

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

Page 3 • Wednesday, January 29, 2003

Band on the run

Dallas-based Flickerstick will hit College Station on its South Texas tour

By Kendra Kingsley
THE BATTALION



PHOTO COURTESY OF FLICKERSTICK

Brandin Lea, lead vocalist for the alternative band Flickerstick, may have a recording contract and thousands of fans, but at the end of the day he wants just one thing – a hot shower.

"When you're touring, you live in the bus," Lea said. "It's not like you wake up in a hotel room. The tour bus just pulls up to a random hotel, and between sound checks and interviews, you try to find a place to shower."

Today Lea may be on the lookout for a shower in College Station, one of the band's stops on its three-city South Texas tour. Described by Lea as a "psychedelic indie rock band," Flickerstick originated at the University of North Texas in 1997. Lea recruited his younger brother and bassist Fletcher Lea, drummer Dominic Weir and guitarist Cory Kreig. Soon, the group known as "Flickerstick" was a regular gig on the Dallas music scene.

With the band's steady success, Brandin Lea, then a senior film major at the University of North Texas, found it difficult to balance his time between classes and performances.

"My brother and I have been playing together since we were kids, but it turned into a serious hobby when we found other guys to play with," Lea said. "The rest of the band wasn't in school, so when I dropped out of college, it made it easier to tour. There just wasn't time for everything."

After adding guitarist Rex Ewing, the band released its first album, "Welcoming Home the Astronauts," in 2000. While several of the band's tracks have hit radio waves, Lea said Flickerstick's sound differs from generic fare.

"A lot of writers write about chicks who broke their heart when they were 17. That gets kind of old and sappy," Lea said. "I like to look to the future when I write (Flickerstick's) songs."

That individual style is exactly what makes Justin Hawkins, a junior speech communication major, a loyal follower of Flickerstick. Hawkins said he discovered the band four years ago through friends who attended the University of North Texas.

"When I first heard (Flickerstick), they totally struck me," said Hawkins. "Their sound is different from a lot of the bands on the radio, but their songs are definitely radio-caliber."

The music is not the only reason Hawkins will be in attendance at tonight's show. Hawkins, the lead vocalist and guitarist for local band Oddstar Experiment, said Flickerstick's live performances have influenced his own band.

"Flickerstick puts on an awesome live show," Hawkins said. "Whenever I saw them for the first time, I was like, 'I've got to put on a show like that.'"

The band's popularity with the public has not been lost on the

From left: Flickerstick members Cory Kreig (guitar/keyboards/vocals), Dominic Weir (drums), Brandin Lea (lead vocals/guitar), Rex James Ewing (guitar/vocals) and Fletcher Lea (bass) will perform tonight at Concept on University Drive. The band recently won VH1's "Bands on the Run" competition.

media. Recently, Flickerstick won VH1's "Bands on the Run" competition, beating out three other bands and taking home \$100,000. The band has also recently released "Causing a Catastrophe," an album featuring live performances of Flickerstick songs.

Yet the recent onset of publicity is not without a price, Lea said.

"Sometimes I get recognized in public, and it can get kind of annoying," he said. "It's hard to eat with your girlfriend or go out with your parents. People are really nice, but sometimes it's like, 'Hey man, I just want to eat dinner.'"

With a growing fan base in College Station, Lea may not get much privacy tonight.

Katie Hare, a senior biology major, has been following the band since she was a sophomore and has seen the band perform on

Austin's 6th Street and in Dallas' Deep Ellum.

"You can tell which fans have been with (Flickerstick) from the beginning," Hare said. "Since the band is from the Dallas area, everyone at the (Deep Ellum) concert knew every word to every song. It was the best concert."

A steady schedule of performances is nothing out of the ordinary for Lea, however.

"You do a sound check, perform, meet and greet, have a couple of beers at an after-party, come back to the tour bus, fall asleep and do it all over again the next day," Lea said. "It's just part of the road, part of the game and part of the band."

Flickerstick will perform tonight at Concept on University Drive. Pre-show tickets can be purchased at Journeys in Post Oak Mall for \$10 or at the door for \$12. Doors open at 8 p.m.

Wednesday

Afternoon seminar for women students: Barbara Mouser, "Opportunities and Challenges for Women in Contemporary Culture: A Biblical Perspective"

4:00-6:00 P.M. . MSC 206

"The Spiritual Journeys of Four TAMU Professors" with Q&A

Panelist: Drs. Charles Futrell, Marketing; Jack Lunsford, Chemistry; Nancy Simpson, Mathematics; and Marlan Scully, Physics

7:00 P.M. . MSC 226

Thursday

"Ethics in Business and Society: Lessons We are Learning,"

Dr. Murphy Smith, Professor of Accounting, TAMU

4:00-5:00 P.M. . MSC 206

"Islam and Christianity"

Dr. Peter Kreeft, Professor of Philosophy, College

7:00 P.M. . Rudder Auditorium

Friday Jan 31

Breakfast by Dr. Peter Kreeft on "Catholicism and Evangelicalism: Are They Compatible?"

St Mary's, 7:00 A.M. (reservations please: info@aggiecatholic.org)

NOTE: This event is not just for Catholics. Everyone is welcome to attend.

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