# Howdy from the President



**G**reetings! I hope 2014 is off to a great start. I would like to convey three items to you in this message:  
1) "Why me?," 2) Communications, and 3) Involvement.

Why me? I was President of the Houston A&M Club in 2012 and served as the Immediate Past President last year.

It was an honor and a humbling experience to be the president of the Houston A&M Club, the biggest in the Aggie Network with a great tradition. The commitment of the Officers, Directors, and most of all the Members is hard to convey in words. The Houston Aggie Spirit is alive and well, but in December 2012, I was ready to move on. deborah lawson '92 was President in 2013 and did an outstanding job.

As 2013 drew to a close, the HAMC faced the daunting task of succession planning. The time commitment required of the HAMC president is fairly intense, and demands good organization and patience, preventing many from accepting the position. I was honored to be asked to serve as President again and accepted the position knowing full well the effort needed to successfully serve HAMC's Members. Thank you for that trust.

In April, the HAMC, in conjunction with the Former Student Association, will roll out a new website. The entire software package is a powerful tool that will allow us to better communicate with our Members. The HAMC is still learning the iModules' nuances, but by the end of April we will be up and running. Hopefully, the transition will be seamless for the Members. We will continue to send out a weekly eBlast with links to the website for more information and registrations. Please tell us what we can do to make the system better.

The HAMC is a great place to help Aggies improve their organizational and leadership skills. If you are interested in getting involved with the Houston Aggies please contact any of the Officers or Directors. The Aggie Network helps define "Aggie Spirit" and either you go to Texas A&M University because of it, are indoctrinated into it while at school, or develop the Spirit post-graduation. Regardless, the Aggie Network is a great resource for business, relationships, and service.

## GET INVOLVED!

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# TIMES ARE CHANGING FOR THE TRADITIONS LUNCH

After attending several Traditions Lunches in the summer of 2013, Dean Johnson, a financial advisor at Johnson Bender & Co., saw the potential for the lunch to do great things for the Houston Aggie community. Dean envisioned a way to recognize Aggies for achieving great things as entrepreneurs, leaders of large companies, and civil service. A marketer by nature, Dean put together a dream team list of speakers for the event and sent out invitations. A funny thing soon happened. They all said “yes.”

As 2014 began, many high profile presenters, including Bruce Broussard '84, CEO of Humana, and Greg Garland '80, CEO of Phillips 66, along with entrepreneurs like Jon Weismann '00, President of Comflow Mechanical Services, Ross Morel '10 of Frogslayer LLC., and Glen Hart '78 of Laredo Energy, clambered for positions on the Traditions Lunch calendar. The Traditions Lunch now provides a way to not only hear from Aggie industry experts, but also gives Aggies the chance to make contacts in some of Houston's highest profile companies.

After his initial shock at the positive response wore off, Dean realized that every one of these Aggies shares the same love for Texas A&M and that is why these great leaders give their time to make the Traditions Lunch a success. Says Dean:



“I can’t imagine the amount of pride someone must feel when receiving an invitation to speak to the Houston A&M Club. No matter how much we achieve in our professional lives, being recognized by Texas A&M or an A&M Club will always be a humbling experience.”

Dean’s biggest goal as Chair of the Traditions Lunch is to provide a great networking experience for all those attending. The Lunch is a great opportunity for Aggies to meet, ask questions of, and shake hands with some amazing Aggie leaders. The HAMC encourages current students to attend so that they can learn how to better network with former students, while learning about potential future employers directly from their C level executives.

The Traditions Lunch offers current and former students the ability to benefit directly from the Aggie Network. We understand that weekday lunches are difficult to fit into a busy schedule, but we encourage you to watch the schedule. We think you’ll find several speakers who will benefit you and your career.

