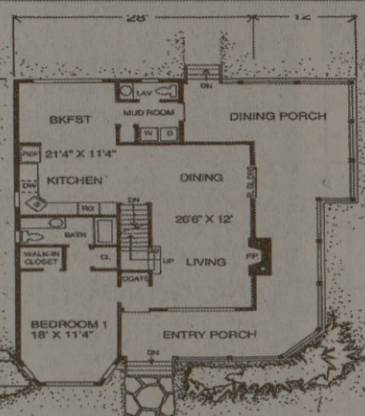


In 'Da House: Patio/Backyard



BY STEPHEN WELLS AND TRAVIS HOPPER
Staff writers

If a man's home is his castle, a student's home is his fallout shelter. After a hectic day of sitting through lectures dumbed and dismayed, visions of "Saved by the Bell" reruns and generic-brand corns become overpoweringly enticing. The backyard and the patio are living areas frequently overlooked in their utility the average student. The usefulness of a patio far outweighs the portion of the rent a student pays for it, offering everything from

comforting solitude to a prime spot for a wild, carnal, keg-standing bacchanal.

• **Making the outdoors snug 'n cozy**

For many students, the great outdoors is just the space between the air conditioning inside their car and the air conditioning inside their home. With the close living conditions most students deal with, making the best use of the room they have involves some unorthodox living arrangements.

Desiree Young, a sophomore journalism major, found one good solution for the lady who has everything but no place to put it.

"Living in a house with three other girls, a lot of our closet space is taken up with clothes," Young said. "Therefore we have to store some of our stuff in the balcony closet and on the patio."

Others are not so tidy. For many students, garbage days are few and far between. So, they deal with it in typical college student fashion. Cary Labrenz, a junior biomedical science major, is a second-hand sufferer of the "Sanford & Son" syndrome.

"It's not like home when people put those big trash pits outside," Labrenz said. "It's just kind of disgusting. It's not too hard for them to walk to the dumpster."

For others, the serenity of the outdoors or the chance to chat with a neighbor brings

them outside.

Mike St.Clair, a sophomore mechanical engineering major, goes outside to unwind without making enemies of his roommates.

"I play the guitar, and when my roommates are trying to study, I like to just go outside and play," St.Clair said. "It's nice to just sit outside and play and forget about school sometimes."

Others are more AbFab-esque while spending their quality relaxation time. They prefer to spend time outside in full Generation-X splendor, working awfully hard at not working.

Tiffany Gremillion, a senior speech communications major, said there is nothing quite like just taking time to watch the grass grow.

"You can't really tell our yard is a yard, because we never really mowed the grass," Gremillion said. "Most of the time when we go out to the front porch we just sit and drink wine."

• **"I was at this great party ..."**

More than any other room in the house, all the craziness that occurs outside begins with the phrase, "We were drinking, and..." One almost universal truth every student quickly learns is that the backyard or the balcony make a handy substitute bathroom

when time is not on their side.

Things like keg parties make omnipresent backdrops for varying displays of public embarrassment, some of which become matters of public record.

For some extra-special occasions (Mardi Gras comes immediately to mind), the balcony becomes a ritualized stage where the exploits of boozed-up twentysomethings can be forever remembered in a bead-induced haze.

For some overzealous party-goers, the pain of a hangover is dwarfed by the embarrassment caused by friends who refuse to tell one what they did but admit it was funny.

"We had a big party at our house, and the bathroom was being occupied, so this guy that had to puke just ran to the balcony and did it over the edge," Young said. "We had to go apologize to the downstairs neighbors the next day."

• **Taking home away from home**

For many students, one of the biggest shocks when they get to school is that Mom is not always around to be there for them. The adjustment from framed pictures and pancakes to sticky-tacked posters and a Coke on the run forces students to develop their own tastes.

Kristin Tuttle, a junior biomedical science

major, prefers the minimalist approach to exterior decoration.

"We don't do anything to the outside," Tuttle said. "It's too cold in the winter so we go inside. In the spring we put out our plants, but that's all we do."

Just because many students have little or no backyard, that doesn't stop them from being the typical All-American and having cookouts on the weekend.

"We put our plants outside," said Labrenz. "A lot of people have their chairs and barbecue pits outside, but we take ours inside. We don't barbecue that much anyway."

Other students like show their creative side by decorating for the holidays. A patio can go from a den of slack to a festive holiday haven with just a little light.

"Our balcony at our house isn't a real pretty place, so around Christmas we like to decorate it up with lights and bows," Young said. "Most of the year though it just has our plants and lawn chairs."

