

# AggieLife

THE BATTALION

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## Breaking up is hard to do

Toadies are parting ways after 12 years, will perform a farewell tour in Texas

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THE BATTALION

It has been five months since the release of the Toadies sophomore album, *Hell Below/Stars Above*, and after 12 years and two albums the Toadies will play five more shows in Texas before calling it quits.

The Fort Worth band, formed in 1989, faced change after change before their career took off. After the transitions, the band's final line up was in tact. Todd Lewis (vocals and guitar), Lisa Umbarger (bass), Clark Vogeler (guitar) and Mark Reznicek (drums) found a mix that worked.

With the release of *Rubberneck* in August 1994 the Toadies started to gain national recognition. By the end of 1996 the album reached platinum status. Seven years later, the Toadies graced the music scene with *Hell Below/Stars Above*.

The success of their sophomore album *Hell Below/Stars Above* led to a new album more than a year to be noticed and there was hope that it would be the same for *Hell Below/Stars Above*.

Since July, rumors had been floating of the Toadies break-up and on Aug. 22 Lewis called the *Dallas Observer* to officially announce the band's breakup. Lewis told the *Observer* that the break up was a result of Umbarger's decision to leave the band, as well as overwhelming frustrations with the music industry.

"She's (Umbarger) given a lot of reasons, but I haven't been able to make a whole lot of sense out of it," Lewis said. "She's going through a lot of life changes. I don't know how long she'd been thinking about it. You know, who knows? She's decided

she wants to have a real job and do boring, real-people stuff."

Josh Cisnerof, who promotes Toadies concerts, said that the Toadies did not want to play without Umbarger. He said that if it were not for the fans, the Toadies would not do any shows. The Toadies had cancelled several shows around the nation, but wanted to have a small farewell tour in Texas, he said.

"The Toadies are a very family-oriented band and they just couldn't see themselves playing too many shows without her (Umbarger)," Cisnerof said.

Lewis told the *Observer* it did not take him long to decide that if Umbarger was not going to continue playing with the Toadies, then the Toadies would not play without her. Lewis said that Umbarger and he had been together since the beginning, and it would not seem right to continue without her.

Cisnerof said that Umbarger leaving the band

was not the only factor to consider in the break up. He said there had been problems with the Toadies and the record label, Interscope Records, as well.

"The label was doing the usual label thing: 'If you don't sell X number within X number of days, then you suck,'" Lewis told the *Observer*.

As for the band members' plans after the farewell tour, everyone will be independent. According to Cisnerof, Reznicek wants to continue with music. Cisnerof said Reznicek has already

established a band named Warsaw and already has a date to play at The Metro in

Austin. According to *The Observer*, Vogeler wants to attend film school in Los Angeles and Lewis will continue with music. Cisnerof said Lewis is planning to take a long break before starting any projects.

"Todd is wanting to take a break from everything," Cisnerof said. "He's tired of the politics and

lawyers in the industry. I think it will be a while before Todd comes out with anything."

As for Umbarger, Cisnerof said she may possibly move back to Australia, although that has not been confirmed. He said that during the long break between *Rubberneck* and *Hell Below/Stars Above*, Umbarger started concentrating more on her personal life. Umbarger wanted to get back to the things she had been involved in during the Toadies seven-year break, Cisnerof said.

The kick-off tour began Sunday in Austin with opening bands such as Pushmonkey, The Reverend Horton Heat, Blue October and local favorite, Feeding 5,000.

Feeding 5,000 band member Jeremy Rocha said there are many big bands that support the Toadies and it is sad that they are breaking up.

"I think it's really cool that the Toadies are sticking to their roots and playing in Texas," Rocha said.

Other show on the Texas tour include:

Sept. 27 in San Antonio at Sunset Station  
Sept. 28 in Houston at the Aerial Theatre  
Sept. 29 in Dallas at the Bronco Bowl  
Sept. 30 in Lubbock at The Pavilion

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