## MARCH

03	Dr. Pamela Plotkin '89	Director of the Texas Sea Grant Program TAMU
10	Jake Donaldson '04	Three Square Design Group, Founder & CEO
17	John Rynd '79	Hercules Offshore, CEO
19	Scott McDonald	Assistant Vice President for Academic Services and Director of Admissions
24	David Baggett '81, John Vanderhider '81, Matt Flanagan '90	Opportune LLP, Founders
31	Ross Morel '10	FrogSlayer LLC, Founder & CEO

## APRIL

07	Nathan Murphy '96	Rosetta Resources SVP & General Council
14	Dennis Seith '79	INEOS Olefins & Polymers USA, CEO
21	Brian Green	Houston Food Bank, CEO

## APRIL

28	Glen Hart '78	Laredo Energy Founder & CEO
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## MAY

05	Mark E. Ellis '79	Linn Energy, CEO
12	John Schiller Jr. '81	Energy XXI, CEO & Founder
19	Greg Garland '80	Phillips 66, CEO
26	Sheri Foreman Elder '85	Houston Center for Literacy, CEO

## JUNE

02	Dr. Joseph Newton	Texas A&M College of Science, Dean
09	Fred Caldwell '82	Caldwell Companies, Founder & CEO
16	Joe Tortorice '70	Jason's Deli Founder & CEO
23	Rebecca Olvera	CAMP (Caring Aggies Mentoring Program)



# First Round for Three Aggies

With three Aggies expected to be taken in the first round of the upcoming NFL Draft, one can argue that the spotlight has never been brighter for Aggie Football than it is right now.

With Johnny Manziel, Jake Matthews, and Mike Evans all projected as top 15 selections this year, they join an elite class of A&M first round draft picks:

2013 – Luke Joeckel (JAX)  
2012 – Ryan Tannehill (MIA)  
2011 – Von Miller (DEN)  
2003 – Ty Warren  
2003 – Sammy Davis

The 2014 NFL Draft will take place May 8-10 in New York City and be televised on both the NFL Network and ESPN. Plan to join the Houston Aggies for our Watch Party.



Photo Credit: AggieAthletics



By Brandon Hamburg. Follow @Spadilly

## Everything's BIGGER in Aggieland



When the gates open at Kyle Field this fall, fans will be treated to the largest video board in college football. The new video board, built by Daktronics, will measure 47-feet tall by 163-feet wide (7,661 square-feet), almost twice the size of the previous video board. It will also be the first display at the college level to feature 1080 resolution.

Daktronics will also be installing two auxiliary displays, one in each corner at the north end of Kyle Field. Each display will feature a 15 HD pixel layout and measure 36 feet high by 54 feet wide.

For more info on the Kyle Field renovations, check out <http://www.kylefield.com>.

Photo Credit: AggieAthletics



# An Aggie Abroad: Cambodia

A few weeks ago, Jeremy, Ben, and I traveled north from Singapore to Siemp Reap, Cambodia, to “live” among the locals for a long weekend. We co-existed with the locals, visited 13th century ruins, ate native food, learned about their culture and daily life, and returned to our hotel each day grateful for what we have – each evening we retired to an air-conditioned room, with clean drinking water and a comfortable bed.

Cambodia is the 70th most populous country in the world, with a population of over 14.8 million people and a growing economy in textiles, agriculture, construction and tourism. In terms of human development, however, it is among the lowest in the world. A fact we saw firsthand when visiting the floating village of Kompong Phluk, where homes are built on stilts to weather the floods experienced six months out of every year. Floods that provide the fish and shrimp the locals catch and sell. Other villagers work the nearby rice paddies or drive boats carrying visiting tourists like us.

We tried to capture the way Cambodian villagers live through our camera’s lens. As we stepped off the boat in the dry season, a wedding ceremony was about to take place; the villagers gathered to witness the celebration. Nearby, we happened upon a group of children learning English words and others playing outside.

Villages like Kompong Phluk are the poorest in Cambodia. Due to poor personal hygiene and sanitation, life expectancy here is low and education usually ends with elementary school. Although education is free in Cambodia, many families choose not to send their children to school because they can’t afford to buy the reading material, school supplies and uniforms. Additionally, child beggars contribute to the household income.

