

# Free wheelin' in Aggieland

*Born to be wild: Aggie motorcyclists take adventure into the streets of Bryan-College Station*

By KEITH MCPHAIL  
THE BATTALION

Students find it is exciting, dangerous, and their parents do not approve. Some students do not care. Michelle Rea, a senior civil engineering major, has been cruising College Station on her 1982 Honda 600 for nearly a month. Her motorcycle is one of 600 on campus. While enjoying her new found freedom, she has been forced to keep her cycle from her parents.

"They couldn't live with giving me permission if I got hurt," Rea said. "They said if I did get one, they better find out about it. So they haven't."

Whether they are experienced bikers or riding for the first time, Aggies are having fun on their hogs this summer. They are shuttling back and forth to campus dodging through traffic with ease. They are parking at the lot. They are not waiting for cars to get out of their way. They do not have to walk a mile to class. They are not condemned to the rolling prisons, the A&M shuttle buses.

The Texas A&M Motorcycle Club members enjoy the freedom of the open road. The 30 active members frequently pack up and roll to Somerville and Sam Houston National Forest. The

club meets every Thursday at 9 p.m. at Sweet Eugene's to plan weekend rides and good times.

Students need not look far to find an excuse to buy a cycle, because of the seemingly endless searches for a parking space at the conveniently undersized campus parking lots. The avoidance of traffic and parking headaches is the excuse many new bikers use to rationalize becoming an easy rider.

Safety concerns are increasing as the repeal of the helmet law will see more riders mounting up without a brain bucket.

Jeff Brown, vice president of the Texas A&M Motorcycle Club and senior agricultural engineering major, said the law is a welcome change.

"People should have the right to choose, but riding without a helmet and safety gear is a bad idea," Brown said. Brown, who has never wrecked, claims motorcycles have been given a bad rap due to dramatic accidents.

"If riders pay attention to cars in the environment they ride, they should be all right," he said.

Philip Fisher has been around motorcycles and A&M all his life. In addition to being the owner of Motorcycles Plus, he was raised in a family of Aggies, and his father owned a College Station bike shop

when he was young. Fisher has been riding and racing motorcycles since he was a child without a serious wreck.

"The little old lady who didn't see the cycle is a cop-out — a lot of people just don't know what they are doing," Fisher said.

Motorcycle aficionados can find out more about the Motorcycle Club by consulting their web page at [www.tamu.edu/tamc](http://www.tamu.edu/tamc). Racing enthusiasts will find plenty of action this weekend as top bikers will be battling it out Saturday and Sunday at the Texas World Speedway.

Tom Williams, director of Parking, Transit and Transportation Services said cyclists have not caused problems on campus.

"The motorcycle population is an honorable bunch," Williams said.

Bikers live for the engine as their music, the sun on their backs, the freedom of owning the road — the thrill, the speed, the power. Live to ride, ride to live.

