

Bass guitarist Les Claypool

## Primus: Their quirky style reaching its prime

By Rob Clark  
THE BATTALION

Primus' style of music can be best described in one word — bizarre.

Lead guitarist Larry LaLonde said, "It's kind of like lots of wrong notes. It's kind of a mismatch, like three guys that listen to different stuff smashed together."

LaLonde and bass guitarist Les Claypool create searing guitar riffs that provide a hard backing for Claypool's quirky vocals.

Their unique blend helped the San Francisco band hit it big with its 1991 gold album "Sailing the Seas of Cheese."

Their follow-up album, "Pork Soda," Claypool said is basically another Primus record.

"Pork Soda" surprised many by debuting at number seven on the Billboard album charts in April.

"To see our names that close to Whitney Houston on a chart was a pretty funny thing," LaLonde said.

"Other people seem to think there's more (success) than there is," LaLonde said. "Everything is pretty much the same as it's been. Maybe we're just too stupid to realize it or something."

LaLonde said one reason for Primus' success is the chemistry between the band members.

Yet the band's chemistry is not the only factor contributing to its unique sound. LaLonde said his use of marijuana helps with the creative process.

"I think it would be great if they could legalize it," LaLonde said. "We have a booth touring with us, talking about the uses of hemp."

However, marijuana is not the main ingredient for creativity, he said.

"But a lot of times you're sitting around and it's raining outside, so you smoke a joint," LaLonde said. "You're sitting with a guitar in your hand and sometimes you come up with things that otherwise you may not have. It works for me in a lot of creative ways."

Primus fans have their own creative ways to support the band. The sarcastic catch phrase, "Primus sucks" has become increasingly popular at Primus concerts.

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## The TREK to BONFIRE

By Margaret Claugton  
THE BATTALION

Now Aggie Spirit is one thing, but former student Ed Travis is another.

When Ed graduated from Texas A&M in 1968, he physically left College Station, but his heart stayed in Aggieland.

In order to show his appreciation for his years at A&M and his tried and true Aggie spirit, Ed will attempt to bike the 180 miles from San Antonio to College Station to attend Bonfire.

A former member of the Corps of Cadets, Ed became a recruiter for the Corps Leadership Outreach (CLO) program in San Antonio. After attending a CLO seminar last August, he developed an idea.

"I stayed with a corps unit," Ed said. "It got me so pumped up. That's what gave me the idea."

"When I got back I pulled my oldest daughter's bike out of the garage, dusted it off, and got started."

Ed intends to bike from Aggie Park, a park purchased by former A&M students in San Antonio, to the Bonfire site. The trip should take two days with an overnight stop in Bastrop.

"I'd like to spend the night in Bastrop and then continue the trip in the morning, if I can move," Ed said.

Ed has been training for the trip five to six days a week for three months.

"I usually do a 17-mile training course, but 60 miles is the farthest I've been," Ed said.

He cites three reasons for this off-the-wall venture.

"One is I love A&M so much and I had so much fun, I want to show my appreciation," Ed said.

He says he also has two Aggie daughters and feels that in a sense he is doing this for them.

In addition, Ed hopes to turn this idea into a fundraising effort for the CLO recruiting program.

"We could take the idea and expand on it," Ed said. "Groups could participate from all over the state for fun or fundraising. It would be like many spokes coming together at the hub of a wheel."

Some current Corps members are behind Ed all the way.

"I think what he is doing is great," said Mike Asunchion, a sophomore in Squadron 12 and participant in Bonfire. "It takes a lot of money to recruit, more power to him. Anything that promotes A&M and the Corps is great."

Sophomore Ricky Schoggins, also working on Bonfire, would like to see Ed succeed.

"I think he's crazy," Schoggins said. "But he obviously has a lot of pride in his school and is proud of what he does. I'd like to see him do it."

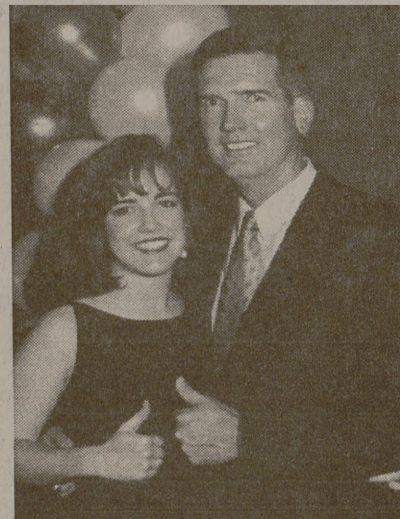
Ed's wife, Kerry, thinks he is crazy, too. But she said she will be supportive by following him part of the way in her car.

