

By K. McElroy

Battalion Staff

Record enthusiasts are discussing Steely Dan's latest album "Gaucho" not only because of its musical brilliance, but because of its manufacturer's suggested, albeit ungodly, price of \$9.98.

That's \$10 for seven songs — or (including sales tax) \$1.50 per song.

Even more bad news for consumers is that the figure isn't an industry freak, but a soon-to-be standard for single album, cassette and eight-track cartridge prices.

However, local Dan fans haven't had to pay that price. Most major Bryan-College Station record stores are selling "Gaucho" and other new releases anywhere from about \$1 to \$2 less

than suggested by the manufacturer. A few major supermarket chains like Skaggs Alpha Beta and Safeway are also selling albums at that low price.

"That 9.98 is what the manufacturer suggests, but we don't charge it," says Bruce Burrier, manager of Music Express. He says the record company — in this case conglomerate MCA — when choosing a suggested price, picks one that will keep the profit steady for itself, artist and retailers in the face of inflation.

Hasting's Records and Books also ignores the industry's suggested prices because they don't depend solely on music for their income. Cathy Pudlewski says most of the store's profits come from book sales, so they can afford the price slash, as can su-

permarkets which obviously don't depend on record sales.

Karen Green of Musicland says her store doesn't have as large a discount as some others, but customers are still buying "Gaucho" and other high-priced albums, keeping store employees constantly filling the racks. The store does closely abide by the price she says the manufacturer sets.

"We have to pay it or else," Green says.

Retailers, realizing that lower prices do bring in more customers, aren't the only ones trying to lower prices. Rock musician Tom Petty fought his parent company MCA, which wanted to suggest \$9.98 for his "Hard Promises," released about a month ago. Petty even delayed the release of the album until a

compromise price of \$8.98 was reached.

But since \$8.98 is just a moral and not economic victory, consumers are finding other ways to beat album prices. Some are buying used records or cutouts, which are records — usually not the top sellers — which have been reduced to extremely low prices because the manufacturer wants to get rid of them.

Another extremely cheap method is to tape albums from the radio. But few Bryan-College Station stations play whole albums — let alone without commercial breaks, a necessary feature for taping from the radio.

Burrier said his store has many midline albums — records that don't have the current suggested or cutoff prices. For ex-

ample, his store offers the first five Steely Dan albums — which aren't as popular as the latest — for about \$4 or \$5.

"I guess the manufacturer is trying to give the consumer a break," he said.

Another way buyers are getting out of paying high prices is to share the record cost. Two persons split the cost of an album and a blank cassette or eight-track cartridge. All three store workers say they've noticed pairs of customers who've come into their stores to share costs.

"We get lots of people buying blank tapes," Burrier says. "They say they're taping albums from friends." He doesn't mind the system.

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THIS WEEK

Movies

Check theatres for specific times and prices. Movies subject to change without notice. All listings are current through press time.

Campus Theater
846-6512

S.O.B.: Blake Edwards, the man who gave us the "Pink Panther" movies and "10" is back with another fad comedy film. This time he's after The Hollywood Director and his California scene. The movie stars Edwards' wife Julie Andrews — topless. Needless to say, she's no Mary Poppins here. Rated R.

Caveman: Ex-talent Barbara Bach and ex-Beatle Ringo Starr (now married) in this neanderthal comedy which is as senseless as its dialogue. This effort has as much slapstick as an Abbott and Costello feature and about a third of the humor. It's that unfunny. Friday and Saturday at midnight. Rated PG.

The Grove
845-2916

Because of the July Fourth holidays and finals, Aggie Cinema will not present any films until next Wednesday.

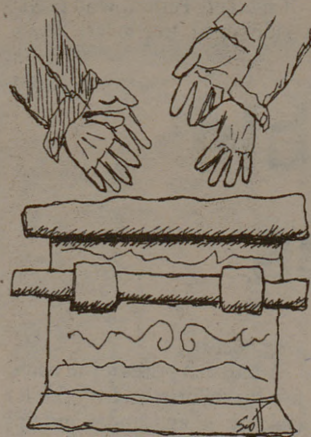
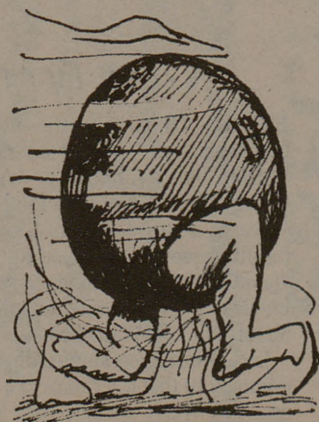
Attack of the Killer Tomatoes: This movie is rotten to the core (and non-regs, too). It probably sounded peachy on paper — a parody of all those horrid

