

# AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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PAGE DESIGN BY JULIE BONE

## Town & Texas Country

### Aggie Roger Creager, Texas country artists to head up Bryan concert Saturday

By Jimmy Hissong  
THE BATTALION

The gentle lapping of water against the Lake Bryan shoreline is not likely to be a topic of conversation backstage this Saturday at Ziegenbockfest. Nor is it likely to be heard over the melodies belted by sweat-soaked vocalists to the tune of acoustic guitars and crunching beer cans. But the water will resonate with the howls of fans as a feel-good sentiment ripples outward through the crowd with the camaraderie of the performing artists at the core.

College Station boasts a number of smaller venues that popular Texas country musicians frequent, but residents and students do not typically get the opportunity to attend the larger and louder performances that an outdoor stage provides, with the exception of Chilifest (which isn't technically in College Station).

As a result, continual attendance of even the most loyal fans to B-CS shows fails to demonstrate the companionship and respect these artists share with one another.

"Everybody has a schedule. They're playing wherever a lot. I'm playing wherever a lot," said Roger Creager, singer, songwriter, and three-time Texas A&M student. "These festivals are usually the only times we get to see each other, and it definitely comes across on stage."

The corporate pop formula of syndication and record sales utilized by MTV moguls conjures myths of success factors in the music industry, with radio play and radio overplay being the most crucial and annoying. However, the grassroots campaign of various artists claiming membership into the emerging country rock variety rejects the road to Total Request Live and concentrates on the continual construction of an extensive and loyal fan base.

Of the names in today's Texas country scene, only Kevin Fowler has made an MTV appearance with his rock band Dangerous Toys, but that one has been chalked up to lessons learned. After a corporate buyout, Fowler found himself without a loyal fan base or a band.

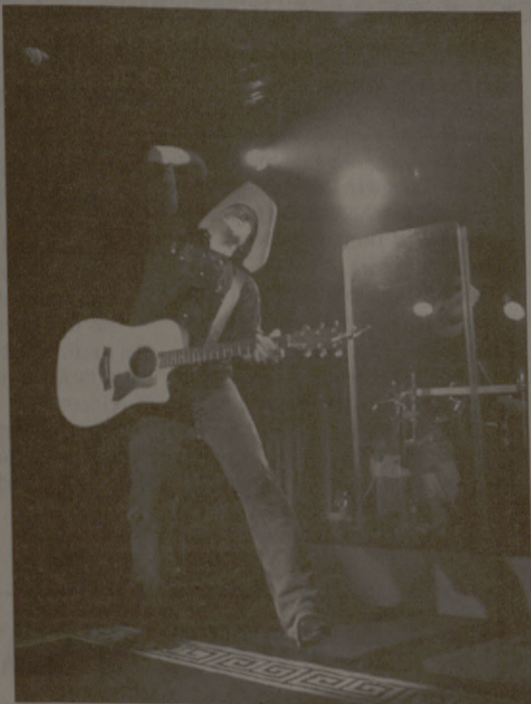


PHOTO COURTESY OF DUALTONE RECORDS  
Ziegenbock Texas Music Fest will take place Saturday, Sept. 4 with doors opening at 10 a.m. and artists performing until past midnight. Above: Roger Creager windmills as he wails on his Martin. Right: Creager in El Campo, Texas.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DUALTONE RECORDS

"I was kind of a hired gun, and that's the worst thing to build on," Fowler said. "Now we just do what we do and let whoever likes it latch on."

Through the crusade to inspire Lone Star State sympathizers and red-dirt natives with killer performances and heartfelt ballads, bonds have formed among the country brethren.

"Everyone is friends. Everyone has had some beers with everyone else," said Buddy Huffman, frontman for the band Macon Greyson.

Even though these artists now share a similar stomping ground, their paths to the stage were rather different. Mike Eli of the Eli Young Band and Jack Ingram, frontman for Jack Ingram and

The Beat Up Ford Band, pursued their musical interests during and immediately following their college years. Max Stalling, singer and songwriter, and Creager both pursued nine-to-five occupations before answering a call from honky-tonk. Creager crunched numbers as an accountant, while Stalling was deterred by a steady paycheck from the Frito-Lay Corporation.

In addition to past career path differences, the Ziegenbockfest crew fails to see eye-to-eye on a precise description of the music they waft over the crowd.

"A fan once told me he thought we were a cross between Weezer and Johnny Cash," said Huff-

man. "Whatever that means."

Others look for a slightly less defined definition of their sound.

"I think I'd call it country music, but people call it what they want. Just don't call it silly," Ingram said.

The difficulty to nail a direct label to the music derives from the expanse of appeal the music has to offer. The variety that the genre has to offer is matched only by the variation of age and appearance of the fans. Grandmothers, fraternity broth-

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