Our guides spoke of government corruption (living under one party’s rule for over 25 years), where villagers receive little government assistance, the education system is heavily decentralized, and opposition has often led to imprisonment and death at the hands of Prime Minister Hun Sen and his party. Cambodians are given little opportunity to progress in life and continue to live as third-world citizens while the government reaps the rewards of its growing economy.

Another day, we visited the Cambodia Landmine Museum and School established by Aki Ra, a former Khmer Rouge Army child soldier. Formed in 1968 and the ruling party from 1975 to 1979, the Khmer Rouge was an ally of communist North Vietnam and was responsible for the genocide of millions of Cambodians during that time.

Years later, Aki Ra devotes his life to removing landmines in the villages where he once laid them. His organization has removed thousands of mines, but many still remain and are often set off by passing farmers and children. He opened a home for those affected by landmines and at-risk village children, many of them orphans and amputees from detonated landmines. Thanks to private donations, Ra’s students receive free education and materials.\*

Later, we visited the magnificent ruins of Angkor, the largest pre-industrial city of the 12th Century. It would take at least two days to see all of the temples, so we chose the most well-preserved, the ruins of Angkor Wat, Prasat Bayon, and Ta Prohm.







Angkor Wat is the most widely known Cambodian temple, as well as the best preserved. It was the largest we visited and beautiful to see still standing. Angkor Wat's central towers represent the homes of the gods and each has a Hindu cosmological significance.

Prasat Bayon is known as the Temple of Faces. Its massive stone faces are assumed to be representations of King Jayavarman VII, but were later modified by the Khmer Empire. It was absolutely magnificent to see.

Lastly, we visited Ta Prohm, where parts of Tomb Raider were filmed. This temple was built to honor the family of King Jayavarman VII. It is set within the jungle and large trees grow out of the ruins. As we walked through halls and peered out of windows, we imagined what would have been seen at the time when life filled the temple. We watched our one-year-old son run across the open courts and admired the beautiful work carved by hand – statues of Buddha, Vishnu, and other gods.

Our trip was a short one, but we were able to capture the essence of Cambodia. The people we met humbled us. They were welcoming and grateful for the small donations we made. The temple ruins were beautiful, and we left with a permanent memory of our experience. I hope that in the near future, the government party changes and the leaders work to increase the quality of life of the Cambodian people.

I hope you enjoy reading about our adventures. Stay tuned for an article on Vietnam!

*Written by Adriana Dean*



**\*If you'd like to help, donate to The Landmine Relief Fund (LMRF) at [www.landmine-relief-fund.org](http://www.landmine-relief-fund.org).**



# Remembering the SWC: Jamie (Spychalski) Nielsen '99

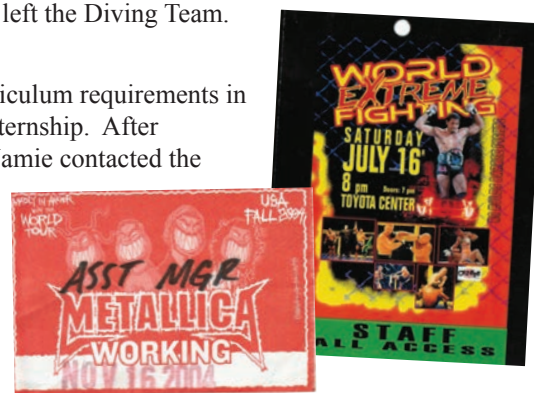
**A**s Texas A&M continues to thrive and grow in the SEC, let's take a moment to remember a time not so long ago, when in the last year of the Southwest Conference's 82 year history, a lowly freshman became the first and only female Aggie diver ever to win a SWC diving event.

"There was no pressure of anyone saying you have to get first. . . I just tried to stay relaxed and do my best." Her "best" put Jamie 27 points ahead of second place. According to Coach Kevin Wright, Jamie wasn't convinced that tower diving was her strength. "But she persevered and got through the days of being tired, and it finally paid off. . . This is something she'll be able to carry with her throughout her life."\* Jamie's perseverance has helped her navigate a career that many envy.

