



South Padre

The thought of sun
and fun can drive you South

by Kathy Wiesepape

Battalion Staff

Spring break is finally here, and it's time to get away from the books and into the sunshine. And if your idea of a vacation includes sand, surf, Beach Boys music and the chance to start on a tan, South Padre Island is the place for you.

For the second time in two years, Anheuser-Busch, Inc. — brewers of Budweiser — and Seafest, a division of the Port Isabel/South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce, have planned a week-long extravaganza for the hordes of college students that descend on the beaches during spring break.

Love and Torrence will be accompanied by the Endless Summer Band, which is made up of former members of the Beach Boys and the Jan and Dean Band, two groups that originally started the "beach music" craze in the 1950's.

The 1983 Beach Party Revisited will include beach sports, poolside parties, moonlight dances and a free outdoor concert featuring Mike Love and Dean Torrence. Love has been the leader of the Beach Boys band since the early 1960's, and Torrence became popular in the late 1950's as half of the Jan and Dean duo.

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"We're hoping to make this an annual event," said Torrence. "But of course, anything's subject to change.

"We like to see people enjoying themselves, and as long as they're enjoying it, we feel compelled to keep doing it."

Love and Torrence are scheduled for five beach concerts this spring: four on Florida beaches and one at Padre Island.

Torrence said he especially enjoys the outdoor concerts because they're fun for everyone and free. He said 12,000 to 18,000 people usually attend the informal concerts, and he likes performing for the large groups.

"A lot of what we do comes from spontaneity," he said. It isn't like smaller performances where every move the performers make is carefully planned, and there's no freedom to interact with the audience.

Torrence likes what he calls the attitude of the beach concerts: relaxed, laid back, with everyone there simply to enjoy himself.

"The beach party is a total concept," he said, "and I'm really into total concepts. It's the atmosphere of the beach that makes it all come together, and our music is a part of that feeling."

The rock-n-roll, beach-style music is not making a comeback in the 80's, Torrence said — it's been popular all along.

"Even in the radical late 60's people were playing surfing songs," he said. Just like any other kind of music, it's had its peaks and valleys, but it's never disappeared.

"Every summer it peaks," Torrence said. "It goes through minor cycles, but it's always there."

The corporate-sponsored beach parties have been successful, he said, because Anheuser-Busch has worked especially hard to promote them.

"They're not like a lot of people in the music business," he said. "They work hard, and they plan well in advance."

Torrence said he realizes that many students will be heading for the mountains over spring break and putting on skis instead of swimsuits.

"I think a lazier bunch goes to the beach," he said. "Personally, I'm a lot more comfortable in the sun, and I love the water."