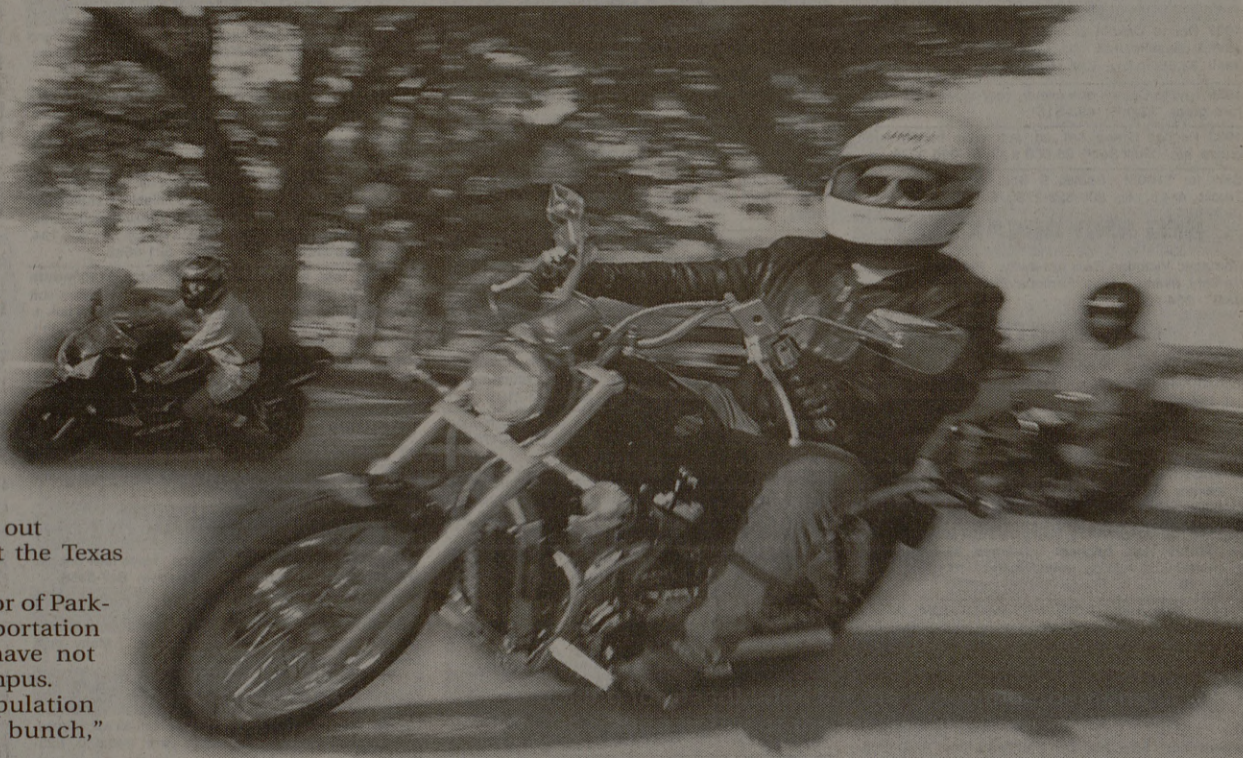


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: Stew Milne

Kevin Ruckstuhl on his Honda CBR 600 F2, Jeff Brown saddled on a Suzuki Intruder 800, and Scott Martin follows on his Suzuki Bandit 400, all officers in the A&M Motorcycle Club, ride through campus.

## WEEKEND PREVIEW

**Thursday  
July 3**

**Fireants**, a classic rock/rhythm and blues band from Bryan-College Station, is playing at Fitzwilly's at 9:30 p.m.

**Rocky Richardson**, a rock and country musician and comedian, is playing at Chelsea Street Pub and Grill at 9 p.m.

**Friday  
July 4**

**Blue Valentine**, a classic rock/rhythm and blues band from Bryan-College Station, is playing at Fitzwilly's at 9:30 p.m.

**Eugene Eugene**, a jazz band from Bryan-College Station, is playing at Sweet Eugene's House of Java at 9:30 p.m.

**Rocky Richardson**, a rock and

**Saturday  
July 5**

country musician and comedian, is playing at Chelsea Street Pub and Grill at 9 p.m.

**Mike Cancellare**, an acoustic rock musician from Lockhart, is playing at Sweet Eugene's House of Java at 9:30 p.m.

**Rocky Richardson**, a rock and country musician and comedian, is playing at Chelsea Street Pub and Grill at 9 p.m.

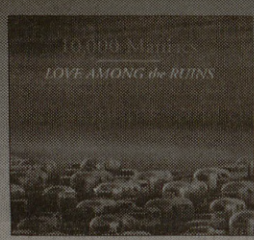
**Ty & the Semiautomatics**, a rock band from Houston, is playing at Fitzwilly's at 9:30 p.m.



