Stacy Cameron/ THE BATTALION

Le Sears prepares a cup of Espeso Macchiato at the Bryan Brewing Co.

I WANT A NEW BREW...

Bryan micro-brewery hopes good beer, low prices will draw crowds

By Haley Stavinoha
THE BATTALION

The first micro-brewery in the Brazos Valley begins brewing beer today.

Molly McWaters, public relations director and waitress, said the Bryan Brewing Co. is different from other breweries because it is a small business and beer will receive first-hand attention.

The idea all started when Thanh Nguyen and his roommate were driving to Austin to watch a foreign film and picked up a paper.

Thanh saw an advertisement for a micro-brewery and started brewing beer in his home.

Thanh decided it would be a great idea to bring it to Bryan.

The Bryan Brewing Co. currently offers 20 different kinds of imported beer, and will brew German, European and American beers.

McWaters said they hope to have a variety of beers available.

"With it being a small brewery, the menu will be able to change more often," she said.

The company has brand new machines, designed by DME Brewing services based out of Milwaukee, Wisc.

Gary Bauer, vice president of DME, explained the beer making process starts with wort, which is 10 percent malted barley.

The next steps are to add yeast, sugar and flavored carbon dioxide.

It then goes to a tank for boiling and fermentation.

Bauer said more micro-breweries are popping up to avoid the cost of importing other beers.

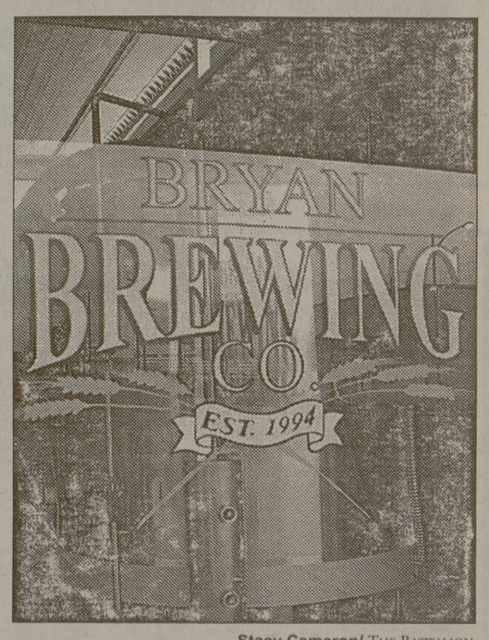
"Micro-breweries are now taking over 4 to 5 percent of all beer sales," Bauer said.

Besides brewing beer, the company opens every day at 11 a.m. to serve lunch and they also serve dinner.

"It's a great place to take a date because there is not an entree over $7," Sears said.

"It has a pricey atmosphere but is inexpensive," McWaters said.

Starting today, along with the first batch of beer, the Brewing Co. will have an acoustic folk music concert by the Car Box Poets.



Stacy Cameron/ THE BATTALION

The window of the Bryan Brewing Co. with a beer brewing machine behind it.

Confessions of a drag queen

By Constance Parten
THE BATTALION

Is it a man or a woman? Or is it a man in a woman's clothes?

The term "drag queen" for many people usually sparks images of effeminate men donning expensive evening gowns, gobs of makeup, large wigs and stiletto heels in order to live out their fantasy of being a woman.

But performing in drag has nothing to do with wanting to be a woman. At least not for A&M student Randy Dion.

Dion, a 22-year-old meteorology student, first started "doing drag" at Club 202 in Bryan about a year ago. Dion said he first took part in the shows because he loves performing and it gave him a great opportunity to entertain people.

But looking at him, it's hard to believe he could look like a woman.

"I love to be on stage in almost any capacity," Dion said. "I do drag because its really fun, but I wouldn't walk down the street that way. It's like being in character. Its acting."

Many people confuse drag queens with transvestites, Dion said. Drag queens are entertainers who dress for the stage and leave their outfits there. Transvestism is an entirely different realm, he said.

According to the American Psychological Association, transvestism is a fetish. Men or women who find sexual excitement on a regular basis from wearing apparel typically worn by the opposite sex are classified as transvestites.

But not all transvestites are drag queens, and not all drag queens are transvestites. In fact, the idea of men dressing as women for the sake of entertainment has a very mainstream, heterosexual history.

One of the most well known and most widely accepted cross-dressers was Milton Berle, who dressed as a woman on his television program during the late '50s and early '60s. Tom Hanks and Peter Scolari dressed as women in the early '80s television program "Bosom Buddies."

And Wesley Snipes and Patrick Swayze are set to star in a new movie in drag.

But the concept of cross dressing doesn't end there. Remember "Tootsie" and "Mrs. Doubtfire?" And don't forget Rupaul, the ultimate cross-dressing drag queen who's MTV hit "Supermodel (You Better Work)" made him internationally famous.

But Randy Dion has no delusions of grandeur.

"This is something I am doing for now just because it's fun," Dion said. "I really can't see myself doing this for very long."

Dion said his first shopping experience to buy outfits for his performance was awkward.

"Oh, god it was horrible," Dion said. "They didn't have my size in anything. When I finally was able to find something in my size I told the sales lady I needed to try it on. She was really nice about it, and since there weren't any women in the dressing room, she let me try it on in there."

Dion said when he came out of the dressing room to look at the dress and get the sales woman's opinion, he received stares from other shoppers.

