

THE AG KICK-OFF

Seventh annual concert launches new semester at Texas A&M

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Every fall Aggie traditions move full swing throughout Texas A&M campus, ranging anywhere from random wildcatting to Silver Taps.

But for those students looking for a new way to celebrate the Aggie Spirit, the Ag Kick-Off just may be an optimal solution. Growing into one of the bigger, more contemporary traditions, the Ag Kick-Off is scheduled for its seventh annual concert tonight at The Texas Hall of Fame.

Mark Schaberg, an Ag Kick-Off promoter from the sponsor Popular Talent, said the event was an immediate success when the first concert premiered seven years ago.

"The first Ag Kick-Off was in 1993," Schaberg said. "We did a big pre-party concert early before the first yell out at Wolf Pen Creek, and we headlined Robert Earl Keen. It went really well, and we decided to continue the Ag Kick-Off as a new A&M tradition."

Schaberg said the kick-off party celebrates Aggie traditions and has already had a large impact on campus life when the concert rolls around in September.

"It really has become a new tradition on its own," Schaberg said. "All the on-campus organizations, frats, sororities, etc., have to call us and schedule their September events around the concert."

This year, Pat Green is scheduled to headline the show, with Cory Morrow and the Dub Miller & HWY 6 Band. Unlike years past, the bands will be playing an indoor show at the Texas Hall of Fame, rather than outdoors at Wolf Pen Creek.

Don Dickenson, assistant manager of the Texas Hall of Fame, said he has been working very hard preparing for the show.

"We're really excited about the Ag Kick-Off being at the Texas Hall of Fame this year," Dickenson said. "It's been a lot of work to prepare for since we've had so many shows here recently, but I think it's going to pay off in the end."

Schaberg said the decision to change the venue was made when the 1998 show was delayed due to weather.

"We were bringing out Vanilla Ice and Run D.M.C. and Jerry Jeff Walker, so it was a cool line up," Schaberg said. "But the weather got real bad that night, and we had to postpone the show for two weeks later and it was a real mess. We don't want to have to deal with that again."

Karl Schutz, a sophomore chemistry major, is looking forward to this year's show mainly because Pat Green is headlining.

"I've never been before, but when I saw that Pat Green was going to be there this year, I decided to go," Schutz said. "I don't even know what other bands are playing."

Pat Green said he is equally excited about heading the Ag Kick-Off this year. He said having shows like the Ag Kick-Off is a real compliment to Texas A&M University.

"I think it says a lot for College Station and the students and fans of Texas music there," Green said. "A few years ago, no one knew who we were, and they've supported us all the way through."

Green said Aggieland shows are always a little more rowdy than shows in other Texas towns.

"Aggies seem to get into the music a little bit more," Green said. "They seem to be more interested in the show holistically whereas in other places, the fans just seem interested in hearing certain songs and then going back drinking beer, which is okay if that's what they're for, but it's always nice to see fans up at the stage and singing along with you the whole time. It's really a tremendous high."

Green has been part of the Ag Kick-Off line up twice before, but this is the first year that he is able to headline the concert. Green said fans can expect his usual craziness this year.

In upholding the Aggie spirit, Green said three of his band members are not only current Aggies but are planning on dunking their rings during the show.

"I've got three Aggies in the band, all of them seniors," Green said. "We've got Brendon Anthony on the fiddle, Brett Danaher on the lead guitar and Justin Pollard is our drummer. And I don't know when they plan on doing it exactly, but all three of them are wanting to dunk their rings out there at the Texas Hall of Fame."

Green is not the only band with Aggies in it. Dub Miller, Class of '97, and front man of the Dub Miller & HWY 6 Band, said he is looking forward to returning to Aggieland.

SEE Kick-Off ON PAGE 5.



Pat Green, Brett Danaher and Brendon Anthony play last semester at Shadow Canyon.

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