In 1995, the TAMU Swimming & Diving program recruited Jamie (Spychalski) Nielsen '99 to compete for the Aggies. Jamie accepted an A&M Athletic Scholarship, and along with her twin sister and toughest competitor, Jennifer, moved to College Station. As a freshman, Jamie competed in the NCAA Championships placing 8th in the 10 meter platform competition and becoming the first of only two female Aggies to earn All American Honors. To this day, Jamie still holds A&M's second highest all time top diving score for 12 dives.

Winning came easily to Jamie, but choosing a major seemed like something best left for another day. Then, one day at the pool during her sophomore year, the answer came. Jamie's love of athletics made her wonder what exactly can a body handle and recover from? A career in Athletic Training beckoned. But alas, it was not to be, as Jamie was quickly informed that her dive training schedule would not permit her to volunteer the required hours with one of A&M's athletic teams. Luckily, a new major appeared on the scene: Sports Management, with classes similar to those for Athletic Training. This was the right place for Jamie to showcase her athletic interests. Once the major was chosen, however, Jamie faced her toughest choice yet: focus on school or athletics? She knew her time as an Aggie diver was over, and with a heavy heart, Jamie left the Diving Team.

Jamie completed the Sports Management curriculum requirements in the fall of 1998, and dove into her full time internship. After looking at the "list of approved internships," Jamie contacted the Houston Rockets. Sydney Greenblatt, then Vice President of Marketing at the Compaq Center, took Jamie's call, but informed her that this internship was not actually with the Rockets, but the Compaq Center, responsible for ALL non-Rocket events, including The



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Harlem Globetrotters, Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus, Sesame Street, concerts, and so much more. Despite being “unpaid,” the position offered the most amazing and educational experiences on Earth. At the end of the semester, Greenblatt offered Jamie a full-time position, and within one year, she was promoted to Marketing Manager.

In 2003, the Compaq Center closed, and Jamie transitioned to Marketing Manager for the brand new Toyota Center. Three years later, the Toyota Center was up and running smoothly, so Jamie took on the WWE. That’s right! World Wrestling Entertainment.

Working for WWE allowed Jamie to travel around the world, seeing the sites of England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, and France, and meeting and befriending past and present WWE Superstars. Most importantly, however, the position allowed Jamie to work from her Houston home, convenient for a first-time mom. Jamie and her amazing husband Allen welcomed Travis on 31 January 2006.

Jamie’s second child, Brooklyn, joined the family in 2011, and working from home continued to provide the best of all worlds. Jamie had her family close, but still had the career she craved. Sadly, all good things must come to an end, and Jamie was eventually asked to relocate to Atlanta, a move that simply wouldn’t work for her family.

Luckily, Jamie’s former Toyota Center boss, Andrea Young, had taken over the top spot at Sam Houston Race Park, and Jamie became SHRP’s Director of Marketing in September 2013. Today, Jamie is making sure that Houston knows all about the 2014 Live Racing Season that kicked off on January 17th. Jamie, not only markets horse racing, but promotional days like the Chinese New Year Celebration, Food Truck Day, Wiener Dog Races, Camel & Ostrich Races, and the upcoming post-race concert season following Quarter Horse racing in March and April. Be sure to visit Jamie at SHRP before the season ends in May. Who knows what other exciting things she’ll be doing next!



\* A&M Hosts Final SWC Swimming & Diving Championships; Zwerneman, Brent; Sports Hotline, Vol 13, No. 2, Feb. 22, 1996.



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# AGGIE NEWS

Photo by Laura Squire Photography | <http://laurasquirephotography.com/>



Congratulations to Nicholas & Carrie (Greene) '01 Conner! Nick and Carrie were married on 1/4/14 in Cypress, Texas. Carrie is currently serving on the HAMC Board of Directors and has been an active volunteer with the club for the past 11 years, primarily with Houston A&M Coach's Night, Aggie Muster, and the Houston Food Bank. Nick is a Louisiana Tech alum, loves attending Aggie football games with his wife, and has volunteered at HAMC events over the last few years. Best wishes and gig 'em!