"Other people were looking at me funny," Dion said, "but the sales lady said she thought it looked better on me than it would have on her."

Dion said perhaps the most difficult thing about dressing in women's clothing is finding shoes that fit.

"Shoes are a bitch," Dion said. "Guys' feet are a lot wider and just plain bigger. I wear an 11 in women's shoes."

Dion said the worst part about shoe shopping is finding attractive shoes in his size that aren't flats.

"What do they think," Dion said. "Women with large feet can't walk in heels?"

Dion said he has become proficient at finding attractive outfits for reasonable prices, even in College Station. He said the trick is to be frugal and look for sales.

"If you're really good at it you can find some good prices." Dion said. "I got a really good deal at a bridal shop here in town. I paid $75 apiece for two gowns. One originally cost $900 and the other was $500."

Even though he has had success with finding traditional drag attire, Dion is looking toward a more casual look for his future performances.

Brian Blake / THE BATTALION

Randy Dion, a 22 year old meteorology student enjoys entertaining people by dressing up in drag.

"I want to look more like a woman you would see just walking down the street," Dion said. "I've already done a Melissa Etheridge routine, and I liked the comfort of the outfit and the simplicity."

Dion said although he enjoys performing, he does not consider himself a drag queen.

"Lots of people experience a fascination with what the opposite sex is wearing," Dion said. "I'm giving myself a chance to experience that, but I don't identify myself as a drag queen, I just do drag shows. There are many other things going on in my life. I don't see myself doing this for more than another year."

It's good! Contest nets student $50,000 for 50-yard field goal

By Margaret Claughton
THE BATTALION

Brian Wright sits in front of a computer punching the keyboard feverishly and staring intently at the monitor. He looks like many of the other student workers in the Teague Research Center.

Judging from his casual student attire and down-to-earth look one would never guess he won $50,000 Sunday for kicking a 50-yard field goal.

Wright, a junior political science major, was selected to attempt the $50,000 kick after entering a drawing sponsored by a Houston radio station.

The station has run this promotional event for the last five years which allows one fan the chance to attempt a 50-yard field goal before each Oilers home game.

The selected fan can kick from three distances in an effort to make a field goal and subsequently win $50,000 dollars.

Wright said he received a call from the station informing him of his selection three hours before Bonfire began last Thursday.

The long wait before the actual event made him even more nervous about the kick.

"I had four days to think about it," he said. "Like 'what if my shoelace hits it?' I thought maybe I would rush it or the tee they provided me with would be different."

During the four days before the event, Wright said he practiced every day.

"It drove me nuts," he said. "I wanted to practice but I didn't want to wear my leg out. I was kicking 65 yards on Friday. But Saturday I was really worried."

Wright said he knew he could make the field goal, but feared the circumstances he was kicking under might affect his performance.

"I knew I had the ability," he said. "But I was worried because it was a one-shot deal and I had to do it in front of 45,000 people."

Upon his arrival at the Astrodome, Wright said he suffered from a severe case of butterflies.

He was not allowed any warm-up kicks and was soon whisked off into the middle of the Astrodome field.

"The radio people told me the whole thing was going to be real quick," he said.

But instead, the game announcers delayed the event to introduce Oiler alumni.

"They announced all the old players while I was standing there in the middle of the field," he said.

Wright said the extra time allowed him to relax, however, and get used to the large crowd.

After they were finished, Wright was introduced to the crowd. He said he was surrounded by radio personnel, some of which were attempting to shake him up.

"One guy said '$50,000' about four times," he said. " I think he was trying to make me nervous."

As one announcer lowered his hand, Wright let the pigskin have it.

"As soon as I kicked it I knew it was good," he said. "But they tell me I jumped about 10 feet when it went through."

Wright's father, Nick Wright, watched the kick from the stands.

"The kid must have jumped about 10 feet," he said. "He looked very surprised."

Deborah Ethridge, Wright's fianceé, said she screamed so loud she lost her voice.

"The whole stadium screamed," she said. "I've lived in Houston all my life and I've never heard the stadium so loud. Even some of the radio people mentioned it."

Nick Wright said he was confident of his son's ability.

"I was extremely delighted but not surprised," he said. "I knew he would make it. It was just the circumstances he had to kick under."

Wright said the radio station was delighted he made the kick as well.

"They were really happy to pay someone," he said. "I think they liked to see someone make it."

Pete Gardner, promotions director for KTRH, said in the Houston Chronicle that he enjoyed seeing the successful kick.

"It was really kind of neat," he said. "We've been doing this for five years and I was beginning to wonder if anyone was going to make one."

Gardner said the station carried an insurance policy on the kick, in case someone did make it.

Wright said he will probably receive the check at the Astrodome before the next Oilers home game.

"I'll probably save it, bank it," he said. "Maybe use it for a nice wedding, but that's 13 months away."

Wright said his successful kick is mainly due to his father's skillful coaching.

"He's the main reason I made it," he said. "My dad taught me how to kick when I was six or seven."

Nick Wright said he hopes Brian will use the money wisely.

"It would be nice if it would cover some of his education expenses," he said. "I'd like to see him go get his masters degree with it."

Ethridge said she would like to see Wright spend the money on himself.

"No one in the world deserves it more than he does," she said. "He should do something for himself."

Stew Milne / THE BATTALION

Brian Wright holds the football he kicked 50 yards on Sunday before the Houston Oilers game to win $50,000.