Ty & the Semiautomatics

## 9,999 Maniacs shine without Merchant

**10,000 Maniacs**  
*Love Among the Ruins*  
Geffen Records  
★★★★ (out of five)



By STEPHEN LLANO  
THE BATTALION

It has been a long time since 10,000 Maniacs has released a new album. *Love Among the Ruins*, the first release from 10,000 Maniacs since 1994, proves it has been way too long.

It has been 3 years since the MTV Unplugged concert, when Natalie Merchant, lead vocalist, left the other 9,999 Maniacs to pursue a solo recording career. Without Merchant's unique and powerful vocals stamping a brand of uniqueness on 10,000 Maniacs' songs, it seemed no other vocalist could rise to the challenge of filling her shoes.

New vocalist Mary Ramsey not only fills the gap left by Merchant, but does it with force. In song after song, Ramsey demonstrates that 10,000 Maniacs has not only risen to the challenge — they have improved on it by finding a talented new singer. The combination of rich acoustic guitar and rhythm with her voice should keep this re-

lease in the CD player for quite some time.

Ramsey's former work includes recording with artists such as Ani DeFranco, Billy Bragg, and Goo Goo Dolls. She also plays violin and viola for the album, which adds brilliantly to the rich sound. Ramsey and John Lombardo, one of the earliest members of 10,000 Maniacs, formed a duo during the interim since Merchant's departure called John and Mary. After a couple of releases, the pair and the band decided to play together and see what would come of it. This resulting album is just perfect — not too fast, not too slow; mellow, but very upbeat and full of solid, well-written music and lyrics that will endure beyond most other recent releases getting major top 40 air play.

The addition of Ramsey has so improved the sound of the group that Merchant is barely missed. On tracks like "Rainy Day" and "Girl on a Train," her voice is so pervasive that it seems to bring a whole new dimension to 10,000 Maniacs.

Keyboardist Dennis Drew said he feels the addition of Ramsey is perfect. "What Mary brings to us is fantastic," Drew said in an interview available on their web site ([www.maniacs.com](http://www.maniacs.com)).

"Not only her singing, but also her status as another real soloist. We have a whole new color and flavor."

Some of the powerful and darker elements on earlier albums have been brushed aside in favor of this new sound, but it is not at all a disadvantage. In exchange, the band has risen to an entirely new level. Perhaps the days of Natalie Merchant are gone, but 10,000 Maniacs is here

to stay. It may be a new incarnation, but if *Love Among the Ruins* is any barometer of things to come, a new road of success for this band is already being paved.

In fact, this album could be considered a debut CD. The band has so much freshness to it, many wouldn't believe a band started in 1984 could conceive it.

10,000 Maniacs are back, and ready to write the next chapter in an already solid musical heritage. *Love Among the Ruins* is an incredible fresh start for any band, and a must-have for those who love fascinating twists on good mellow music.



10,000 Maniacs

*A Taste of Summer  
for Students of Texas A&M*

## Gaming Night at Hullabaloo

Come join us for an evening of FREE bowling, FREE pool, and FREE refreshments at Hullabaloo in the Memorial Student Center!!

**July 8 from 7 PM - 10 PM.**

Sponsored by  
TAVS, Inc.,



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University Center Complex, TAMU Bookstore,  
and Residence Life & Housing.



Persons with disabilities please call us at (409) 845-1515 so that we may assist you at the event.

### College Station Part-time Hardware Positions

Universal Computer Systems, Inc. is looking for candidates for the following positions at our College Station computer facility. Operating hours of the facility are 6a.m.-10p.m., Monday through Friday and 8a.m.-10p.m. Saturday. A candidate must be able to work at least 15 hours Monday-Friday and have completed at least one semester of college.

**Data Entry** - The College Station Repair facility handles computer repair for all our clients nation-wide and repairs more than 60,000 pieces of equipment per year. Persons working the data entry positions are responsible for maintaining data for more than 2000 parts both shipped from and received at the facility.

**Cleaning and Reclamation** - Persons involved in cleaning and reclamation must maintain upkeep of all equipment received and shipped from the facility. Involves disassembly of equipment, upkeep of pieces, and reassembly of equipment.

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