

## It's all gravy

### Cross Canadian Ragweed to visit College Station for new disc release

By Jacquelyn Spruce  
THE BATTALION

He's cramped in a small room miles away from home. The closest friends he has are the ones who came with him. Sounds like a wide-eyed freshman on his first day of class, right? Wrong.

Cody Canada, frontman for Cross Canadian Ragweed, said living in the tiny quarters on the bus for eight weeks at a time isn't so bad, especially when you're in a successful band selling out shows with three of your best friends since the fourth grade.

"The bus is home," Canada said. "Our homes that are in one spot and not mobile, that's our home away from home."

Unlike many bands, Cross Canadian Ragweed has managed to stick together throughout the hard times because of the members' close friendships. Canada said he believes that a lot of the band's success can be attributed to how well the members know each other.

"The friendship is definitely the common thread," Canada said. "We'd been friends forever; then we became musicians. So we know everyone's buttons. We know where to push and how long to push and what not to push. We have a lot of faith and love for one another, so there's not much that can break us."

From its first gig at the Wormy Dog Saloon in Stillwater, Okla., to a sellout show at last year's Rodeo Houston, Cross Canadian Ragweed has emerged from a group of kids in Oklahoma to a top-notch national act. But Canada says that sometimes it can be just as difficult to keep that initial momentum going as it was to get there.

"Getting there was always a goal, but nothing's going to stop us. We've always had that attitude," Canada said.

Cross Canadian Ragweed's new

album, "Soul Gravy," to be released on March 9, has the original Ragweed flavor and speaks a lot of truth, Canada said. It's more rock 'n' roll than the past two albums, but he said it's all part of the growing process. For the first time in their career as a band, the members had the opportunity to spend enough time on the album to perfect it before the final recording.

"This is probably the first record that we're proud of every song on it," he said. "We actually had more time to do this record. I mean, '377' we did in three days, and 'Purple' we did in eight or nine days. This one we had two months to run with."

"Soul Gravy" isn't a name of a song on the album like the band's previous albums. Canada said the name came about as a joke at first.

"We were joking around looking for old rock 'n' roll kind of titles," Canada said, "and I said 'plaid gravy,' just kidding around. Then Chris, our sound guy, acted like he was kicking me in the face, and he had the sole of his shoe in my face. And we were like, 'soul gravy!' and it stuck from there."

The guys from Cross Canadian Ragweed will visit Hastings in College Station on March 11 for their CD release party.

Chris Niebuhr, Class of 2003, said he looks forward to the CD release party.

"I'm excited. I'm going to buy the CD and take that and my guitar to get signed on the 11th," Niebuhr said. "I like the fact that they take the time to write their songs for their fans as opposed to writing them to be on the radio."

Their new CD is accompanied by a live DVD recording of a concert in none other than College Station.

"(The record label) left it up to us to choose where (to do the live recording),



PHOTO COURTESY OF WMAZ

The members of Cross Canadian Ragweed, (from left to right) Randy Ragsdale, Cody Canada, Jeremy Plato and Grady Cross, visit Hastings in College Station on March 11 to promote their new album "Soul Gravy."

and of course, we said College Station," Canada said.

Canada said they chose College Station for their live recording was because of the bond between the band and the Aggie community.

Following a concert in 2001, a police officer approached the group and said the mother and sister of drummer Randy Ragsdale had been in a car accident between College Station and Madisonville. Ragsdale's sister Mandi was pronounced dead at the scene, and his mother was taken to the hospital in College Station.

When the band got to the hospital,

they couldn't believe the support shown by their fans.

"People fed us, brought us coffee and offered us their homes and their cars, whatever we needed. It would be really hard to forget something like that. It's almost like a second home to me," Canada said. "Ever since that night, we've had a very special bond with College Station."

While not all events are as tragic, Canada said the band members are always there for each other, making road trips that much easier.

"We have a lot of fun with each other too," Canada said. "We're not

here for very long so you might well have as much fun as possible."

Senior mechanical engineering major David Rodgers said he enjoys the southern rock sound of Cross Canadian Ragweed.

"I think they break away from traditional Nashville sound," Rodgers said. "They have their own sound."

Canada said they'll continue to create that sound. "We just know that we'll be driving up and down the road playing music whether it's in a bus, in a van, or in a Pinto," he said. "We're still going to be playing music together."

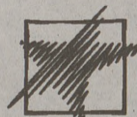
## Souki's got a "Make It Happen" list for Spring Break

1. Buy hat for beach party
2. Jump start math major
3. Explore interest in music



#### Message to Souki:

While you're home on spring break reserve a seat in one of our summer sessions or our three-week May mini-mester. Check out our summer classes @www.college4you.com. **Make it Happen!**



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