



Two Spy's ROAD TO SUCCESS

Local band has come a long way from small beginnings

By BETH BROWN
THE BATTALION

The group began, as many bands do, with two guys sitting around, strumming guitars and playing with lyrics. But the members of the band knew they wanted to do more with their talent, so they formed a band.

After going through several different members and even different names, they became Two Spy.

The band explains that their name came from two places. They were inspired to use the word 'spy' from the popular comic strip from *Mad Magazine*, "Spy Versus Spy," and the word 'two' was derived from a story in the Bible.

"We decided to make it something that had to do with the Bible ... there were 12 spies that went to check out the Holy Land, and according to God, 10 were bad and two were good. So, we decided to be Two Spy ... it's catchy," McLawhon said.

Two Spy will perform at Third Floor Cantina tonight. All five members of Two Spy are A&M students.

The band comprises lead vocalist Ryan McLawhon, a junior speech communications major; lead guitarist Trent Foley, a senior computer science major; bass player Russell Wedelich, a senior electrical engineering major; drummer Eric Loftis, a sophomore music major and keyboard player Chris Tucker, a sophomore general studies major.

McLawhon explained that the guys had a band in high school but did not take it very far. Once they came to A&M, Two Spy, which had seven

members until this year, began to play at local clubs and bars such as Zapatos, Shadow Canyon, Double Dave's, Rudder Fountain and the Didger Doo, which the guys affectionately call "the Didge."

A favorite spot for the band is Third Floor Cantina, where they have played several times.

"Third Floor had helped us out a lot," McLawhon said. "They really like us, which is cool. They recorded our live album, and I'm sure we'll have more Third Floor shows coming up."

McLawhon said the band also has played in Houston and Copper Mountain, Colo., but "mostly we just stick around here because we have school."

Foley said the band likes playing in College Station because of the small-town atmosphere.

"There are far fewer bands here, so it's not as easy to get lost in a thousand bands," he said.

The band's sound is influenced by various bands, including Radiohead, Tori Amos, 311, the Dave Matthews Band and McLawhon's favorite band, Toad the Wet Sprocket.

McLawhon said listeners can expect "a lot of fun music they can jump around to, as well as stuff they can sit back and listen to for the nice melodies."

"Hopefully, we can get people to think about things," Wedelich said.

Come see Two Spy at Third Floor Cantina tonight. Opening band Exist will perform at 9 p.m. and Two Spy is slated to play at 10:30 p.m. As Wedelich said, "We just like to jam and have fun."

Chasing a Rock 'n' Roll dream

Linus following their goals, will play Friday at Third Floor Cantina

By JANE HOLDEN
THE BATTALION

Linus has a goal in life, far loftier than any modern malady of wanting to express their feelings or be understood by their peers. Singer Chris Pate, guitarist Steve Dokken, bass player Eric Dickerson and drummer Sean Eubanks want to be the most successful rock-and-roll act to ever come out of College Station, Texas, and their confidence is backed by something greater than braggadocio: determination.

"Most bands would have quit by now," Pate said. "We've been ripped off, taken advantage of, and lost members ... About a year and a half ago, we had to really ask ourselves if it was time to quit, but we decided to keep going. Now it's to the end."

Tonight at 10 p.m., Linus, with opening guests Lure and Thread, will perform at the Third Floor Cantina to release their new, self-titled CD. Linus fans should be pleased with the new maturity of an already distinctive sound, blending vocal harmony with hard rock. "Satin," the first single off the new album, reflects this combination and is the product of a developed song-writing process.

Park sings to an intense musical backdrop, "And this dress it fits you so exceedingly well." It is the kind of song that causes the listener to hum its harmony while banging along on an imaginary drum set. "Satin" reveals a sensitivity uncommon to most hard rock music, and the new CD has eleven more tracks packed with just the same punch.

"We strive to express a positive image," Eubanks explained, to which Pate added, "We don't want to sing about things that don't matter. We just want to stand for something, as hard as that is and do something my mom can be at least somewhat proud of."

