Greetings from Erin...

Howdy Ags!

Can you believe that we have passed the mid-point of the semester already? Pre-registration for spring classes begins in a couple of weeks and finals (yes, finals) will begin shortly after that. As the crunch time begins, take a moment to reflect on the impact you have made on the campus community this year. If you haven’t had the opportunity to give something back yet, there are plenty of opportunities to do so. Log on to http://studentactivities.tamu.edu/online/aggieserve/ for ideas.

Until next month, thanks and Gig’em!

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Dates to Remember!

4/1 Fall/Academic Year Study Abroad Scholarship Deadline
4/2 Last RSO General Meeting
4/20 Aggie Relay for Life
4/21 Aggie Muster

AGGIE MUSTER
“Softly call the Muster, let comrade answer ‘Here’…”
April 21, 2012
Flag Raising Ceremony – Academic Plaza – 9:00am
Camaraderie BBQ – Memorial Student Center – 11:00am-2:00pm
Reflections Display – Rudder Exhibit Hall
   Thursday, April 19th from 10:00am-4:00pm
   Friday, April 20th from 10:00am-4:00pm
   Saturday, April 21st, from 10:00am-3:00pm
Campus Muster Ceremony & Roll Call for the Absent – Reed Arena – 7:00pm
http://muster.tamu.edu

2012 BRAZOS VALLEY EARTH DAY EVENT

April 21, 2012 at Wolf Pen Creek
11:00am-7:00pm
FUN FREE EVENT!
• Live music, including a free concert featuring Vocal Trash
• Environmental Education Displays/Demonstrations
• Free snacks, refreshments, and more!
http://brazosvalleyearthday.com

AGGIE PALs

Aggie Pals are Regents’ Scholars who commit to handwriting letters to their fourth grade pen pals for one academic school year and meet their pal during the Spring semester during their annual visit to Texas A&M University.

If you are ready to share knowledge about higher education to students whose home environment most likely resembles a Regents’ Scholar’s, then please contact Aisiya Bhura at aisiyabhura@exchange.tamu.edu for an application.
Earth Day first began in the United States in 1970. This celebration was started by United States Senator Gaylord Nelson on April 22, 1970.

April 22 was selected because of its location in the year. The day was originally meant to be an educational day, so Nelson wanted to ensure that college students were going to be in session during this day. He felt that more people would be reached if they were in class during this time.

Controversy immediately surrounded this day because it also happened to be the birthday of Vladimir Lenin. Nelson denied these accusations, but controversy still surrounds this coincidence.

Earth Day Then and Now

On the very first Earth Day, New York City decided to get involved by shutting down 5th Avenue as well as utilizing Central Park as the central area for celebrating. It was estimated that nearly one million people participated in New York City alone. Since New York City was the headquarters of all of the major news media, the very first Earth Day was highly publicized.

In Philadelphia, Earth Week was created because of the very first Earth Day. The first group of people felt that devoting only one day to environmental awareness would not be enough time to have any actual impact on the planet. Instead, they held an entire week of events. This initial celebration was so popular that it immediately became a national holiday.

1990 marked the 20th celebration of Earth Day. This celebration was much better publicized and as a result, more people participated. This year’s activities created a big boost towards worldwide recycling efforts. This was also the year that Earth Day went worldwide.

Earth Day is now celebrated in over 100 countries across the globe. Through the years Earth Day evolved and many different organizations were formed including Earth Day USA which helped organize Earth Day events throughout the United States. Earth Day 2000 marked the first year that the day was organized primarily through the use of the internet. The internet allowed for better networking, and as a result thousands of activists were allowed to interact with one another and create a more organized event.

Earth Day around the World

Earth Day events occur all across the globe. These events are meant to inspire not only the countries they are held in, but also people all over the world.

In Thailand, Monks from all across the country gather and participate in a mass meditation ceremony. This ceremony is meant to encourage world peace through creating inner peace among the group.

In Canada, Earth Day is actually celebrated all year by multiple wildlife parks promoting better environmental practices.

In Spain, a festival is held each year that only uses eco-friendly products. During this festival attendees are able to celebrate through food and dancing. They are also educated on new ways to protect the environment.

In Bulgaria, a world energy forum is held. This forum is attended by leaders from all over the world.

Costa Rica combined Twitter and Earth Day creating an event called Twearth day. During Twarth day followers are able to follow events that are happening in the jungles of Costa Rica all week.

Regardless of where you might live, you can create your own Earth Day events as well. Just research the different events that are going on in the world around you.

Adapted from http://earthday-2011.com/earth-day-history
5 WAYS TO GO GREEN

1. Save Energy
To save energy there are several steps that you can take. The first is to lower your thermostat. Just lower the thermostat a few degrees in the winter and raise it a few degrees in the summer. Just a few degrees will lower your heating or cooling costs all year as well as conserving your energy. Another way to conserve energy is to switch your light bulbs from incandescent to compact fluorescent light bulbs. Although initially these bulbs are slightly more expensive than standard light bulbs, they will save you money in the long run. Another way to save energy is to unplug unused appliances. Although you do not realize it, even plugged in appliances (such as cell phone chargers) that are not turned on use energy and drive up your electricity costs.