"She says it's mid-life crisis," Ed said.

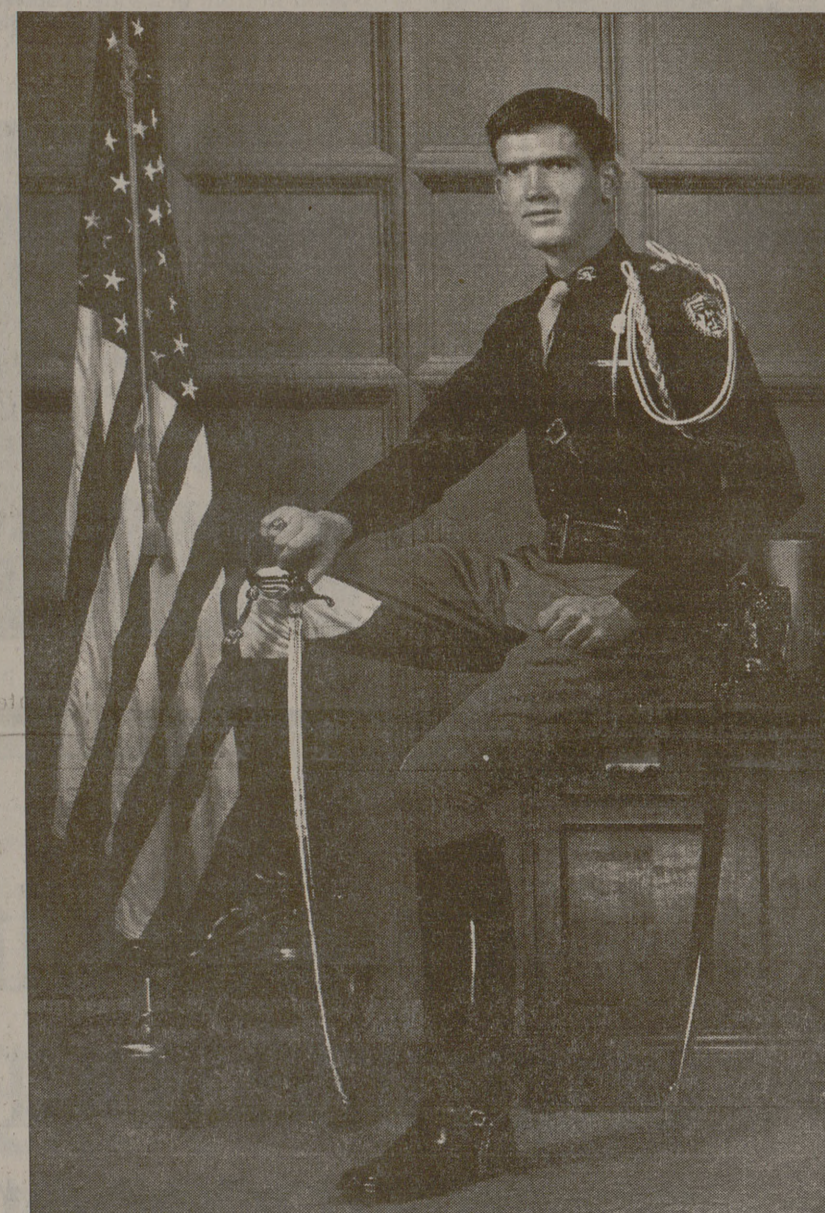
Ed's daughter, Traci, also considers her father's idea a little off but hopes he accomplishes his goal.

"When he first told me, I didn't think he would actually do it," Traci said. "But when my dad gets an idea it's pretty well decided he's going to do it."

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Ed Travis, class of '68, plans to ride his bike from Aggie Park in San Antonio to Bonfire beginning today. Travis, a former member of the Corps of Cadets (bottom photo), will make one stop at Bastrop during his two-day trek. Travis (also pictured with daughter Traci, left) hopes to raise money for the Corps Leadership Outreach (CLO) program.



## MUSIC REVIEWS

### Honoring Hendrix... Diverse group pays tribute to rock legend

By Joe Leih  
THE BATTALION

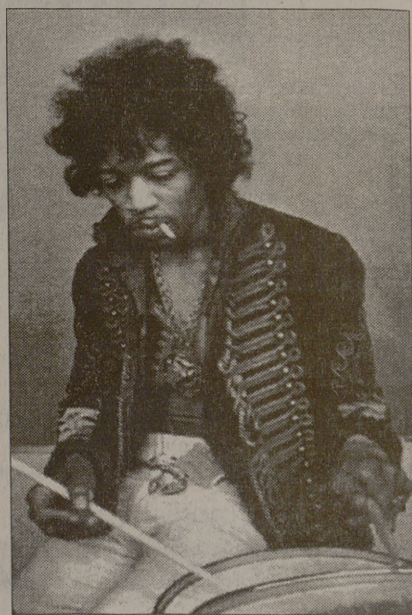
"Stone Free: A Tribute to Jimi Hendrix"  
Various Artists  
Rock tribute  
Reprise  
Album courtesy of CD Warehouse

In 1970, the great guitar-god Jimi Hendrix passed away.