Oscar and Nicole (Castro) '03 Terrazas celebrated her 10 year reunion with their new son, Dominic Bane Terrazas, born on August 24, 2013 at 8lbs 9oz and 21" long.



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# HAMC PRESIDENT ELECT

**"I have seen the future, and it works"**

- Lincoln Steffens (April 6, 1866 – August 9, 1936)



On a sunny day in 2000, Julie Williams '04 took her first step onto the hallowed ground of Aggieland, leaving Beaumont just a memory on the horizon. Just four short years and a few beers later, Julie received a B.B.A. in Management with a Minor in Psychology and was ready to take on the world.

Julie hit the road and headed to Florida, where she spent the next 8 years working, playing, and getting an MBA from the University of Central Florida in 2010. (insert horse laugh here...). Upon arriving, Julie took advantage of the Aggie Network, locating Aggies in the area with similar with similar backgrounds.

Julie was soon elected President of the Texas Aggie Club of Northeast Florida in Jacksonville, where she served for two years before moving to Orlando. Not long after moving, Julie connected with her fellow Central Florida Texas A&M Club members to enjoy Aggie Football watch parties and served as President from 2010-2012 and Muster Chair in 2012.

When she returned to Texas in 2013, she predictably logged onto the HAMC website to see where she could meet some local Aggies and build new friendships in her new city. After only a few happy hour events, Houston already felt more like home. So much so, that after just a few weeks in Houston, Julie agreed to chair the HAMC's Coach's Night 2013, the Club's largest fundraiser to date with over 1200 Aggies in attendance.



Julie has continued to be very active in the HAMC, hosting our first annual Crawfish Boil last spring (and the 2nd this March), founding the Backyard Breakfast Club (1st Saturday of the Month), and stepping in as Board Secretary when a vacancy occurred. Not satisfied with staying still, Julie accepted the challenge of chairing Coach's Night 2014 while learning the ropes as President-Elect.

In her spare time, Julie works as a Project Manager for PrimeSys, LP.

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# Aggie Mom Charm

**My mother had a great deal of trouble with me, but I think she enjoyed it.**  
**- Mark Twain**

**O**n Saturday, February 8th, the Houston Aggie Moms Club held their annual “Crazy Auction” fundraiser at the H.E.S.S. Club. Master of Ceremonies, KTRK Channel 13 Sports Director Greg Bailey '90, was joined by over 185 Aggies, Aggie Moms, and Aggie Friends.

Each year, the Aggie Moms raise funds to support scholarships and, new this year, to fund a Global Studies Endowment to help our Aggies gain valuable experience that employers seek. Proceeds from the event will also benefit the Libraries at College Station and Galveston, as well as the many student groups that make up life in Aggieland, including the Student Counseling Center, Carpool, and The Big Event to name just a few.

Remember The Big Event? Yes! No? Either way, you won't want to miss the upcoming March 20th meeting, which will focus on “The Big Event,” the largest student run “Day of Service” in the country. Hear the latest from the student co-chairs and learn how you can be a part of this special day.

The Moms are also gearing up for Parents' Weekend in College Station – April 11-13th – where they will be selling items at the Aggie Mom Boutique in the MSC. Don't miss your chance to pick up the new Aggie Mom Charm for your Aggie Mom! In true “mom” fashion, each year, the Houston Aggie Moms award the George P.F. Jouine '07 Award to the Corps of Cadets unit with the highest GPA.

On May 8th, the Moms will announce their 2014-15 Scholarship recipients, welcome new President Naomi Miller and her incoming Board, and honor our Moms of Senior Students with a commemorative gift. Then these hard-working Aggie Moms will take the summer off to recuperate and come back refreshed, ready for another round in the Fall.

It's not too late to join us, we love meeting new Aggie Moms! Even if you're not an Aggie Mom, you know an Aggie Mom. Show your support for your Aggie Mom by supporting our Aggie Moms. For more information, go to <https://houstonaggiemoms.aggienetwork.com>.



