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THE NAUTILUS

Serving Texas A&M University at Galveston since 1972

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Galveston celebrates 113th Mardi Gras



Photo by Sean Chavez, '24

MARDIS GRAS ON PG. 3

2 Bryan Museum prepares for Mardi Gras with mask-making workshop



Photo by Gail Lonngi, '24

By Gail Lonngi, '24

Galveston's Mardi Gras celebration is the largest of its kind in Texas, and is among Galveston's largest yearly celebrations.

In preparation for the island's 113th Mardi Gras, the Bryan Museum invited the Galveston community on January 25 for an evening of mask-making and an early access tour of "Mardi Gras Unmasked," a special exhibit featuring various historical, artistically decorated masks.

Among the relic masks was one that dates back to the 1920s and one crafted by a Cirque du Soleil mask-maker.

President Welsh gives update on Galveston Quick-Look Assessment, visits TAMUG

By Gail Lonngi, '24

With the conclusion of the fall '23 semester, President General Ret. Mark A. Welsh, elected TAMU's 27th president on December 12th, 2023, announced the release of the much anticipated Galveston Quick-Look Assessment report. This announcement and a drafted report was shared December 11, 2023, accompanied by a request for feedback by January 5 on the Quick-Look Assessment (QLA) Team's--led by Joe Pettibon and Deborah Wright--recommendations.

Following the response period to the report and further discussion of recommendations with Vice President Colonel Michael E. Fossum, President Welsh visited TAMUG on January 23 to discuss the results of the report and the next steps. During his visit, Welsh affirmed that the purpose of this assessment was to "ensure that everybody has a voice" and that those voices were considered in making the soundest possible decisions.

The guiding criteria for making decisions based on the report's recommendations were presented as the following:

- Whether a decision makes common sense,
- How a decision raises the university's profile
- How much agreement each respective decision is met with
- How a decision would benefit students, staff, and faculty
- Whether a decision is realistically, fully executable

Welsh reiterates that "evil intentions don't exist here", and the priority of mending "orphaned duties" that have resulted from understaffing. He adds that even with the efforts that have gone into the report and the decisions based on its data, implemented changes will be re-assessed in the future to ensure their functionality and whether further

Tickets to the event were priced \$15 and \$25 for members and non-members, respectively. Though the event was geared toward an adult audience, participants of all ages were welcomed to the workshop and exhibit tour.

Mask-makers had the opportunity to choose their own mask shape and design and all supplies were provided at the activity, including feathers, sequins, markers, pencils, scissors, and painting materials.

Events like these hosted by Galveston's local businesses not only encourage people, both local and visiting, to come together and have fun while being a larger part of a well-loved and well-renowned celebration. They also play a major part in highlighting pieces of Galveston's own history and how it manifests today. They attract diverse student populations to interact with one another as well as communities outside their campuses.

"I think events like these that are really accessible to the public play a big role in the preservation of Galveston's history and traditions," attending mask-maker, Galveston Community Art student Regan L. stated. "To me, activities like this are also

a good motivation to get out of the house and have some fun every now and then at this time of year and still do art."

Regan added, "This particular one did give me a wider perspective of Mardi Gras, like, that it's more than an excuse for people to go out to get drunk over the weekends."

The art student expressed sincere thanks and appreciation to the Bryan Museum staff for making this workshop and tour a welcoming and informative experience, and they encourage fellow students to visit and look out for further events they host.

To read more about Mardi Gras on Galveston and at TAMUG, visit: <https://www.tamug.edu/mardigras/History.html>

modifications are necessary.

Upon review of the feedback provided on the drafted report and the QLA Team's suggestions, it was reportedly found that students, staff, and faculty were largely in agreement with the presented recommendations. Main areas of focus and concern in the report included TAMUG's organizational structure, student experience, communications systems, diversity, academic programs, Sea Grant Mission, the centralization of multiple campus services and facilities, structure of university libraries, and faculty affairs.

Among the more immediate changes students can expect to see are the advertising of TAMUG as the College of Marine Science and Maritime Studies, and the full transportability of recreations, parking, and dining passes between the Galveston and College Station campuses.

Other impactful decisions included: Involving Marketing and Communications (MARCOM) in continuing efforts to make communication between campuses and campus communities more transparent, direct, and efficient; a project concerning the investment of Available University Funds in TAMUG's financial needs, the creation of a Scholarships and Financial Aid position to focus on scholarship management, availability of relevant accounting information, and certification of veterans; serious efforts to make scholarships transportable between TAMUG and CSTAT campuses, and investigating how to simplify the admissions pathway for TAMUG Engineering majors.