Fans wept and musicians cried, but Hendrix's brilliant, bizarre mix of jazz, blues and good ol' rock-n-roll lived on.

Twenty-three years later, John McDermott and Eddie Kramer, authors of "Hendrix: Setting The Record Straight" decided to prove his music's immortality by assembling an array of artists that influenced him, played with him or were guided by his music. The resulting album, "Stone Free: A Tribute to Jimi Hendrix," is an eclectic mishmash of diverse Hendrix tunes that demonstrates the depth to which his music touched the world. In fact, it proves that his music shall never die.

Bluesman Buddy Guy is one of the Hendrix-influencing artists that appears on the album. Performing Hendrix's "Red House," Guy throws his slow-driving guitar alongside Johnnie Johnson's piano



Hendrix

power and picking quick, wailing guitar solos, Clapton delivers a solid rendition of a foot-stompin', butt-shakin' Hendrix classic.

Still, the most attractive part of the album is the experimental performances of the modern artists. By rearranging the structure, style and even tone of the song, these groups prove Hendrix's pioneering approach to music lives on.

The English act the Cure gives an almost unrecognizable rendition of Hendrix's hit, "Purple Haze." Sampling groans and squeals, using echo effects and setting them all to a synthesized drum beat, the members of the group give the tune an incredible surrealist feeling.

In that same vein, P.M. Dawn gives their own bizarre interpretation of Hendrix as well. Performing "You Got Me Floatin'" with a unique blend of metallic guitar and distorted vocals, the members reveal what Hendrix was about — experimentation.

Other groups like Ice-T and Body Count, Belly and the Pretenders all give their own interpretations of Hendrix as well.

And even if their renditions lack the intensity, drive and soul of the late, great Hendrix, they at least show that his music and his approach to music will live on.

Thank God.

### Bringing back that Western swing

By Lesa Ann King  
THE BATTALION

Asleep at the Wheel and various artists  
"Tribute to the Music of Bob Wills and The Texas Playboys"  
Country tribute  
Liberty  
Album courtesy of CD Warehouse

Texas swing band Asleep at the Wheel introduces the old time Western swing sound to a new generation of country fans in their latest release "Tribute to the Music of Bob Wills and The Texas Playboys."

In the late 30s and early 40s, Bob Wills pioneered the Western swing sound. His music borrowed elements from blues, Dixieland jazz, fiddle hoedowns, cowboy music, mariachi, pop ballads and Big-Band swing and combined them into a new sound that was years ahead of its time.

A modern day Western swing band, Asleep at the Wheel provides either instrumental backup or vocals on most of the album's 18 cuts.

Since the early 70s, Asleep at the Wheel's music has preserved the classic Western swing sound. For this project, the band's founder and lead singer Ray Benson also lined up some of



Wills

country's most talented entertainers to perform on the album including George Strait, Garth Brooks, Vince Gill, Brooks and Dunn, Merle Haggard, Lyle Lovett, Willie Nelson, Dolly Parton and many others.

One artist to particularly listen for is the gentleman that single-handedly brought Western swing back to country music charts in the 80s, George Strait. A true cowboy, Strait renews the vocal style of Bob Wills like no other country music artist can with his saucy rendition of "Big Ball's In Cowtown."

Another cut to listen for is "Blues for Dixie" by former Texas A&M student, Lyle Lovett. A native Texan, Lovett's style embodies the Texas attitude and the Bob Wills approach to music in this classic Southern song.

Another great Western swing veteran, Merle Haggard sings a song written by Bob Wills himself called "I Wonder If You Feel The Way I Do." Haggard is responsible for bringing the Western swing sound to this generation of country artist when he released the album, "A Tribute to the Best Damn Fiddle Player in the World (Or My Salute to Bob Wills)" in the 70s. His latest song is a fitting contribution to Asleep at the Wheel's album.

In his country music debut, Huey Lewis teams up with Ray Benson to sing one of the best cowboy swing songs "Hubbin' It."

Asleep at the Wheel's latest collection offers down home country music at its best and is a dream to any Western swing fan.