

# State and Local

## Navy band plays country hits in spite of technical problems

By Shane Hall  
Reviewer

Country music fans at Texas A&M were treated to a show of their favorite country hits Wednesday as Country Empire, the U.S. Navy's

### Review

country and western band, performed a one-hour show at Rudder Fountain.

With the cloudy weather and threat of rain, it was not the best day in the world for an outdoor concert. But as they say in the entertainment business, the show must go on.

And go on it did, but not without a fair share of troubles. The first few songs of the show, which began shortly after 11 a.m., were plagued by problems with the sound. Feedback and distortion were apparent as the band performed their set of top-40 country radio favorites. Bass guitarist Terry Matthews seemed most affected by the sound trouble, his bass licks sounding heavily distorted at some points in the show.

By the time the band began its version of "Love's Been a Little Bit Hard On Me," most of the sound troubles seemed ironed out for the time being. Their version of the Juice Newton hit was one of the high points of the show. Vocalist Mary Alice Ames gave a good performance of the song as did her husband, Bud Ames, who is the band leader and lead guitarist.

After finishing the song, guitarist Ames announced that the band would be taking a short break. It seems the band was disturbing a nearby meeting.

The show resumed at noon, with the band covering George Strait's "Foolhearted Memory."

All of the band members are talented musicians, as they demonstrated throughout the show. Bud Ames and rhythm guitarist Dave



Photo by Mike C. Mulvey

Bud and Mary Alice Ames perform country and western songs at Rudder Fountain Wednesday afternoon. The husband and wife team are part of

the Navy band Country Empire. The band had to pack up after about an hour of playing because it started raining.

Nielsen are both talented guitar players, while the rhythm section of drummer Duncan Hudson and bassist Matthews provide a good beat.

Keyboardist Janet Shultz adds to the group's sound with her playing while the husband and wife team of Bud and Mary Alice Ames handles the vocals with skill.

Unfortunately, like the first set, the second was plagued by sound problems. "Gone Too Far" was especially bad as crackles and pops in the P.A. system rang forth almost as

clearly as the band's music.

"First Time Caller," another Juice Newton tune, turned out rather well, though. Mary Alice Ames gave her best vocal performance of the show, accompanied well by the band.

About 12:30 p.m., the rain arrived. "We're gonna stop now before we get electrocuted," Bud announced to the audience, which increased in numbers during the show.

The band members promptly began breaking down their equipment, ending a somewhat enjoyable, but

rather problematic performance that frankly should have been planned a little better. With the weather the way it was, one would think someone within the University system would have had the sense to move the show somewhere inside.

Country Empire is a band of talented musicians, but the members really should add to their song repertoire. The addition of some original material or perhaps some lesser-known cover tunes would certainly add some interest to the current top-40 country format the band uses.

## Police suspended for alleged beating of three suspects

SPRING VALLEY (AP) — An undisclosed number of Spring Valley officers have been suspended pending the outcome of an investigation into the alleged beating of three burglary suspects, a department spokesman said Wednesday.

Spring Valley dispatcher L.G. Daniels said she could provide no more information about the probe. Houston FBI spokesman Johnnie Joyce would neither confirm nor deny the federal agency was taking part in the investigation.

The alleged beatings took place after three 20-year-old men were arrested early Sunday following a break-in at a Spring Valley antique store near Houston. The three were identified as Kenny Johnson of the Jasper area and Kelly Hebert and Ricky Bouillion, both of Winnie.

Johnson told investigators he and Hebert used a rock to break into the store to steal a table. The officers heard an alarm and entered through a window, Johnson said.

Johnson said one officer approached him and asked him where Hebert was hiding. Johnson said he put his hands above his head and asked not to be shot.

He said the officer slapped him on the left side of the face, and then when he said he would not cause trouble, the officer struck him on the other side of the face.

The other officer handcuffed him from behind, borrowed another set of handcuffs from a second officer and used the second set as a grip while the first officer slapped, kicked and kneed him in the back, face and stomach, he said.

Johnson claims one officer turned his back while the first officer and another officer beat him until Hebert was discovered hid-

ing in the building. He says he was placed in a patrol car, but could hear the officers beating Hebert.

After kicking a window out of the car, Johnson said, he fled, still handcuffed, to a motel where he hid from helicopters and police while he telephoned his father, who is a jailer at the Jasper County Jail.

Johnson said a relative took him to Lumberton and then to Jasper where he was hospitalized. Hebert and Bouillion, contacted by telephone late Tuesday, said they were slapped and kicked by the same officer after their arrest.

Hebert said the officer slapped and punched him inside the store, and was interrupted when the owner arrived, and he was then taken to the Spring Valley police department.

Both Hebert and Bouillion said they were placed in separate rooms at the police station and the officer beat and choked them when he questioned them, repeatedly saying they were lying.

## Correction

A Wednesday *Battalion* article incorrectly stated that the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station is a co-sponsor of the North American Waterfowl Plan.

The North American Waterfowl Plan is not an A&M-based project; it is a joint venture between the United States and Canada. The *Battalion* article concerned the research by R. Douglas Slack, a professor of wildlife and fisheries science at Texas A&M. Slack's research project concerns snow geese and is not directly related to the North American Waterfowl Plan.

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