

Same Song, Different Tune

Northgate Music Festival brings bands from around the nation to College Station

By Lycia Shrum
THE BATTALION

The music festival once known as North By Northgate has changed identity.

Not only has the name changed to the Northgate Music Festival, but other changes — some large and some small — have occurred.

The 2002 Northgate Music Festival was modified for a more festive appeal since its debut in 1998.

The charities have changed, the number of performers has increased, a new stage has been added and vendors will be selling everything from food to crafts.

Debbie Coleman, Northgate Music Festival Event Coordinator, said the changes that were made should provide an exciting music festival this year.

"We wanted the festival to have a more festive atmosphere, both inside the venues and outside," Coleman said. "Our hope is that people will come to Northgate for dinner, look at some of the local artist's work and then enjoy the music, making it an entire night's event."

Coleman said the stage added will highlight local bands, and it will be behind Freebirds.

Not only will the festival promote local music from across the state, but the festival will have a charitable purpose.

Since its beginning in 1998, the festival has raised money for various local charities. Coleman said this year's proceeds will go to Caring Aggies 'R Protecting Over Our Lives (CARPOOL), Scotty's House and Twin City Mission.

Adam Sheedy, director of marketing for the festival, said booking headlining musicians is not centered on how much the festival will profit.

"It's not about how much money we can spend to get somebody like Neil Diamond to play at Shadow Canyon," Sheedy said. "It's about how much money we can save to give to CARPOOL, Twin City Missions and Scotty's House."

Sheedy said there is a fine line between offering the most entertaining festival possible and being able to donate as much money as possible to the underprivileged of the Brazos Valley.

During the past four music festivals the increase in proceeds went from \$7,000 to \$15,000.

With an increase in the success and growth of the festival, it was inevitable that more man hours were needed to run the festival. The Northgate Music Festival, like many music festivals, will be run by volunteers.

Nearly 230 volunteers will contribute their time to this year's festival and Michael Miori, volunteer coordinator for the festival, said the festival would not be possible without their help.

The volunteer application deadline was extended because there were not enough volunteers signed up. However, Miori said they now have more than enough volunteers to ensure the festival runs smoothly.

The Northgate Music Festival has grown to become one of the most anticipated festivals in Bryan-College Station and this year will consist of 169 musicians, 230 volunteers and a 10-person planning committee.

Amanda Torres, a member of the planning committee, said she only sees the festival getting bigger and better.

"I already see possible future opportunities opening up," Torres said. "As the amount of bands that apply continues to grow, so does the festival's future. I see the festival continuing to provide the local area with a way to experience live music and help the local music scene as well as continue to provide help to local charities."

Eden Automatic will perform at Fitzwilly's Upstairs Friday at 11:45 p.m.



Catch the McKay Brothers on the Tradition Stage Friday at 8:00 p.m.

Pilot Radio will perform at Crooked Path, Friday at 10:00 p.m.



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Single Frame Ashtray brings innovative music to Northgate Music Festival

One of the best things about the Northgate Music Festival is the bands that travel from out of town to give Bryan-College Station a taste of music from the other realm.

One band that will be adding flavor to the festival is the Austin-based group Single Frame Ashtray.

Brendon Reilly, guitar, bass, vocals, synthesizer; Jason Schleter, guitar, bass, synthesizer, piano, organ, vocals; and Adreon Henry, drums, synthesizer, turntable, vocals of Single Frame Ashtray are always stoked to be playing for crowds in Bryan-College Station.

"We have more fun playing in College Station than any of the other cities we play in," Reilly said. "The Bryan-College Station audiences we've played for seem to be really hungry for innovative

art and entertainment."

For Single Frame Ashtray, innovative entertainment is one of the best ways to describe the shows. Henry said the vibe of their shows could be best described as

"pop takes a trip to space without any ear plugs."

The visuals in a Single Frame Ashtray performance make

the bands' shows stand out. The band has been known to use a slide show to communicate with the audience in various ways.

"Most of the slides we pick are from family vacation trips in the mid 70s

through the early 80s,"

Henry said.

"These are times that

our crowd can remember and even though the places and the people shown are not directly related to individuals in our audience we hope they can relate and identify indirectly."

The boys of Single Frame Ashtray said the band's influences are endless.

"As a whole, I think we could list several thousand bands, movies, people, places, ideas, chirps, beeps, statics and gurgles that have affected our style," Reilly said.

Reilly said each band member is from a different background and has different tastes. While most bands are easily categorized into a certain genre of music, Single Frame Ashtray is a bit more difficult to distinguish.

Single Frame Ashtray will be playing at the Crooked Path Ale House Friday from 11:45 p.m. to 1 a.m.

—Lycia Shrum



Thanks For The Update plays their part

For Thanks For The Update band members Kevin Jordan, vocals and guitar; Jason Tenner, guitar and bass; Tyler Lewis, bass, guitar and keyboard; Logan Youree, drums, bringing a diverse music scene to College Station is one thing they strive for. Bands such as Modest Mouse, Built to Spill and Bright Eyes influence the style of music Thanks For The Update creates.

Youree said one of the driving forces behind the band is to keep its songs accessible to the fans.

"I think that you should be able to keep your music open and ready for change as you feel that they need it," Youree said. "We try to write songs where each one is different from one another, but you can still say 'Hey, Thanks For The Update wrote that song'."

With the release of its album, *Place Insecurities Here*, Thanks For The Update has managed to bring diversity to its songs while having cohesiveness throughout the whole album.

Jordan said he and Tenner decided early on that the music of Thanks For The Update would be honest.

"All that matters is the song," Jordan said. "Not the people playing, and how talented they are at their instruments."

Jordan said lyrically, he tries to speak plainly and avoid any phrase or wording just because he thinks it sounds 'neat.' He said every element of the song has to fit together.

The band's music is a style that many Aggies may not normally be exposed to, but that is all the more reason to listen to this band.

"The people that might actually enjoy our music often don't realize that this style even exists in College Station. They tend to journey to Austin or Houston to see it," Youree said.

As the house band for Big Pauly's, Thanks For The Update has chances to play more shows than most local bands. In retrospect to that, it also gets a chance to grow and broaden its fan base.

"We still have room to grow in College Station," Jordan said. "I understand that our fan base may be smaller than other local bands, but I believe there are still a few people out there who haven't heard us that might like us. As far as overall popularity goes, we have already done better than I ever thought."

Thanks For The Update will be playing on the Promenade Friday night at 9 p.m.

—Lycia Shrum

Feeding 5000 brings it back home

These pop rockers began performing together less than a year ago, and in 10 short months have become an established local band.

Its guitar-driven sound mixed with violin and keyboards descends directly from Blue October and Better Than Ezra. The five-piece band — Scott Taylor, vocals/rhythm guitar;

were a couple of independent labels that are really interested and that don't have many bands to them, which is definitely a good thing when you're wanting a lot of devotion from a label."

Things look bright for Feeding 5000 and the band will shoot its first video soon.

This weekend it will concentrate on playing its show in the Northgate Music Festival where it will be reunited with Saving Dawn, the band it opened for at its very first show.

Taylor said he is not familiar with most of the other bands playing the festival, but hopes the Feeding 5000 fans will watch other performers and other bands' fans will watch the Feeding 5000 show.

"We've got one slot out of three days of non-stop music, so I'm sure a lot of our people are going to come out and check out other local bands, and vice versa," Taylor said. "We're looking for other people's crowd to check us out and hopefully catch on to us."

—Thomas Phillips



PHOTO COURTESY OF FEEDING 5000