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# Miss Cy-Fair



**C**ongratulations to Callie Thompson '12, who was recently named Miss Cy-Fair Houston 2014. Callie's personal platform is "Living without Limitations: Moving Beyond Your Own Challenge". Callie hopes to encourage children in Cy-Fair and throughout Texas to live without limitations and move beyond their own personal challenges so that they can pursue their own dreams and passions.

Callie earned her bachelor's degree from Texas A&M University's Mays Business School and plans to earn a Master of Science in Human Services with a concentration in Organizational Management and Leadership.



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Come together with fellow Aggies to watch as Johnny Manziel, Mike Evans, Jake Matthews, Ben Malena and 37 other members of our Aggie family compete in the NFL Draft! The first round starts at 7, with the Houston Texans getting first pick!

**Thursday, May 8**  
**Cottonwood**  
**3422 N Shepherd Dr**

Registration will open April 16  
Contact Shane Frazier '98:  
shane.frazier@aggienetwork.com



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# HOUSTON AGGIE EVENTS

## BREAKFASTS & LUNCHES



### EVERY MONDAY

Traditions Lunch  
H.E.S.S. Club, 5430 Westheimer Road  
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM



### SECOND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH

Aggie Women's Lunch  
Maggiano's Little Italy, 2019 Post Oak Blvd  
12:00 PM



### FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

Downtown Lunch  
Artista Restaurant, 800 Bagby Street  
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM



### THIRD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

The Woodlands Lunch  
Americas, 21 Waterway Avenue  
12:00 PM



### EVERY THURSDAY

Reveille Club Breakfast  
Cafe Express, 1101 Uptown Park  
6:30 AM - 8:00 PM

### FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH

HAMC Breakfast Club  
The Backyard Grill, 9453 Jones Road  
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

## VOLUNTEER & ACTIVITIES



### FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH

Houston Food Bank Volunteering  
535 Portwall Street  
6:00 PM - 8:30 PM



### THIRD THURSDAY OF MOST MONTHS

Houston Aggie Mom's Meeting  
Church of Christ, 1910 Bering Drive  
6:30 PM - [houstonaggiemoms.aggienetwork.com](http://houstonaggiemoms.aggienetwork.com)

## HAPPY HOURS



### THIRD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

Cypress Happy Hour  
Cork Cafe, 25712 NW Freeway, Suite C  
6:30 PM



### SECOND THURSDAY OF THE MONTH

The Woodlands Happy Hour  
The Refuge Bar & Bistro, 24 Waterway Ave  
4:45 PM



### SECOND THURSDAY OF THE MONTH

Ol' Army Cocktail Hour  
Cottonwood, 3411 N Shepherd Dr  
5:30 PM



### LAST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH

HOWDY Club Happy Hour  
Locations on [howdyclub.com](http://howdyclub.com)  
5:30 PM



### THIRD WEDNESDAY OF ODD MONTH

WH3OP! Happy Hour  
Locations on [wh30phouston.com](http://wh30phouston.com)  
5:30 PM

## NEW EVENTS



### MONDAY, APRIL 21, 2014

AGGIE MUSTER  
details on [www.houstonags.org](http://www.houstonags.org)

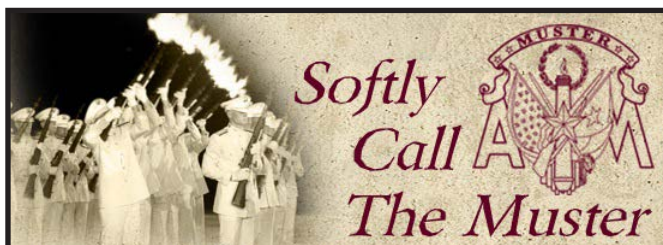
### SUNDAY, MAY 4, 2014

iFest  
Volunteer info on [www.houstonags.org](http://www.houstonags.org)



### Sunday, May 4th

**iFest is going down under!  
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Houston A&M Club.**



## MONDAY, APRIL 21ST

**INFORMATION COMING SOON  
ON [WWW.HOUSTONAGS.ORG](http://WWW.HOUSTONAGS.ORG)**

# HOUSTON AGGIE

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