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When Willie Nelson hit Austin back in the 1960s, he was an immediate and identifiable hit in the drug-oriented city where speed, cocaine, marijuana and various other illicit goods are tolerated if not totally accepted.

And the long, slow squeal with delight when this Nashville outlaw recorded his great song “Me and Paul,” a story of tough times he endured with his drummer and longtime friend Paul English. The hot spot for reasons I’d rather not disclose ... But if you’re stayin’ in a motel and leavin’, don’t leave nothin’ in your clothes.

More recently, Willie teamed with Waylon Jennings to sing “I Can Get Off On You,” a little ditty which says something like, “Take back the pills, take back the weed, take back the coke, and take back the whiskey, too.”

Now, however, things have reportedly changed in the Nelson camp. Willie has gone on a health trip-running miles daily, swimming, etc. And signs in his buses prominently proclaim: “If you’re wired, you’re fired!”

And—at this writing—the king of country music still had a band and a road crew traveling with him—presumably mellow and operating, without aid of drugs. Crack, coke, crank, coke, speed, caballeros, white crosses, or any other type of stimulating “rocket bean.”

It could be, however, that Nelson’s edict on upper material could be more of a business than a health or moral issue. One member of the crew reportedly became so whizzed up that convulsions and tongue-wallowing occurred. And Willie, now making movies with Robert Redford and hobnobbing with President Jimmy Carter, just can’t have his family members freaking out before such illustrious co-stars and groups.

But Nelson, being the great poet and song-writer that he is (and I feel he’s the finest in this country), showed talent and perhaps even a hint of humor in his ultimatum—if you’re wired, you’re fired.” A no-talent department head might have posed a memo which read something like this: “In the future any employee of this company who shows symptoms of drug use, stimulants in particular, will have his or her employment terminated without further notice.”

And isn’t it funny how times do change.

When Willie Nelson started his July 4 picnics at Dripping Springs, the attraction that really made this one a booming success was rock idol Leon Russell. And Russell, an old friend of Nelson’s, lent his powerful drawing presence to every single one of the picnics—including the last rain-plagued disaster near Gonzales. National TV footage from the second Nelson picnic near College Station was billed on WCNA Jack’s “Midnight Special” as “On The Road With Leon Russell” piquing more than a few Willie fans. Nelson, who has three platinum albums and a string of million-selling hits over the past year, recently played to a jammed Mid-South Coliseum in Memphis.

And the opening act for Texas Willie? None other than the great Leon Russell and wife Mary.

In the wacky world of San Antonio radio, plus personalities from this area, here are a few recent developments. While Bob Crowley of KMAC was on vacation, Howard David and Lou Roney hired Mark Champion to replace him. Barbara (Legal) Marullo, the finest female voice ever to grace a local airwave, was canned from her one-day job at KITY when she showed talent and perhaps even a hint of humor in her employment, which read something like this: “In the future any employee of this company who shows symptoms of drug use, stimulants in particular, will have his or her employment terminated without further notice.”

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Two major recording companies are already pitching for the sons of Doug Sahm and Augie Meyers, a pair of young and hot pickers who formed a fledgling band appropriately called The Second Generation.

With 14-year-old Shawn Sahm doing lead vocals and singing most of his own material, The Second Generation will serve as opening act April 28 for Sam Kindrick's Tex-Mex Holiday at Floore's Store in Helotes.

Headlining the bill will be both Augie Meyers and the Texas Head Band, and Esteban (Steve) Jordan and his scorching hot group The River Jordan from Corpus Christi. Included in this group is Steve Jordan Jr., a 12-year-old wonder.

San Antonians already know the power of Augie and group, but there are many gringos who will be pleasantly shocked when the one-eyed Jordan (it's pronounced "hor ... don" in Spanish) hits the stage with his own son, Esteban Jr., on percussion and vocals.

"El Parche," as he is known on the chicano circuit, is a 90-pound dynamo and undisputed king of the squeezebox. And it's safe to predict that, before the evening is done, both Jordan and Augie will be on stage together with twin accordions heaving when the Tex-Mex extravaganza draws to a close.

It's also a good possibility that Esteban Jr. (he's already on one of Steve's many LPs called "That's My Boy") will wind up on stage with Shawn Sahm, 17-year-old Clay Meyers, and the Second Generation's lead guitar player, 21-year-old Kevin Lewis.