Academic flexibility, availability, and identity were more apparent concerns among student and faculty populations. In response to these concerns, Welsh explained the following decisions and plans:

- The ultimate decision against merging the Marine Biology and Marine Science programs, but exploring how to provide anymore

MARDI GRAS (CONT.)

By Gail Lonngi, '24

Every year, during the two weeks preceding Fat Tuesday, Galveston hosts a massive celebration of Mardi Gras. This year marked Galveston's 113th Mardi Gras celebration, which included parades, parties, concerts, booths, colorful beads, extravagant costumes, and other festivities. Major Mardi Gras events on the island this year were held February 2-3 and 9-10 with Fat Tuesday on Feb. 13.

Mardi Gras today is celebrated by people from all walks of life: Long-time locals, visitors, families, friends, and students from a sundry of campuses. For many, this is a time of year to have a lively night on the town, enjoying a good and freeing time while celebrating and mingling with loved ones.

The parade, one of the main attractions, begins on Seawall Boulevard, continues into Rosenberg Avenue and ends at the Strand Historic District.

Some of the most popular participants of the parade lineup include the Golf Cart Parade, Jeep Parade, Umbrella Brigade, and Fire Truck Parade. This year, Galveston also welcomed concert headliners the Gin Blossoms, Eli Young Band, and Duelo onstage at the Strand.

During the parades, a UTMB student shared the holiday's significance to them with the *Nautilus*, saying, "Mardi Gras to me is just a time to get out, go have fun, just have a good time, you know? I mostly hang out and watch the parades."

Galveston boasts a long and famed history of celebrating Mardi Gras since the 1860's, growing from isolated masked balls into a citywide festival with a variety of themes. The holiday has become a beloved tradition of Galvestonian history, remaining the biggest Mardi Gras celebration in Texas and among the most popular in the U. S., attracting hundreds of thousands of people each year.

Over time, Mardi Gras in Galveston has adapted and evolved to become more inclusive of Galveston families. And while many traditions and the spirit of revelry has stayed vigorously alive at the annual festival, more and more attendees have begun to acknowledge Mardi Gras as a time to celebrate family, joy, gratefulness, and their local history and traditions.



4 QUICK-LOOK ASSESSMENT (CONT.)

- possible academic flexibility for students in course enrollment
- The faculty-led decision not to rename TAMUG's Liberal Studies department
- The imperative need to re-examine availability of TAMUG minors
- The highly supported decision not to relocate the CSTAT Oceanography department to TAMUG
- Ensuring consistency of access to in-person academic advising for all students

Regarding matters of diversity and equity within the university, Senate Bill 17's implementation and requirements was stated in the report, as the bill went into full effect January 1.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Welsh listed the next steps

of posting finalized report recommendations and decisions, delegating responsibilities to and informing the appropriate university offices, monitoring monthly progress reports on applied changes, and officially initiating the university capacity and student experience studies. He maintained that not all decisions are irreversibly final, and adjustments are to be made as needed in the future as changes progress.

Both President Welsh and Colonel Fossum have expressed joy and thankfulness in having overcome much tumult and change within the university in the span of just a couple of years. The university president made a point to sincerely thank the QLA Team and all TAMU community members who communicated with them, and encouraged further questions or concerns to be addressed to him.

Watch the full presentation here: <https://www.youtube.com/live/Yxz4QCu8m7A?feature=shared>

Food Recovery Network chapter's first recovery a success

By Sean Chavez, '24

A recently formed organization here on campus and starting strong is the TAMUG chapter of the Food Recovery Network. The Food Recovery Network is a nationwide student-led movement focused on both reducing food waste and combating food insecurity across the U.S. It is currently America's largest student-led movement against hunger, active at 180 campuses and in 46 states, and has been active since 2020.

The TAMUG chapter's first recovery was held the afternoon February 1, 2024 at the TAMUG. While this chapter is new, they are determined to reach great heights. They aspire to collect unused foodstuffs from different locations in and around the Galveston

campus for those in need of access to food.

The food is collected and then delivered to Galveston's local Salvation Army. The total amount of food collected on this recent first recovery was 58 pounds, which fed 70 people. The chapter hopes to retrieve around 60 pounds of food per week, which would total up to 1,000 pounds of food at the end of the semester.

Chapter founder Melton "Bubba" Nelson stated he "wants to not only not get food from on-campus events and locations, but from off-campus restaurants as well." When asked what the driving inspiration was to begin the Food Recovery Network chapter on campus, he replied with, "I saw how much food was wasted. And I felt inspired through the Aggie core values to do something."

