

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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Looking for a party crowd

'Live from Northgate' draws crowds with free concerts and laid-back atmosphere

By Tori Foster
THE BATTALION

Last Sunday night, Northgate transformed from its typically wild weekend scene to something a little more low-key and relaxed. Barbecue pits, domino tables, lawn chairs, mattresses and even inflatable swimming pools sprung up on the promenade behind the Dixie Chicken.

The backyard-style gathering premiered the Live from Northgate Show as it began its season with a "Warm Weather Kick-Off Party" on March 16 and featured musical artists Jason Boland and Stoney LaRue.

Creator and host of the show Corbin MacClaine said Live From Northgate is a free live radio show that is recorded every Sunday from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m.

"We try to bring live music to College Station and provide a forum for artists to perform their songs acoustically," she said. "They also get to hang out with the fans, and in turn, the fans get to hang out with them."

The show features country music and incorporates the top ten country songs from the progressivecountry.com database tracking system.

Casey Mack, Web page designer for livefromnorthgate.com, said progressive country differs from "Nashville country" because progressive artists write their own songs.

"The music is the actual artist's music," he said. "They wrote it, they sing it, they play and they live it everyday. They aren't going to play something that some songwriter think-tank in Nashville made up for them."

Natalie Hovel, a senior journalism major, said the Bryan-College Station area is very supportive of progressive country.

"(Progressive country) artists know (we support them) and they are appreciative of us," she said. "This music is so popular with A&M students. So, it works both ways, (the artists) get a great audience and we get to hear the music we love."

The live show is recorded during its first hour and the second hour consists of artists playing whatever they want and audience members requesting songs.

After the songs are recorded, the show is formatted and sent to more than 12 radio stations in Texas.

"(The show) provides the artists with radio



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Live from Northgate features free country music concerts on Sunday nights. For more information, dates and events, log onto www.livefromnorthgate.com.

exposure all over the state in just one stop," MacClaine said.

Audience members' voices can also be heard on the radio show.

"We pull people from the audience and have them read stuff for the countdown," MacClaine said.

Ashley Lockwood, a regular audience member and senior speech communications major, said she enjoys the laid back environment of the show.

"The music is free, you can bring your own drinks and the best thing is that nobody cares what

you look like," she said. "At the end of the weekend, no one feels like partying hard, so it's a great place to just have some fun with your friends."

The show originally began as "The Back Porch" but MacClaine had a vision of bigger and better things. MacClaine and Matt Matthews, production manager of Live From Northgate, formed the Matthews/MacClaine Agency, found some sponsors and created the Live From Northgate show.

"I essentially had to go out and sell a show

that didn't exist and hope it worked after I got the sponsorship," MacClaine said. "It has gotten bigger than my wildest dreams. Who would have thought that this radio show would still be thriving after three years?"

The show will run rain or shine throughout the year, and Hurricane Harry's has agreed to host it if the weather is bad.

Several special events have been planned to occur throughout the year, including a "Back to School/Corbin's Birthday Party" in August.

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