

Something amazing happened this past week, but in order to understand it, you must first understand how important an Aggie Ring is to those who wear them. When you first get to A&M, one of the first traditions that you typically learn about is the Aggie Ring. For undergraduate students to get their ring they must first pass 90 credit hours, 45 of which must be obtained within the A&M system. Earning their Aggie Ring is a huge goal that almost every Aggie share. Once they meet their goal, there is a ceremony where qualified Aggies are presented with their class ring and it is a huge event.

Many people may think that it is like any other class ring and rather unimportant, but the truly neat thing is the symbolism that is built into the ring, and more importantly the family that it represents. The Aggie Family is truly one of the most amazing phenomena that I have ever experienced. If I spot someone with an Aggie Ring, I know that I can go up to them and have an instant connection, and it does and has worked both ways. I've experienced this in situations ranging from going into a copy shop in Galveston to coming into Port of Houston on the bridge of a ship. The Aggie Ring is used as the symbol of the Association of Former Students for Texas A&M University. The Association of Former Students is a massive organization, consisting of over 500,000 current members, that every Aggie is a member of from the moment they take their first class. It is dedicated to its members and to the future of the school.

About a month ago, I was at 8-mile beach, celebrating the completion of Big Event (a large service project held every year in the spring) with some of my fellow Company Commanders from the Maritime Academy, when my ring slipped off my finger. It has always been sized too big and I didn't notice until I got back to school that it was gone. I searched for a long while over multiple trips and found nothing. I truly thought that I would never see my ring again.

Last Monday I received a call from Mr. Scott Pearse, a Galveston College employee, saying he had found my ring while treasure hunting along the beach with his metal detector. Mr. Pearse really enjoys hunting for all sorts of objects along the beach in Galveston and takes delight in returning people's lost treasures, such as rings and wedding bands. He says that he has found 10 class rings over the years and always tries to get the rings back to their owners. He told me that he believes that it is the right thing to do. In the state of Texas, it is illegal to pawn or melt down a piece of jewelry that has someone's name engraved on it without providing positive consent from the person whose name is engraved on it. With that being said, I am sure it would be possible to melt down rings yourself or find someone who is less than honest to purchase these items. Despite the facts, the thought never crossed my mind of Mr. Scott Pearse and I am grateful to him for returning my ring.

Not only does my ring represent my commitment to graduate this December, or the great things that I have accomplished at A&M so far, but it also represents my memories both good and bad. From times of hanging out with good friends, to hard times at sea where it served as a constant reminder that I was part of the Fightin' Texas Aggies Class of 2019. I would be damned if I would let my sea project come between me and graduating in December 2019.

Words cannot express my gratitude towards Mr. Pearse and the world truly needs more honest people like him who are committed to doing the right thing!

Thanks, and Gig Em',  
Matthew R Miller  
Fightin' Texas Aggie Class of 2019