To read more about the Food Recovery network, visit: www.foodrecoverynetwork.org.

To read more about Aggie Dining's combat against hunger, go to: <https://dineoncampus.com/tamu/combating-food-insecurity>.



Photo by Sean Chavez, '24



Valentine's Day

Dear Aggie, I'm in a long-distance relationship because my partner currently lives and works out-of-state. Valentine's is getting close and the distance has been pretty rough on us. They're going to be gone for the month and visiting isn't in the cards this year. Any advice for how we might be able to celebrate while we're away from each other? Sincerely, Hopeless Romantic.

Dear Hopeless Romantic, I'm sorry to hear you two are going through that this Valentine's season. People always try to tell you distance makes the heart grow fonder, but it isn't always easy and sometimes it really begins to take a toll.

Thankfully, nowadays, there are a lot of ways to help bridge some gaps along distances when visiting isn't possible. It might not make everything better, but it should make the distance a little more bearable, help you both find more ways to spend time on and with each other, and help make the wait more worthwhile.

For many people, a call goes a long way, especially when you've been missing your special someone's voice. In situations like these, technology has proved pretty helpful. Seeing if your partner is open to arranging a time to call may be a good idea; for instance, while you're both unwinding after a day, or if you would like to stay on the phone together while out on a walk or errands.

Facetime and virtual dates are also worth trying, and are perhaps more common than you think! There's no need to feel self-conscious. Facetimeing while you each go out for a coffee or bite to eat for Valentine's can make for a great and accessible way for you both to spend time together. You don't have to go out to do this, though, you can definitely do it from home too.

Another virtual date idea is to go see the same movie on a certain day and then call after to talk about what you each thought. But as an alternative, you can also call or Facetime from home while watching the same film or same show together.

Often, couples exchange special gifts or acts of service on Valentine's Day. Depending on what your significant other prefers, sending them a gift package this holiday can warm their heart, or, saving gifts until the next time you see them can show them they've been on your mind. It's also possible to contact local florists in your significant other's area to try and arrange a floral delivery, if they happen to like receiving flowers (but if you decide to do this, try to in advance if possible, as florists and flower shops are often busy this time of year).

If either of you enjoy writing or appreciate receiving letters, sending each other love letters while you're apart is also a really sweet and romantic gesture. This is an easy way to provide your partner with some words they can physically keep close by until you can see each other again.

Alternatively, planning on doing something for them next time you're together, such as taking them to a place they enjoy, or learning to make their favorite dessert, or treating them to a favorite meal or sweet may very well make them feel special. There's absolutely nothing wrong with planning your own personal Valentine's Day ahead altogether for the next time you're with each other. It can even give you both something special to look forward to.

I hope some of these ideas help! And I hope your Valentine's Day turns out well, and that your next one goes even better.

Dear Aggie, with Valentine's Day coming up, what should I get my boyfriend, who isn't as expressive with his feelings as I am? Any advice for how I should go about this with us being same-sex? Sincerely, Lovestruck and Lost.

Dear Lovestruck and Lost, depending on your boyfriend's love

DEAR AGGIE ON PG. 6

SeaSpray Organization Spotlight

2024 Journal Fundraiser

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o 1 page; 6"x9"; 0.81 vertical & 0.88 horizontal margins; Times New Roman

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SING TO YOUR HEARTS CONTENT

6 DEAR AGGIE (CONT.)

language and personality, a simple gift like a bouquet of flowers and spending quality time together could be romantic enough. Your intentions can go a long way even through simplicity. While your and your partner's love languages may be different, this simple and traditionalist approach to Valentine's Day love might work out well for both you and your boyfriend.

Dear Aggie, I want to be in a relationship with someone, but I am incredibly introverted and shy. I often keep to myself and feel awkward at parties or social events. If I feel more comfortable alone, how am I able to find someone? Sincerely, Wallflower

Dear Wallflower, it can be hard to find that special someone, especially if you don't like talking to strangers. What's important to remember is that even though it can feel uncomfortable, putting yourself out there is the only way to meet people with similar interests. Sure, there's a chance that someone could approach you first, but don't expect it if they are just as shy too. At the end of the day, it's okay if you're not ready to come out of your comfort zone just yet. Instead, focus on yourself and what makes you happy and one day you'll meet the right person. Sometimes, one can only find love when they aren't trying to pursue it. I hope this helps!