2. Save Water
This is another easy way to not only go green, but also to save money. Just reduce your shower times a few minutes each day. Install low flow shower heads to reduce the amount of wasted water that flows through the shower head while you take a shower. Turn off the faucet when you are not using it such as when you are brushing your teeth, or when you are lathering your hands and face. Just turning the faucet off during these times will conserve water and energy.

3. Conserve Gas
This method of going green will more than likely save you the most money. Walk or ride your bike when you can. Carpool with others to reduce gas consumption or ride the TAMU bus.

4. Don’t Use Bottled Water
Although bottled water is much easier to use, it is very bad for the environment. It takes hundreds of years for the plastic in bottled water to decompose. This plastic is also only able to be recycled once (unlike aluminum). Instead, purchase a water filter pitcher for your dorm or apartment and use a reusable aluminum water container. These containers are stylish and come in a variety of styles and sizes.

5. Don’t Waste your Electronics
Even though the newest cell phone just came out, it does not mean that you need to run out and purchase it leaving your perfectly good phone in the garbage. Once you get a new phone, donate your phone or old computer to a group that accepts them. If you cannot find one, just search for one on the internet. Electronic waste has started presenting numerous problems to our environment including Mercury contamination.

With these easy ways to go green, you will save the environment while saving a little money.

Adapted from http://earthday-2011.com/earth-day-ideas-5-ways-to-go-green

CAMPUS CULTURAL SPOTLIGHT

TEXAS A&M SPORTS MUSEUM

Hours of Operation:
Monday-Friday :: 9am - 5pm
Saturday :: 9am - Kick-off (Football Home Games Only)

No school can match the athletic traditions of Texas A&M University. The superior athletes together with the famous Aggie Spirit combine to tell a story that is one of the most exciting and compelling in the nation.

The tradition of the 12th Man, the excitement of Kyle Field, the revelry of the historic Aggie Bonfire, and the resounding yells of the student body will come to life in a sports museum unlike any other in the nation.

It is fitting, too, that the new museum is located in the Bernard C. Richardson Zone at Kyle Field. The story of A&M’s men’s and women’s varsity sports is presented using photos, film, artifacts and computer databases for interactive displays for all visitors to the campus to enjoy free of charge.

The Texas A&M Sports Museum has the distinction of being the nation’s only all-sports museum funded primarily by former athletes.

“This is a wonderful opportunity for all Lettermen to honor their teammates who deserve special recognition in a space such as the Sports Museum of Texas A&M University,” said Jim Singleton, Museum Committee Chairman.

When visitors enter the “Zone” they will step into a large lobby area, shared by both the museum and the 12th Man Foundation, that will feature rotating exhibits focusing on sports at Texas A&M University. From the lobby, visitors will enter the museum. First, they are greeted with the Spirit of Aggieland including a donor wall and introductory exhibits to the Sports Museum. Visitors will experience several different exhibits in the Museum including the Timewall, Legends Gallery, Sport-by-Sport Perimeter Displays, and Interactive Computers.

Adapted from http://www.aggieathletics.com
ECO-FRIENDLY CLEANING ON THE CHEAP

I don’t know about you, but I’m always on the lookout for a way to save a buck, and live a little healthier, so when I found out about these super cheap and easy ways to clean up your place while still being friendly to Mother Earth, I was pretty excited!

So next time you’re thinking about cleaning up your place, try out these inexpensive green-cleaning ideas. They’re healthier for your body, your bank account, and the environment!

Ingredients

Yes, you can go shell out 4 bucks for the commercial green-clean spray stuff, or you can really go green (and keep some green in your wallet!) by grabbing this stuff:

• Dish soap - Usually both cheap and mild, dish soap is great in the kitchen. Besides dish washing, you can use it diluted to clean counters, or more concentrated to cut grease.
• Vinegar - I am amazed by how awesome vinegar is. It is inexpensive, but it disinfects, shines, and cleans. It can even eat through soap scum and hard water, the stuff you usually have to scrub at forever to clean up!
• Baking soda - Not only is this great for scrubbing when mixed with a little warm water, it can also be used alone to tame unruly smells.
• Salt - So cheap, but great for scrubbing. See below.

(Remember to keep this stuff separate from your cooking-grade products of the same kind, though, just for sanitation’s sake)

Cleaning

Below are a few examples of how you can use the ingredients above to get your green-cleaning done.

• Toilet - Flush so the water level goes a little lower, and then pour undiluted vinegar around the rim. Scrub, flush again, and you’re done.
• Sink/Tub/Shower - For basic cleaning, you can use some vinegar again. If you need to scour away hard water stains or soap scum, try mixing 1/4 cup salt with 2 tablespoons of vinegar, and scrub away.
• Hard Floors - If you have linoleum, you can use a diluted vinegar mixture. Just pour a little vinegar in a bowl or the sink, dilute with water, and mop. You don’t need much vinegar to get the job done.
• Carpet - If your carpet smells a little funky from the pizza your roomie left under the bed for six weeks, fear not—sprinkle some baking soda over the spot, let it rest a minute, and then vacuum it up!
• Smells - Set a little cup or bowl of baking soda in any room or closet with a weird smell. It absorbs nasty smells. Just remember to rotate fresh baking soda in when it becomes less effective.

