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Organization provides comaraderie for 'older Ag

The Battalion

By Terri Welch The Battalion

Attending college at an older age than most students can be a

difficult experience.
Students Over the Traditional Age (SOTA), an organization designed to help those wanting to meet people a little older, plans several social activities a semester and holds a transitions conference

for older Aggies.

"There are over 7,000 students, both graduates and undergraduates, that are classified as over 24, says Robert Dickens, a 26-year-old mechanical engineering graduate student from Houston, and president of SOTA. "The majority are graduate students, but a lot are undergraduates.

Dickens says these students deal with a variety of problems that most traditional aged stu-

"Feeling really awkward and out of place is part of the experience," he says. "(Older students) go through many of the same things freshmen do, but at a differ-

ent point in their life."

Most older students are single and support themselves completely, Dickens says. They are trying to coordinate part time jobs and pay off loans at the same time. Doris White, treasurer of

SOTA, can identify with this situation. A 35-year-old junior mechanical engineering technology major from Amarillo, White says she was tired of being a secretary and wanted more of a challenge.

"When I graduated from high school, I didn't know what I wanted to do," she says of her decision not to attend college right away. After working a while at several



Students Over the Traditional Age (SOTA) provides social functions for A&M's older students. Pictured here are (from to right) Ray and Kim Modglin, Doris White (treasurer), Rod Schaffter, Lisa Preston, (back row, left to right) Roberto (president), Karen Wade, and Tommy Armstrong (vice president).

places, I decided I wanted to do something technical to make more money. That is why I came to

It was a tough decision for White to make, considering she had no family support. Her friends thought she was making a big mistake.

"A lot of people told me not to do it," she says, pointing out, "it was real strange. I thought they would be happy (for me)." White says when she started

classes, she was very self conscious about her age and didn't interact with the students socially, just scholastically.

"There were a lot of times where I finally would ask the other students, 'How old do you think I am?' and they always answered younger than I was, so that was good," she says.

Classroom interaction problems and making onds most have

lems and making ends meet have not taken the most effort, she says. Finding a roommate has posed the biggest challenge. As people get older, they become more set in

"I think younger people might

expect me to mother them, that's not true," White say also have a lot of my own and I'm not sure if some younger would appreciate much as I do."

White says it was hard to to A&M and be by herself. So helped her to meet people.

own age and adjust to colle

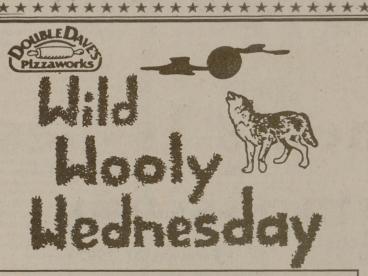
Dickens and White end any Aggie who is over the tional age to join them at 6; Friday, Feb. 28th at 3-CE for their next meeting. Ca 7387 for more information.

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Social Distortion refines 'rockabilly on speed'

Continued from page 11

band also adopted a new musical style, taking the sound of 50's rockers like Jerry Lee Lewis and Eddie Cochran and adapting it to the 90's. The band's 1990 self titled release "Social Distortion" took the group to the top of the alternative charts and led to a well publicized tour with Sonic Youth and Neil Young.

With "Somewhere Between Heaven and Hell," Social Distortion proves that he last album was no fluke. Ness and the boys

refine the rockabilly on speed style that's been featured on the last two albums. Although shining moments are fewer on the new release, "Heaven and Hell" is a better album overall. The rough spots that occasionally marred "Social Distortion" are gone, ironed out by a new tightness to the band and consistently better

Ness, as on earlier releases, focuses most of the songs on the the pitfalls of fast living. Whether its women on "Bye Bye Baby, or a murder rap in "99 to Life," Ness growls out his lyrics with the intensity of someone who's been through what he's singing about. The rebel attitude that surfaced during the group's punk period is still intact, but it's now sharpened with a streetwise wisdom. Ness sings about life in the fast lane, but he also makes it

clear that he doesn't make the same mistake twice. "Heaven and Hell" also features some experimentation with the band's sound. With "This Time Darlin'," Social Distortion plays an actual tears and beers country song. Although this might seem like quite a leap, the group adapts well to a vintage country style, and the Johnny Cash-like "Darlin" is one of the strongest cuts on the album.