Dear Aggie, The walls at my dorm are a little too thin and I don't want the rooms next to me to hear whenever my partner is over. Is there anything I can do to prevent others from hearing us? Sincerely, Noisy Neighbor.

Dear Noisy Neighbor, There are a few places, actually, where you can hide out with your partner. First, there is a soundproof room that you can "use" for a "project" in the multimedia studio in the library.

Just kidding.

Simply changing locations can help alleviate the worries that you would be overheard through the thin walls of your dorm. The first that you can do is to go to a hotel room; an alternative to that is by doing it during an event like Midnight Yell where the chances of having an empty room are naturally higher than when there isn't a Midnight Yell. But you are still a college student, so at the end of the day, simply being

discrete and not projecting to the point that the entire dorm building can hear you and your partner should suffice.

Dear Aggie, I'd like to surprise my significant other. Do you have recommendations for date spots in Galveston for this upcoming Valentine's Day? My partner lives out of state, and I'd love to make this limited time with them memorable. TAMUG brought us together and our first date was at the Hooters on the island. Thank you in advance for the advice! Sincerely, Jacrispy

Sure thing, Jacrispy. Are y'all/they nature-lovers?

- Nature park: Galveston Island State Park; \$5 entry fee to fish, hike, paddle, etc.
- Beach trip: Stroll upon and shell-search at 8th Mile (car accessible & free)
- Dolphin tour: Baywatch \$25 fee (5 star w/600+ reviews); surrounded by fine-dining

Are y'all/they foodies?

- Fine-dining Seafood by the Galveston Channel: Willie G's (\$\$)
- Semi-fine Italian dining in the Strand: Mama Teresa's Flying Pizza (\$\$)
- Laid-back American dining by the Galveston Coastline: The Spot (\$\$)

Are y'all/they romantic?

- Picnic Date: Beach (night is applicable), Galveston Island State Park, Pelican Island Flats, etc.
- Movie Date: Galveston Primetime (applicable at home)
- Book/Coffee Date: Galveston Bookshop & MOD Coffeehouse

Are y'all/they competitive?

- Axe throwing: Axecade & the Rage Cage of Galveston
- Go-Karts: Galveston Go Kart & Fun Center (also has Axe throwing)
- Bowling: Now at Galveston Primetime

Hope this helps!

The Dear Aggie column will answer questions on all matters of interest to students at TAMUG. Submit a query by emailing tamugnautilus@gmail.com. Names will be kept confidential.

Film Review: Lift

By Caleb Castro, '27

Lift is an action/comedy featuring Kevin Hart, whose character, Cyrus, leads a crew of thieves in a heist to clear their records and save millions of lives. For a comedy, the humor doesn't land very well, and is rather structurally predictable. As an action film, there isn't a whole lot to say about the stunts or special effects. It's a movie that takes a stab at two different genres, and fails to hit the right notes in either of them, which makes the entire 104 minutes of runtime pretty lacking and unfulfilling altogether.