Howdy!

The MSC is opening on April 21st! For those of you who have never been inside the MSC, it may just seem like another building on campus… that happens to be amazing, with its spacious meeting rooms, student life, and Aggie Nights. For those of us who have toured its secret passageways; or eaten at Rumors, 12th Man Café, and the Hullabaloo; or studied and met up with new friends in the flag room every night; it will be another experience.

Advantages I see for the upcoming school year? More rooms and more room. I joined the Regents’ Scholars Organization (RSO) my first year here (way back in August 2008) and we met up at the MSC rooms for almost every meeting. It was fun and easy to just walk up to the MSC and find the meeting room to hang out with my RSO buddies but then I joined the RSO Executive Board—we had to book rooms a semester in advance, only to realize that we were too late. We ended up with the latest time slots in the smallest rooms all because we didn’t book rooms within the first 3 hours that room reservation was available online; because the MSC was closed, we were in deep waters, drowning in the pool of sorrow that was made of polluted rain drops of the MSC room reservation service. Fortunately, RSO survived and will prosper even more with the MSC’s reopening because Regents’ Scholars all over campus will know that if RSO was amazing this year, it’ll be even more fantastic when they have rooms reserved at the renovated MSC, with its spacious rooms and brightly lit halls. Perhaps next year, RSO can hold a dance at the grand ballroom for all Regents’ Scholars to hang out with each other just because there happens to be a ballroom there. Though RSO didn’t use the MSC for a dance during my first year, we still had our fair share of fun; during reading days in the fall semester, RSO members quietly crept into the flag room to see a mini stage set up in front of the decorated Christmas tree… we took out our pillows at 5:00pm and started pillow-fighting! Was it worth the bruises? Well, we discussed that over dinner at the 12th Man Café, which will now be called Rev’s Diner.

Furthermore, the MSC isn’t just for organizations; it can be used for the arts as well. I remember my first year was full of performances by the Singing Cadets in the flag room the Friday before football games and that’s where my friends and I hung out to watch some performances after class. Throughout the day though, students would play the piano in the flag room. During my 4-hour break between classes, I sat in the flag room, waiting for people to play the piano. Almost every day, Journey Guy came to play “Don’t Stop Believing.” As soon as he walked in, he sat at the piano and played the song while singing in his high voice, imitating the original song. Another time, one guy started playing One Republic’s “It’s Too Late to Apologize,” attracting another guy, who banged the piano top to play the drum portion of the song. When the singing part came… another guy stood there singing the whole song and they jammed together, entertaining everyone in the flag room. Other random musical performances occurred, like a local band called Strawberry Jam playing one of their songs and passing out their fliers to everyone who passed by, while Aggie Nights scheduled free karaoke, game nights, and Salsa competitions Friday nights, using the flag room as the raffle drawing room. I went with RSO a couple times and we were one number away from getting the raffle! We had so much fun, and now that the flag room will have more room in it, more people will be able to enjoy all that it has to offer.

Students help make the MSC what it is and one way is by submitting their artwork for display in the Stark Galleries. Every time I went in, I saw something different; there was toilet with garden growing out of it; a cook book that I had to handle with gloves they provided; and a display where I had to sit on a couch and watch colors on the wall. It was strange. But I had fun going through all the displays and artwork and revisiting them with my friends. During the MSC Open House, student organizations would set up tables all around the MSC and people went to each table, picking up whatever goodies they had and stopping to listen to members talk about their experiences. I was hooked when RSO did that my first year; they answered all my questions and there was so much room in the MSC that they didn’t have to scream out their answers; people could even pass each other without constantly saying sorry for bumping into each other. I joined RSO and SWAMP (ScreenWriting, Acting and Movie Production Club) my first year; while RSO held meetings and socials at the MSC, SWAMP used the MSC hallways to shoot videos. I actually shot a video in a long, white hallway with several locked doors and when I was asked to describe my movie in one word, I said, “Psychological.” The MSC made my movie what it was because if it hadn’t been for those specific hallways, the movie would have been a disaster. Luckily, the MSC contributed to the success of my movie with SWAMP and my social life with RSO.

Why am I praising the MSC? The point of this whole article is that you should make your own memories. Some of these things happened because it was by chance whereas other memories happened because I took the initiative to go there or join something. I scheduled my friends into my calendar so we could catch up on each other’s lives while eating a burger downstairs or I chose the MSC as my relaxation spot so I could listen to people playing the Amelie theme song during prime piano playing time. The MSC has so much to offer and I took advantage of as much of it as I could and I will again once it reopens. I took off my hat whenever I walked in and I never stepped on the MSC grass. I attended some events in Rudder Fountain Plaza and participated during election time to hold up signs for one of the Student Body President candidates. What more is there to do? We’ll find out together.

Asiya Bhura
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