Other memorable songs include "Making Believe," "When She Begins" and "King of Fools," a track that easily stands along with former tunes "Ball and Chain," "Prisonbound" and "Story of Mr. Life" and "Chain," "Prisonbound" and "Chain of My Life" as one of the band's best songs.

Dave Jerden returns to produce the new album. After producing Social Distortion's last release, Jerden went on to fame as the co-producer for Jane's Addiction. However, instead of the lush sonic effects Jerden used on two Jane's Addiction albums, he wisely takes the opposite approach for Social Distortion. Jerden's production techniques utilize a "live in the studio" approach which gives the band's sound a crystal clarity. On CD, the acoustic guitar and percussion sound especially sweet.

Behind all the talk of changing attitudes, great production, and a sense of (gasp!) remorse, Social Distortion is still doing

what they've always done best: producing kick-ass rock n' roll. The band probably stands as one of the last bands in a rebel rock style that started with the rockabilly kings of the '50s and continued through punk bands like the Clash. With "Somewhere Between Heaven and Hell," Social Distortion continues that traditon. Rock 'n' roll fans can be assured that as long as Mike Ness decides to write music, that vintage Chevy and a midnight cruise aren't very far away.



Robin McAuley and Michael Shenker of MSG

MSG means 'Mostly scorching guitars'

By Chris Eklof

"MSG" **Impact**

MSG has been known by several names throughout its twelve year history, but it has always served one major purpose - as the vehicle for German guitarist Michael Schenker to deliver soaring harmonies and searing solos. MSG's latest self-titled album continues this tradition well.

Schenker demonstrated his musical ability to the world many times during his long career. He played two stints with the Scorpi-ons (brother Rudolph's band that Michael helped form in 1973), made six albums with UFO in the '70s and most recently he played in the all-star group Contraband.

Schenker first formed this band in 1980 as the Michael Schenker Group and put out four albums under that moniker. In 1986, Schenker recruited Irish vocalist Robin McAuley and the band was renamed the McAuley Schenker Group. Now, with the release of their third album, McAuley says that MSG does not stand for anything at all.

Schenker, playing his trademark Flying V guitar, opens up the album with a blistering intro on "Eve" and rarely lets up on the accelerator from there. "Eve" has a catchy chorus to go along with

the frenzied spurts of guitar work. "Crazy" is the twisted story of a boy who is angry about how his father raised him. Years later, they meet in prison and he has the opportunity to pay back his dear old dad. "I'm gonna pay a little visit when they call lights out / He'll be kicking and screaming when he sees how I turned out."

On the ballad "When I'm Gone," the album's first scheduled release, Schenker spices up the slow song by throwing in guitar twists behind McAuley's voca

The album's other true ba "What Happens To Me," s lights McAuley's vocals more Schenker's guitar. Most Schenker's guitar. Most Schenker's work on this song barely be heard in the backgroup as McAuley's vocals comm most of the attention. Only o standard-required-guitar-sol the-middle-of-a-ballad

Schenker make an audible impa McAuley has a truly unust voice. At times on the hard songs, his voice is grungy at rough, but on the ballads it ship through crystal clear. More portantly, the unique quality his voice give MSG an overall ferent sound that sets them a from the crowd.

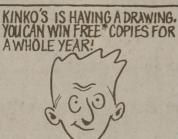
'MSG" contains several so that yearn to be ballads, Schenker keeps them away that with his heavy guitar Just when you think a song w pretty name like "We Belie Love" or "This Night Is G Last Forever" will be a slows Schenker kicks his guitar overdrive and speeds the song

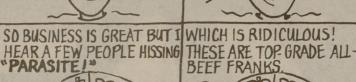
The last song on the albu Never Ending Nightmare acoustic gem that gives a diffe perspective on the guitar wizar of the normally high-volte Schenker. Using an acoustic tar has become the latest fat rock music and several hards bands have discovered quite of commercial success through use. However, that is not the tivation behind this acoustic to MSG enjoys playing acoustical and recorded an acoustic EP Europe last fall. MSG has also launched an eight week acoutour that includes late Febru dates in Austin, San Antor Houston and Dallas.

MSG does not stand for a thing anymore as far as McAu and Schenker are concerned, to the listener it seems to stand Mostly Scorching Guitars or M ly Schenker's Guitars.



















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