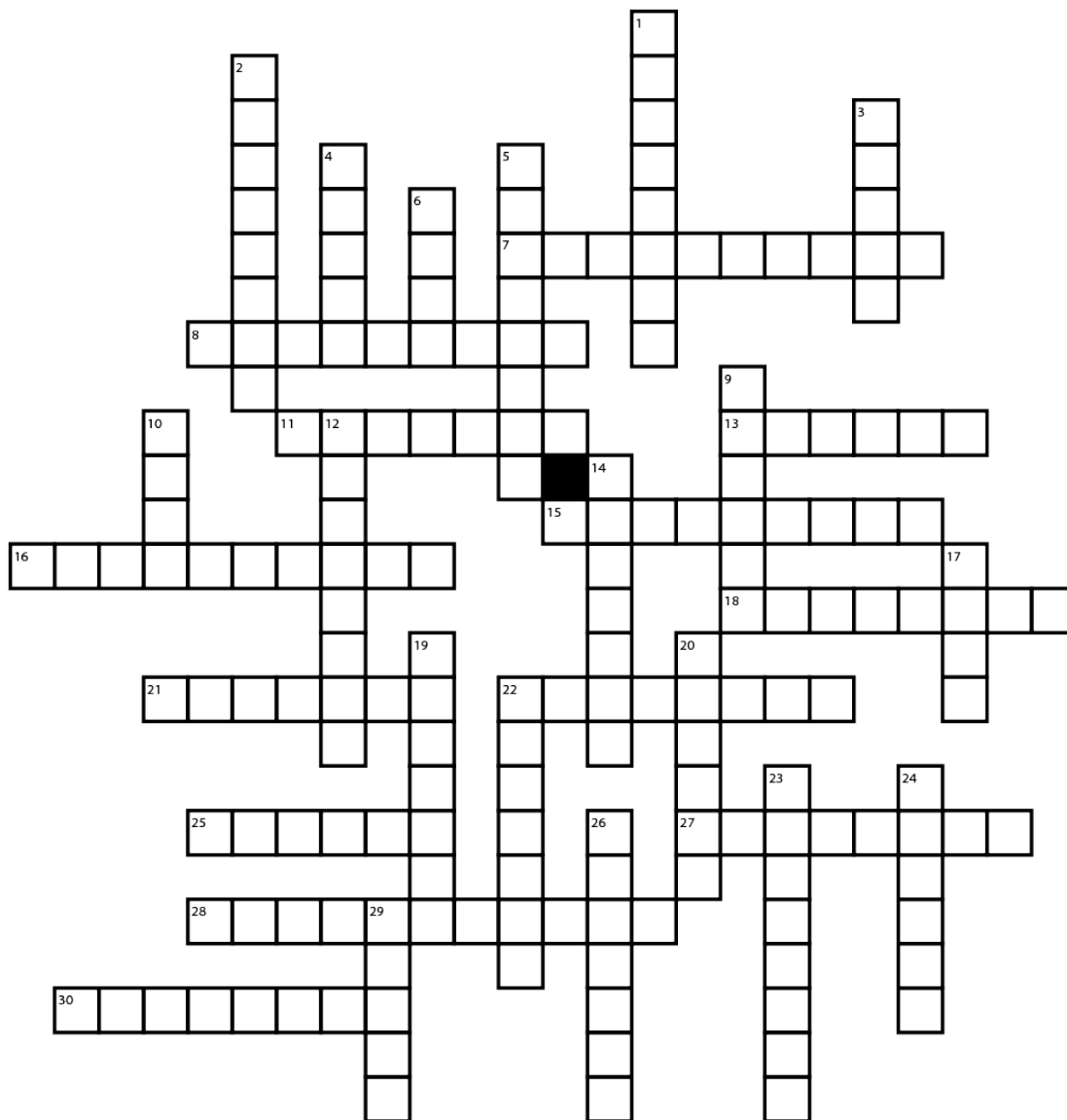
Barely any depth is given to the characters, and whenever there is depth added, it's usually delivered in an awkward exposition dump that feels out of place or forced. Apart from learning the crew's initial motive for the theft, there isn't anything substantial to take away from the whole story. The rest of the runtime just stinks of lazy writing and lacks any sort of appeal to warrant its existence.

Among Netflix's first batch of original content to kick off 2024, there were bound to be some uninspired duds. This movie was one of them, neither

interesting enough to be engaging, nor bad enough to be entertaining. It's unfortunate too because the movie could've been salvageable if it didn't take itself so seriously.

Fully indulging in a satirical take of heist movies would've been a better direction to go with, especially with the potential of this film's casting. If you are still interested in watching *Lift*, I commend you for your commitment. As for myself, I can't in good faith give this movie a rating higher than 3/10.





DOWN

1. The time Aggies do Yell
2. Captain Nemo's ship in 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea
3. Marine invertebrates that often compose reefs
4. Most of the Earth is covered with this substance
5. The world's second largest ocean
6. The acronym for the Aggie Special Events Center
9. Galveston, Great Britain, and Tahiti are all this thing
10. Acronym of TAMUG's engineering building
12. The sunken city
14. A shorebird with a bill to scoop fish
17. The rise and fall of the sea
19. The name of our newest training ship
20. Found on a ship's stern and used for steering
22. This structure helps prevent flooding in Galveston
23. Last name of Moby Dick's author
24. One of the Aggie colors
26. Name of TAMUG's campus coffee shop
29. How Aggies say hello

ACROSS

7. A type of sea turtle with a large head and red-brown shell that can be found in the Gulf
8. A type of tropical storm with exceedingly high winds that frequents Galveston
11. The world's largest ocean
13. A street in Downtown Galveston that is considered the heart of the historic district
15. Word for exploring across the sea
16. Edward Teach
18. Marine mammals often sighted around Pelican Island
21. A strong current that is a risk to swimmers, surfers, and divers
22. In maritime folklore, these birds are thought to be the souls of sailors
25. This person robs ships
27. The Aggie "e" word
28. The branch of science that studies fishes
30. When a current below moves differently from a current above



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