sci-fi movies in which nature goes hogwild. Unfortunately, this extremely low-budget film is worse than any its predecessors. If a sci-fi picture isn't scary, it better be pretty-darn funny. "Killer Tomatoes" lays an egg on both counts. Rated PG. Wednesday at 8:45 p.m.

Manor East
823-8300

Dragonslayer: The latest from Walt Disney Studios, in conjunction with Paramount. Supposedly the beginning of a whole batch of Dungeons and Dragons movies, carrying on the tradition started by "Excalibur." In this story of the handsome knight saving the beautiful princess from the wicked dragon, the special effects are reportedly comparable to those of 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea. Rated R.

Cannonball Run: Burt Reynolds, Dean Martin, Farrah Fawcett-Majors, Roger Moore (as himself), Dom DeLuise and a lot of other people join in a cross-country auto race. With no rules. Find out whether the producers spent too much money getting box office names and not enough on talented writers to develop a plot. Rated R. See review on page 4.



Raiders of the Lost Ark: A collaboration of Steven "Jaws" Spielberg and George "Star Wars" Lucas. A high-energy, 30s drama featuring Doc Savage and The Shadow type action. Harrison Ford stars as a mercenary-adventurer-archaeologist in competition with Nazis searching for the lost tablets from the ark of the covenant. Hitler, one of the bad guy, is interested in the occult, and Ford is the good guy. Rated PG.

Plitt Cinema I&II
846-6714

Superman II: The long-awaited sequel is in its second record-breaking week. Christopher Reeve stars as the Man of Steel, again. Worth the trip (for the women) to see him in his tights. This time, Superman takes on three villains with super powers like his own. He ends up in fist fights in the sky and other amazing things you'd expect in a Superman movie. Plus, it has a plot. Rated PG.

Stripes: Bill Murray stars in this summer's male version of "Private Benjamin." Murray forms his own army brigade,

teaching them everything he knows. Obviously, that kind of training could and almost does cause World War III. Let's hope we all die laughing. Rated R.

Music

Backstage: No entertainment this weekend because of Fourth of July. Guests may eat dinner, or simply enjoy happy hour when draft beer is 35 cents, bar drinks are 75 cents and all call drinks are half price.

Grins: Thursday night, Grin's presents Don Sanders, playing guitar. Cover is \$2. Grin's will be closed Saturday. Happy hour is 4-7 p.m. weekdays.

Lakeview: Tradition continues with Dennis Ivey and The Waymen playing country hits until midnight Thursday. Cover is \$1 for women and \$3 for men, with Lone Star draught beer 5¢ a cup. Saturday night, it's the John Conlee show. Advance tickets are \$9, \$10 at the door.

Rebels: Music starts at 8 on Friday and 9 on Saturday. No cover. Happy hour features half-price drinks and appetizers Friday and Saturday.

Rosewood Junction: Leroy Parnell performs this weekend. Cover is \$1. Two-for-one happy hour daily from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m.

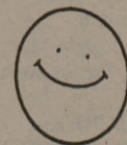
Texas Hall of Fame: The Debonaires are back from vacation. They will play Thursday night, for \$2 cover charge. Friday's band is Sundance, and cover is \$2. Saturday night, the Matheny

Brothers, from San Antonio, appear. Cover is \$3. Texas Fever play Tuesday night, for a \$2 cover. Wednesday night it's Silver Creek, and all Aggies get in free with student I.D. and valid identification.

Etc.

Fourth of July: Saturday is the Fourth of July. For a listing of local events, see page 1 of this issue. For events around the state, see page 2. Remember, fireworks are illegal in the city limits of both Bryan and College Station.

Peach Sale: The TAMU Horticulture Club is selling tree ripe Texas peaches today, July 2, at the Plant Science Club loading dock. The peaches will be first come, first served.



Battalion Classifieds
Call 845-2611