"El Parche" (the patch) Jordan may be viewed on a KLRN Channel 9 "Austin City Limits" show at 9 p.m. April 23, along with Little Joey La Familia. So tune in for Steve and the River Jordan along with Little Joe. Their music is neither all Spanish nor all English. It's a combination of Tex-Mex and Texas soul, and the rhythm and horn sounds are much like those produced by Bulverde's Augie Meyers. Augie is a

Continued on page 7.......

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Photo by Bill Spence-Graphic Studios International
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sounds produced by an outfit called The Sir Douglas Quintet.
... And it's only fitting that Augie's son Clay should team with Doug
Sahm's son Shawn for a Second Generation sound which might
fitting that we call our band The Second Generation. We may be
the old Sir Douglas Quintet, but we are also the second generation of
Augie's wife, Carol, whose single cut of

"Meet Me In Seguin" is
selling well, will be
singing with the group, while Frank (The Wild
Jalapeno) Rodarte will be playing sax for Augie (his regular group) as
well as The River Jordan. Little Shawn Sahm is a
miniature of his Scorpio
father, and Jerry Wexler of Warner Brothers Records has already
been shown more than a passing interest in
singing the youngster.

"Clay and I grew up
together," Shawn said,
"... And it seemed only fitting that we call our band The Second Generation. We may be the old Sir Douglas Quintet, but we are also the second generation of Clay Meyer & Shawn Sahm

"Rockin and Rollin," "She
Makes Me Feel Good," "Hallucinogenic Days." While Shawn started on
drums, he now hits
chords on electric guitar, leaving the drumming to
Clay. And "Little Doug"
says he is quickly picking up the lead
guitar licks which were always a trademark of his famous father.

Shawn's mother suggested that he tape some of the songs he wrote, and this was done at Bob
O'Niel's studio in San
Antonio. The Second Generation appeared before Augie's band at the
rodeo entertainment
crowd away with their high-energy and original
rock sound.

"We do the song
"Hijacked" from an old
Quintet album," Shawn said, "but most of our stuff is original. Kevin also writes, and I have
songs which include
Rockin and Rollin," "She
Makes Me Feel Good," and "Hallucinogenic Days."

"... And it seemed only
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**Watch for Grand Opening!**
Razz Rocks With Best

By Elizabeth McIlhaney

Razz. Even the name smells of high energy. And it should, for it's the name of a local rock and roll band that is so hot it can make many of the groups who roll their way through San Antonio every few weeks, drawing thousands of fans to the Convention Center Arena and the Texas Theater, look like mere tadpoles in a sea that belongs to big fish.

For Razz belongs among the big fish, whether it swims in the ocean or on the national rock and roll circuit. At the Razzle Dazzle club (the similarity of names is purely coincidence; the club used to be Player's Retreat), where the band performs frequently, the audience gets so excited by the time the band is into its last set for the night that half the people seem to forget they are in a club and start dancing, standing on their chairs, shaking their fists and yelling "Rock And Roll!" with the identical high-powered excitement top rock bands generate in huge concert halls.

If it wasn't so exciting to hear this band and watch the audience react just as it should when exposed to such superb musicianship—and pure showmanship—it would almost be funny to see people coming to the kind of club where it is natural to have a few drinks, get a little loose, shoot some pool, take note of the fact Continued on page 11......

Robert Salinas

Bill Geyer

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RAZZ

Concluded

a band is playing, and eventually head on home—just another night on the town.

But people just cannot stay sedate, a "little bit" loose, or "cool" when Razz is on stage. Those guys walk onto that stage and for four hours they play music that demands the audience listen—and react. They're good, they know it and they assume they give their audiences an excellent show.

This isn't to say they are conceited. Nowhere near it. The members of Razz are some of the nicest—and wittiest—guys walking around San Antonio. It's that lighthearted wit that enables them to plunge wholeheartedly into giving an audience something that will make it feel good.

They can't carry on a conversation without seeing all the humor connected with any topic, no matter how serious, so how could they be expected to put on a show that left people feeling anything but high?

All the members of Razz are native San Antonians. Robert Salinas is the lead guitarist and his incredible guitar work sets the musical standard for the rest of the group. He and drummer Bill Geyer are the original members of the group. They have been in other groups and for a while were in a group also named Razz. Razz as it exists today has been together since 1977, although for six months the group stopped all work while lead singer David Montgomery had his tonsils out and lead guitarist Buzz Reininger had some second thoughts about being a professional musician.

"For about two years we told ourselves if we took one part out of Razz it wouldn't be Razz," Montgomery said. When the band began working again in January, the membership was the same. Bass guitarist Randy Potts shares lyrics on many songs with Montgomery and on others with a Led Zeppelin sounding voice. He's also the noisiest wit in the group. "The reason I wanted to be a rock and roll star was because I like girls."