Linus' eclectic sound manages to remain true to the band's own musical message while taking cues from its rock-and-roll predecessors. Linus is influenced by Pate's passion for the Smashing Pumpkins, Dickerson's interest in hard rock and 1980s music and Dokken's cutting edge enthusiasm for heavy metal influences such as Korn and Slipknot. Toss in Eubanks' country music craze and the outcome is a dark and smooth melodic hard rock sound with a modern twist. If the band's recent experiences are any indication of this concoction's success, it would appear that the future holds great things for this College Station-based quartet.

Among the listed credentials on the band's resume are an opening show for Buckcherry in 1999 and an East Coast tour in 2000, on which Linus dazzled crowds at New York's CBGBs. "Anyone who is anyone in the music industry started at CBGBs," Pate said. "In fact, U2 played their first United States show there and it was definitely the coolest part of our tour." Linus also performed in Boston, Nashville, Atlanta and New Orleans and performs regularly in both Houston and Oklahoma City.

Pate, Dokken, Dickerson and Eubanks have had their share of ups and downs but the band believes they have what it takes in terms of talent and determination to become that big success story that originated in College Station.

"It would be really nice for the whole thing to start here," Pate said. "We would love to be the first local band signed by a major label." The aspiring stars shared the same quiet confidence as Eubanks concluded, "I bleed maroon."

Tonight at the Third Floor Cantina, Linus will proudly perform songs off their new album. Fans are encouraged to arrive at 10 p.m. and take advantage of the early opportunity to lay hands on Linus' new self-titled CD. The cover charge is \$5.

Weekend Preview

Thursday

Third Floor Cantina:

The local rock, funk and folk band Two Spy will perform at 10 p.m. The energetic and melodic sound of this multi-faceted group is inspired by artists ranging in genre from Tori Amos to 311. The intense musical groove of special guest, Exist, will accompany the sound, adding a dash of flavor described as "pleasantly tasteful but definitely not decaf." Cover charge is \$5.

Big Pauly's:

Acoustic singer Shane Walker will play a blend of original and covered songs of the Texas country and blues flavor with special guest, Scott Austin. The show will start around 9 p.m. There is no cover charge.

Crooked Path We House:

At 9:30 p.m. Jay Goodin, a regular at the ale house, will perform some classic rock covers with a splash of original acoustic rock. There is no cover charge.

Zapatos Cantina:

Wide Open Mic Night, hosted by Chad Boyd, will begin on the porch stage at 8:30 p.m. Musicians are invited to express themselves with cover songs or originals. There is no cover charge.

Friday

Third Floor Cantina:

The Linus CD release party will kick off at

the Cantina tonight at 10 p.m. with special guests, Oklahoma-based Lure and local heavy metal band, Thread. Cover is \$5.

Big Pauly's:

At 10 p.m. Thanks for the Update, a local rock band with an alternative twist, will be performing for guests at the pizzeria. There is no cover charge.

Fitzwilly's:

At 9:30 p.m. local act Feeding Five Thousand will perform on the outdoor stage. Cover charge is \$5.

Sweet Eugene's:

Bobby Hall and the Ice Cold Blues Band will perform trendy blues music while listeners enjoy a cup of joe. Cover charge is \$1.

Zapatos Cantina:

At 9 p.m., 6 Bridges will entertain guests on the porch stage with acoustic guitars and harmonization to familiar tunes by Jack-O-Pierce and Cowboy Mouth as well as some originals. There is no cover charge.

Saturday

Third Floor Cantina:

At 10 p.m. the legend is here: Chris Duarte will be performing at the Cantina. Cover charge is \$ 10.

Big Pauly's:

Show is to be announced.

Fitzwilly's:

Blue Valentine will entertain bar guests on the outdoor stage at 9:30 p.m. Cover charge is \$3.

Sweet Eugene's:

Austin band Woodwork will be performing alternative rock for latte-sipping coffee-house guests from 9 to midnight. Cover charge is \$1.

Zapatos Cantina:

At 9 p.m. local favorites, 2welveLead, will be performing on the patio stage. This hard rocking alternative band will be laying down the electronics for the night and giving guests at the Cantina a rare acoustic show. There is no cover charge.

Sunday

Back Porch at Shadow Canyon:

Corbin Maclain and K.O.R.A. are bringing the back porch to Shadow Canyon Sunday. The roots-rock, Americana singer Chris Knight will be performing all originals, including the famous single, "It ain't easy being me." The show will last from 8 to 11 p.m.