The student's patio and backyard are his jack-of-all-trades. A good patio can serve as a garbage chute, hall closet, bicycle rack, and smoker's lounge with no effort expended on the part of its owner. This flexibility makes every student's life a little less complicated, freeing up valuable brain cells for more "Saved by the Bell" and corn chips.

Reckless Panhandlers play coffee shop, release debut album *Mojo Kitty*

BY APRIL TOWERY
Staff writer

The men who comprise this local rock band don't look like they would be friends, much less spend several hours a week together supporting a common interest. Such a reckless and random sample of five could only be brought together by ... destiny.

"We met by accident," said vocalist and guitarist J Goodin. "I was in Copasetic Café, and my shirt got ragged on Mark's wheelchair. I don't believe in coincidences, so we started talking. We jammed the next night, and the night after that we played Fitzwilly's."

Reckless Panhandlers, as they call themselves, formed in October and recently recorded its debut album, *Mojo Kitty*, at Harry O's in Wheelock, Texas.

The band will be performing songs from *Mojo Kitty* at Eugene's Friday at 10 p.m.

Since the band's formation, things have fallen into place as the members combined their different backgrounds to form a "jazz to funk to punk to folk" sound.

Bassist Andrew Asare brought a reggae and ska sound to the band all the way from Ghana. Mark Sterle, who plays harmonica for the band, added a twist of Grateful Dead and a background in horn-playing. Guitarist and backup vocalist Mark Thomas lists Alice Cooper and Led Zepplin as influences. Drummer Will Nunez earned a degree in music at the University of Southern Mississippi and drummed along Bourbon Street for awhile.

This unique combination of sounds produced an album which Goodin describes as "a gamut of emotions."

"We start with off with a song that's really dancey and poppy, but really bitter," Goodin said. "Bitter without being hateful."

Sterle, who has been exposed to the B-CS music scene for 17 years said, in spite of his bias, he thinks the Panhandlers have what it takes to go professional.

"We all have a good ear for music and add styles and rhythms that are appropriate for the songs," he said. "We are able to get a crowd up and dancing with original music."

Promotions and booking agent Flakie Van Zyl also

is looking to the future and considering scheduling a European tour for the band.

"There is a lot of moving involved with this band," she said. "The name of the band evolved from a quote about hitchhiking. The music is the bus they're all getting on. They're all traveling, all on the highway. The songs are about transformation. There is always a ready growth."

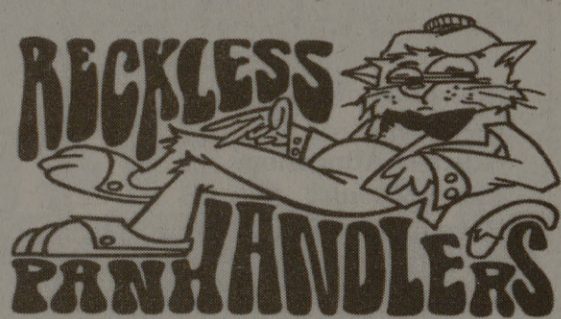
Part of the growing included a realization that this was to be their career, something to take seriously.

"We'd give up our day jobs in a heartbeat for this," Goodin said. "If the band never takes off, I may be living in my car when I'm 40, but I'll still be playing music."

Thomas added that, even with outside work, music continues to consume their everyday lives.

"Without it, it's like being dead," he said. The Panhandlers have proved that the band is very much alive, as concert dates have been scheduled across the area for the upcoming months.

Band members anticipate unity among the bands of Bryan-College Station, and hope to be a part of the history-making Brazos Bash at Reed Arena May 2. The Panhan-



dlers are living proof that any person with any personal history can find common ground with other musicians.

"We jam together because of our love of music," Goodin said. "It's a five-way partnership."

Goodin laughs and looks at the other band members and says what everyone is thinking.

"We want to be described as a kick-ass rock 'n' roll band, in a nutshell."

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Jan. 31	Recreational Day Olsen Grove Pavillion	1-4 p.m.
Feb. 1	Recreational Day Gibbons Creek Reservoir	1:30-5 p.m.
Feb. 3	Shirt and Tie Mtg. C.S. Conference Center (Invitation Only)	7:30-10:30 p.m.

For more information please contact:
Selections Chair: Ben Stover 764-0097
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- The Association of Former Students Reception Desk
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- Office of the Dean of each College
- Office of Graduate Studies
- Student Activities Office, Suite 125 Koldus Building
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Applications Due by 5:00 p.m., February 9, 1998 at the Clayton Williams Alumni Association Reception Desk. Gook Luck.