

Club prepares for Chinese New Year

By Claudia Zavaleta

THE BATTALION

The China Club, along with Chinese communities all over the world, will be celebrating the coming of their new year, Saturday, Feb. 5.

A two and-a-half hour program, which will include a martial arts demonstration and regional folk songs and dances is scheduled for 7 p.m. at Rudder Theater.

Lianchou Wei, general director for the program, said about 50 performers are involved in the show which is sponsored by the People's Republic of China's consulate general in Houston, the China Club and Texas A&M's Jordan Institute for International Awareness.

"Most of the performers are students and their families," Wei said. "But we have also invited two instrumental artists to play the dulcimer and the t'pai. The Peking Opera was also invited to participate."

The club, celebrating its 10th year at A&M, has been planning since the end of the fall semester to bring all the songs and the choreography together for the final performance.

"The China Club is very busy right now practicing for the program," Wei said. "The singing is easy, but the dancing is harder to plan. Every year the China Club organizes this activity. It is the tradition of the China Club and the tradition of China."

About 400 people are expected to attend the annual program, which is the beginning of the celebration for New

Year's Day, called the Spring Festival.

Xushan Fang, president of the China Club, said since the Chinese follow the lunar calendar, the first of the year falls on Feb. 10.

"Spring Festival is the biggest festival for us," Fang said. "The night before, family and friends reunite and have dinner together. It is like Christmas for you."

Each new year is represented by a different animal, Fang said. This coming year will be the year of the dog.

"Every baby born in this coming year will be associated with the dog," Fang said. "It is just like a zodiac sign. Each animal is said to have good and bad traits, and some people can be analyzed by those traits."

New Year's Day, children set off fireworks to ward off demons that might

cause trouble throughout the year, Fang said. Many of the traditions are symbols which the Chinese carry with them wherever they live.

At A&M, the China Club is one of the biggest international organizations with about 300 members. Throughout the year, the club participates in five major projects.

In the summer, the club welcomes new Chinese students to A&M, Fang said. They help them arrange for housing and get acquainted with College Station.

"When I came here," Fang said, "I felt like a helpless stranger. The newcomers really appreciate our efforts to help them."

In August, the club begins to plan cel-

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Pey Wan Choong/THE BATTALION

Fishbone continues quest to end the 'curse'

Band finds success amid controversy

By Joe Leih

THE BATTALION

Alas poor Fishbone, they have so many problems and the end hardly seems near.

Ever since their founding in the late seventies, the black, Los Angeles band known for their whirlwind fusion of ska, jazz, funk and thrash truly have had to fight to stay alive. They've endured cries of "sellout" from their race, fought with skinheads on the road and, perhaps worst of all, watched as younger bands like Living Colour and The Red Hot Chili Peppers borrowed their musical mishmash to far surpass them in commercial success.

Even career high points like last year's Lollapalooza tour (and of course their upcoming Friday night show at Stafford Opera House) only give false impressions

that the members are problem-free.

In fact just last May, the Fishbone "curse" struck again. Bassist Norwood Fisher was arrested in Marin County, Calif.

Amazingly enough, it wasn't for the infamous rock-n-roll cliché of drunken disorderliness, nor was it for trying to smuggle illegal substances across state lines. No, not Fishbone.

Norwood was arrested for attempting to kidnap his own guitar player Kendall Rey Jones with the use of a stun gun.

"We all are a little crazy," Norwood said. "But my excuse is I just wanted to help him. I wanted to take him to a hospital so he could get psychologically evaluated."

Norwood and four others — Jones' brothers Brian Kai Jones and Darren Everette Jones, Jones' former fiancée Anna Claire Loynes and Jones' friend Jeffrey Connor — attempted to grab Jones on April 28 while he was walking in a San Francisco suburb. Jones' cries for help drew several onlookers causing Nor-

wood and the others to flee in a van.

Norwood said that months before, Jones had begun to lose all contact with reality. He anointed instruments before shows, heard voices in his head and later quit the band claiming it was under "demonic possession."

"Some of the people in his family said he was going through a religious experience," Norwood said, "and it wasn't no damn religious experience. He was losing his f---ing mind."

Eventually, Norwood and the others were fully acquitted and the remaining members of Fishbone — singer Angelo Moore, drummer Philip "Fish" Fisher, keyboardist Christopher Dowd, trumpet player Walter Kibby and guitarist John Bigham — hardly faltered with their music.

Ceaselessly spreading their various political messages, the members have continually delivered non-stop, frenetic stage shows across the country.

But even these performances have recently become a point of contention for

the bandmen. Critics have charged that young, white kids who merely are interested in a night of drunken moshing are the only ones to frequent the shows.

Norwood said that he does regret that people of other ethnic groups do not usually come to see them perform, but has great faith in their audience.

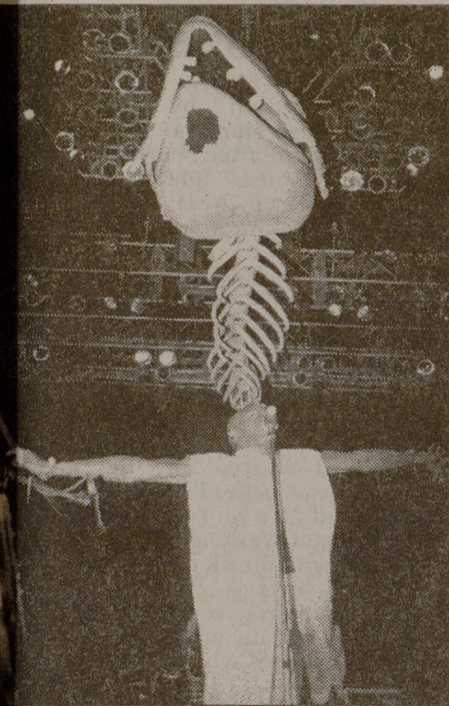
"I think that all of them do get the social and political commentary," he said. "When they sit at home and listen to the records, they dig what we're saying. It's just that when they come to the shows, they come to party."

Helen Triesch, a college marking representative for Sony Music, said that this enthusiasm they spark in the crowd is what truly makes for their popularity.

"They are always one with the audience," she said. "They just incite this amazing energy at all their shows."

And Norwood said he hopes to keep the energy continuing.

"We plan to be running around like Mick Jagger," he said. "I just hope we won't be as embarrassing."



Kyle Burnett/THE BATTALION

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