

"We were thinking about adding a keyboard player. We heard about a guy who is pretty good and knows some music that we want to play. But then you have to split the money four ways!"

Ardoin says school comes before the band.

"My grades are a lot more important than this," he says. "If my grades started to fall because it was taking too much time, I would tell them to take a flying one."

Nelson has a different perspective.

"My grades aren't that important," he says. "I know it's all lies anyway."

The band members have diverse musical backgrounds. Daniel remembers putting a group together in intermediate school.

"We got a few guys together and drew instruments," he says. "I finally bought a \$200 bass guitar the day of our first gig."

Ardoin's father had a band called "The Boogie Kings" that was popular around southern Louisiana when he was younger. He taught Richard some basic guitar chords and sparked his interest.

Nelson is veteran of the Clear Creek High School marching band's percussion section.

"I really like rehearsing," Ardoin says. "I just like getting together and playing."

However, the band hopes to be making some more appearances around town and at private parties next semester.

—by Daryn DeZengotita

## 4 Hams on Rye

Interested in some "nasty, sweaty fun?" 4 Hams on Rye offers just that.

The band gives its audience a high energy, spontaneous show with songs from artists such as Stevie Ray Vaughn and Jimi Hendrix mixed with the band's original tunes.

Scott Oldner, guitarist and lead singer, describes the band's tone as biting blues.

Oldner and bass guitarist Erik Kline originally played rockabilly songs. But three years ago the band found a new lead guitarist who changed its tone.

"I was trying to work up all this rockabilly stuff and Dru (Wilson) came in and messed everything up," Oldner says. "He came in and he was not rockabilly at all. But I knew we needed a lead guitarist and he was good."

Kline grins. "He was adequate," he says.

Oldner continues, "His tone changed the band incredibly. It wasn't a rockabilly tone — it was a biting blues tone."

After Wilson joined the band, the drummer saw "3 Hams on Rye," a Three Stooges' movie. The band decided to make it four and the name stuck. Wilson adds that they chose the name for lack of a better one.

Last year the band underwent another change.

Jeff Zwolinski, who has played the drums since he was 16 years old, joined the band in December. At 30, Zwolinski's years make him the most experienced member of the band.

Kline, Wilson and Zwolinski combined have almost 35 years of experience and have played in several bands, but 4 Hams on Rye is Oldner's first experience with a serious band.

"We're all equal, though, because we do totally different things," Oldner adds.

Wilson has 12 years of experience, Oldner has played for 10 years and Kline for five.

Oldner says when Zwolinski joined, the band was reborn.

He refers to Zwolinski as "the drum machine" and says the band has a drum machine, a guitar machine and (giving Kline a quick glance) a sex machine.

Kline explains that the drummer and bass player must get along and work well together for the band as a whole to sound good.

"I get along a lot better with the drummer we have now," he says, "so the band sounds better."

The band members think it's important that they have a good time when they play.

"The interaction on stage is what it's all about. You have to enjoy what you're doing," Wilson says.

"I don't play the same solos all of the time and on certain songs I'll play with my teeth . . . and that's spontaneous."

Oldner adds, "We just play it by the crowd and it's all spontaneous."

Last summer, KKYS listeners were polled and voted 4 Hams on Rye the number one band in Bryan/College Station.

Oldner says it was a boost to the band's ego but the band doesn't like to compete.

"We do what we do," he says. "I don't like competing against other people, I like entertaining."

He says the band has 14 original songs and four more that it's working on. Wilson and Oldner are half-and-half on the number of songs written, he says.

Grinning, Oldner adds, "He's (Dru) been writing a lot of songs ever since he's been in and out of girlfriends."

The band has made a demo tape of its songs but hasn't cut a 45. Copies of the tape are available at Music Express for \$5.99.

Oldner says cutting a 45 costs between \$1,000 and \$1,500 and the band members don't have the money. They've had promises of backing but they've fallen through, he says.

Kline adds, "In this business you take it with a grain of salt."

All four band members are from Bryan/College Station and



## 4 Hams on Rye

Oldner and Zwolinski are studying at A&M.

Oldner is an electrical engineering major and will graduate in December. Zwolinski is in graduate school and says, hopefully, he will be finished with his graduate work around the same time.

After graduation?

"The top," Oldner says.

—by Mona Palmer

## Notropis

If you haven't had a chance to catch Notropis in action,

you've missed Station's

The so — sometime show is still in a word.

These (for music) they do, a audience.

Brian L. and agent describes straight-ahead stuff"), or rock or fun