

Bar? None.

By NATALIE COBB
Staff Writer

All around Bryan-College Station, night clubs are changing their formats for the summer. Some are closed for the summer because of the number of students that are gone, while others are making changes to their clubs to increase the quality of night life in the Brazos Valley.

Downtown Bryan has been a destination for students when it comes to clubbing, but students might find their plans altered if they try to hit the area during the summer.

The Dixie Theater, one of the many live music venues in the area, is closed for the summer and will reopen under new ownership, a new name and a new format in August.

Junior marketing major Emily Hollier said she will miss the old Dixie.

"I liked the Dixie Theater a lot," Hollier said. "I'm sorry to see it close because there aren't very many live-music clubs to go to here in Bryan and College Station, especially in the summer."

"I am looking forward to the new club and hearing new music though in the fall."

The new format for the Dixie Theater will bring changes, while keeping with the spirit of the original club.

The club's new owner, Rami Cerone, said the format will be a mix of old and new.

"One night a week we will have a dance night at the club, and two nights of the week we will have live bands," Cerone said. "We are hopeful that this new club and new format will bring in students that want to have a good time. It will open in the fall since more students will be in town then."

However, the Dixie Theater is not the only club where changes are being made for the summer.

In order to accommodate fewer students in the summer, several College Station hot spots are closed. The Barracuda Bar on Wellborn is one club which is closed for the summer will reopen in August.

Amanda Barrett, a junior speech communications major, said

she frequented the club.

"I wish Barracuda was still open; there aren't many clubs that play alternative music and now that Barracuda is closed for the summer we have been going to other clubs," Barrett said. "We often go to Woody's, which is similar to Barracuda."

Woody's is a new bar in College Station in the Woodstone Center and has changed its format this summer from an over 21 years of age admission to an 18 years of age and over club.

Gary Seaback, owner of both clubs, said drawing people to Woody's through closing Barracuda for the summer was the goal.

"We closed Barracuda for the summer to draw more people to Woody's; both are great dancing clubs and both play a variety of music," Seaback said.

Another factor in closing Barracuda was concern for keeping people in one location.

"We also wanted people to be able to go from The Tap to Woody's without having to drive across town to Barracuda," Seaback said. "We can keep everyone in one convenient location for the summer."

Seaback said students can expect some changes when Barracuda reopens.

"We are making some changes at some of our bars this summer, we will be remodeling Barracuda and will be serving food at The Tap in the fall with the return of students," Seaback said.

"We tried Woody's as a 21-years-of-age-and-older club for a whole semester. We gave it a chance, but decided to change to an 18 and over club to get people there this summer," Seaback said.

There are many venues in Bryan and College Station that feature live music. The same problems that dance clubs face and bars also affect live music.

Talent booking agent Willie Bennett said he uses discretion when bringing acts to town during the summer.

"During the school year I am careful who I bring in to play; I am even more careful in the summer," Bennett said. "The number of students attending concerts is in direct relation to the number of students at A&M."

However, for some concerts in the summer, attendance is still high. Pat Green said the lack of students this summer had little effect on attendance at his concert last Thursday night at Shadow Canyon.

"We love playing shows in the summer because we can be more intimate with the crowd," Green said. "We can play our music in a less-crowded setting where everyone has an opportunity to really listen."

Whatever the season, clubs around town are adjusting to fit the needs and lifestyles of Aggies.

Fall promises to bring on new formats for several clubs and although some night spots have changed things for the summer, Bryan-College Station club owners promise summer night life is still as hot as ever.

While "Aggie nightlife" quickly becomes an oxymoron with numerous clubs shutting down, some are trying new ways to keep the Aggie "spirits" alive.

At left, bartender John Whittington, Class of '86, spins a drink for Brandy Peacock, a senior journalism major; Jeff Slanker, a junior accounting and finance major and Wende Watkins, a senior speech communication major.



PHOTO BY MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

Once again, it's Disney-by-the-numbers Surprise!

Mulan
Starring Pat Morita, Harvey Fierstein and Eddie Murphy
Directed by Barry Cook and Tony Bancroft
Rated G
(B-)

At the end of *Mulan*, the Chinese Emperor (Pat Morita) waxes on Zen-style about the brave and selfless actions of young Mulan to save the Chinese people from the Huns.

"The flower that blooms in adversity is the most rare and beautiful of all," he says. And while as a movie *Mulan* is quite beautiful, no one should mistakenly believe it is rare or a blooming flower.

Like the often advertised scene of a thousand snarling Huns charging down the mountain on horseback — lifted directly from the stam-pede scene of *The Lion King* — so much of *Mulan* is derivative Disney formula movie making.

Mulan questions societal norms through the traditional Chinese myth of a young woman who enrolls in the

army disguised as a foot soldier in order to spare her aging, crippled father.

Just when she thinks she has failed her family and country, Mulan reaches deep down inside and musters up the courage to overcome all the odds. Talk about unique concepts.

Disney went to great lengths to blend Eastern and Western art, resulting in one of the most innovative sequences in recent memory.

And while the computer graphic sequences are easy to spot for their fluidity, they never fall prey to the embarrassing "rotoscope" effect prominently featured in rival animated films such as *Anastasia* and *American Pop*.

The hallmark of any Disney cartoon is the music. *Mulan's* music is uninspiring and highly forgettable, save perhaps for the Donny Osmond-voiced "I'll Make A Man Out Of You."

Every character except the most stereotypically Asian characters have severely Anglo voices. While Disney should be given credit for using Asian-American actors for the voices, most of them just seem a bit too American. But maybe that's expecting a little too much for a cartoon.

The story, while inspiring, lacks the pacing of past Disney animated classics.

Now if only Mulan would have tried to free Tibet...

- Chris Martin

'Tepid Haha' combines Hanson and Southern rock

By APRIL TOWERY
Opinion Editor

Friday evening's show at Double Dave's on Northgate will be a homecoming of sorts for Tepid Haha band members Aaron Franklin, Chris Heintzen and Brian Ziprin.

The musicians met at College Station's A&M Consolidated High School before moving to Austin and forming the band. The trio recently added bass player Dave Lamplugh.

Guitarists and vocalists Heintzen and Ziprin, original members of Tepid Haha, formed the band in 1995, their freshman year at the University of Texas, for a talent contest at their dorm. When Franklin joined them in Austin the next year, he immediately signed on as the drummer.

With influences ranging from Hum to Hanson, Tepid Haha's sound defies description.

"It's somewhere between indie, heavy and melodic," Franklin said. "I'd compare us to Hanson — we're all baby-faced and have long, blond hair. Our shows are normally pretty inter-

esting, just a good rock 'n' roll show with the heart and soul of southern rock."

What makes the band unique is its onstage personality. The live performances are a cross between music and stand-up comedy.

Franklin has been known to write songs with topics ranging from Oprah Winfrey to high-school classmates. One song was about a girl with braces whose mouth was so big it attracted refrigerator magnets.

The musicians tell jokes in-between songs and while restringing their instruments. One thing is for sure — the "haha" in the band's name is there for a reason.

Although the band members take a lighthearted approach to their shows, they are serious about their music. Because the members are close friends, they spend almost all of their free time together "jamming" and practicing their songs.

Heintzen gave the band's music a unique description.

"It's fast-paced oral ecstasy," Heintzen said.

