



Valentine's Day should be spent with family, not significant others



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staff writer

I do not have psychic powers, but I already know that this week, I will see enough hearts and flowers to make me puke.

No, I'm not one of those desperate, lonely and bitter girls who complains about Valentine's Day because I don't have a dozen roses on my kitchen table. I've had a dozen roses before, and I found that they were absolutely useless. I mean, if someone wants to spend \$50 on me, I'd prefer receiving something that performs some kind of function. Why don't people buy each other books or CDs for Valentine's Day? Instead, they waste money on something that dies before the weekend is over.

Instead of buying me jewelry, pay my rent. I'd rather be able to live comfortably than have a gold necklace to wear on the many occasions that I attend the opera.

It also does not makes sense that a day is set aside to celebrate love. And yet some people spend this day with a boyfriend or girlfriend. Forget that — I love my parents and my sister and would rather spend my time and money doing something for them than for some guy who will take me to dinner.

Besides, I honestly don't have time for a boyfriend. I don't have time to do my laundry. I don't have time to eat anything that can't be microwaved. The ideal date for me is a good book and a cup of coffee. And I've found that a book doesn't lie about calling me the next day. A book doesn't care if it sees me with no makeup on and my hair in a ponytail. And I can make the first move with a book without being labeled a liberal, free-thinking stalker. In fact, books want me to make the first move.

love, it should be centered on the family, because our family members usually love us no matter what. They don't cheat on us with better looking families. They don't go out of town without calling. Families represent love much more than a "significant other."

Several years ago, my father gave me the charming nickname "Ape." Hopefully, it wasn't because I reminded him of a hairy gorilla. To reiterate his love for me, he gives me a stuffed ape for Valentine's Day every year. Yes, it's cheesy, but it means more to me than roses and chocolate ever could.

I think females are raised to believe that if they don't have a date for Valentine's Day, they are useless human beings who will grow up to be old maids and never get married because they have the dreaded curse — a good personality.

Why is it that having a good personality connotes ugliness? A good personality should be something everyone wants to have, yet it's embarrassing when someone says you have one. I think I'd rather make people laugh and be able to carry on a worthwhile conversation about religion or world hunger than be a size six, blonde-haired blue-eyed model, although it would be nice to get the attention those perfect model-types get. But just for a day or two. After that, I'd go back to the good personality.

And why is it that guys will not be sitting around wearing all black and listening to Alanis Morissette on Saturday night because they don't have dates? Because they don't care. It's girls who feel the overwhelming need to get married. And they are so afraid that if they are 21-years-old and don't have a Valentine, that must mean they never will. Okay, get over it. Big deal. Go out with your friends and the people who think you have a good personality.

PLEASE SEE **VALENTINE'S** ON PAGE 4.



BY JAMES FRANCIS
Aggielife editor

not Cary Grant. There is no deserted landscape where a line can come from nowhere chase him down the road. Moreover, Alfred Hitchcock nothing to do with this event. The title, however, North By Northgate Music Festival, might be a bit related to the classic *North by Northwest*, or even Austin music celebration, *By Southwest*.

Let it be known, the upcoming music extravaganza scheduled for March 27 and 28 will be the first of its kind for the Mansfield A&M University and College Station population.

The two-day music festival is scheduled to host over 30 bands from across the United States, and promoters expect it to attract about a thousand participants.

For an event of this size, five venues (Shadow on, Fitzwilly's outside, Fitzwilly's upstairs, the Cow Hop and the Crooked Path Ale House) have been selected and negotiations are in the works to secure two more.

Those individuals who plan to take part in the festival, both on the night and two-night access bands will be made available behind all the planning, and people would wonder how it ever came to be in the

stage that it is today.

Nathan McFall, event coordinator and a senior environmental science major, said the idea of North By Northgate came to him while attending the Austin festival. "It originated at South By Southwest," he said. "I volunteered at their conference and thought we could do this [the festival] in College Station."

So plans started brewing, and soon enough, the music festival became a reality.

"I put together a formal proposal," McFall said, "and then we ran with it."

As event coordinator, McFall said his job is to "cross the t's and dot the i's."

"A lot of people say I'm the man behind the train, the power behind it," he said. "I'm there to make sure everything gets done to make sure it's an organized festival."

Because the event will be held in Northgate venues, McFall said it should be especially beneficial to them.

"I think it will be great for them," he said. "All it can do, assuming it goes well, is help their businesses."

Sponsors of the event, such as the city of College Station, members from radio stations KHLR 103.9 FM and KTSR 92.1 FM and the Northgate Merchants Association, are making arrangements to have a Thursday-night preshow on the promenade being constructed behind Northgate. The purpose of the preshow would

be to get people ready for the two main days of the festival; it would be a means to let people know there is more music to follow.

"The plan is to have an outside-promenade free show to kick things off," McFall said, "and get people excited about what's about to happen."

McFall said another focus of the festival is to have bands that are not overexposed perform.

"We're trying to get a band that doesn't come around here a lot, but [a band] everybody would be excited about," he said. "I want people to come away and say, 'I saw such-and-such band and they rocked.'"

Although some people might still consider North By Northgate to be a mirror of South By Southwest, McFall said the Austin festival is great, but there are differences.

"It's nothing like the Austin festival," he said. "It's nowhere near the size and doesn't have the film aspect. I don't have a problem when people compare them."

With plans still being finalized, the organizers of the festival said they are hoping everything goes without a hitch.

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