He says with a straight face, "But I'm 24 and never been kissed; I'm saving myself for the right one."

Razz does a lot of gigs at the Crazy Horse Saloon in Killeen, which draws crowds from Fort Hood, the largest army base in the world. Pat Travers, Judas Priest and Budgie are the kinds of groups booked there. Razz was the opening act when the Godz performed.

Everyone in the group writes music and lyrics. In addition to original numbers, Razz performs music by Wishbone Ash, Blue Oyster Cult, Alice Cooper and Jimi Hendrix, and a lot by Rush. They're music is concert music," he said. "People like to watch what we're doing." "Seeing is Believing," "A Star's Dream,"

"In our ad, we use the word 'explosive' a lot because in a lot of our music, we go along real slow for a while and then break into something totally different. You can't keep an audience on hard, heavy stuff for two hours. You have to fluctuate from soft to hard."

"Our music is concert music," he said. "People like to watch what we're doing." "Seeing is Believing," "A Star's Dream."

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Slapsticks Snap With Laughter

By Elizabeth Mcllhaney

Two plays of pure slapstick are being presented in San Antonio this month and determining which to see, if not both, will probably depend on one's budget for dramatic entertainment.

Tab Hunter stars in "Here Lies Jeremy Troy" at the Fiesta Dinner Playhouse, and an entire cast of rowdy characters stars in "Footlight Follies" at Melodrama Theater.

Since it opened more than a year ago, Fiesta Dinner Playhouse has offered only one play that was not comedy—"Dial M For Murder"—and it was the best show ever offered at the playhouse. Even though "Jeremy," which is a return to the usual comedy fare, follows on the heels of that successful show, it is not a letdown for it is the funniest comedy the theater has ever offered.

The plot is so crazy it almost isn't a plot, only a series of hilarious scenes, but the general story is about a guy played by Hunter, who fakes a law degree and becomes a success only to be confronted about it by an old schoolmate who decides to blackmail the pseudo-lawyer.

Unlike many of the name actors and actresses who have appeared at Fiesta...
Dinner Playhouse in all their burnt-out glory, age seems to agree with Hunter. He still can't act, but silliness and macho-good looks are all that is required for his part, and he fits it perfectly.

The best actor in the show is Nick Malekos, who plays Charlie Bickle, the ex-schoolmate-turned-artist. Shining through all the corn is some real acting ability.

"Follies" at Melodrama is a musical take-off on the story of Fanny Brice (remember "Funny Girl") . The show is sloppier than many presented at this bulwark of San Antonio theater and the cast in general lacks the sharp dramatic ability portrayed in past shows.

The most outstanding performer by far is Jill Palfreyman, who plays Lotta Gall and Gretta Getsit—she is the hardened Broadway actress who has had all the hard knocks in life and in the end always loses the man she loves, until the end of this play, when her luck changes. Palfreyman knows what to do on stage and her strong stage presence is overwhelming in comparison to most of the other cast members. Her superb, throaty singing voice only adds to her coarse role.

Tom Mullins as Horace Feldzieg is strong in the role of villain but audience members should beware of throwing too much popcorn at him for he retaliates with gusto. At one point in the show, he grabbed the full box of popcorn belonging to a little girl who had been harassing him throughout the show and turned the box upside down on her head, all in fun, of course, as any villain could see.

"Side by Side by Heart," performed by David Drake, Skip Allen and Mike Klauder, was the best song and dance number in the show, drawing well-deserved applause when it was finished. Melodrama Company member Chuck Ballo wrote and composed the music and lyrics and Rick Landmann directed the show.

And now the choice—which play to attend? Here are the facts:

Melodrama Theater provides a play for $3.50 to $5, depending on which night one attends. Children's prices are less but are not offered every night. Wine, apple cider, soft drinks and popcorn cost extra. The setting is intimate to the point of being crowded. Fiesta Dinner Playhouse offers a full meal and a play for $10 to $16, depending on which day one chooses. Matinees and evening performances are offered. The price does not include drinks and tips; the buffet offers a wide variety of good food, from a salad bar to several entrees and vegetables, plus dessert. The salad bar alone provides enough food for an entire meal. And of course, there is no limit on the amount of food one may eat.

The setting is near-elegant, with fake candlelight and pastel tablecloths. People may be seated at tables for two or tables for four or more; those who don't want to dine at a table with strangers should make that request.

Reservations may be made at Melodrama by calling 224-4464 and at Fiesta by calling 494-7793. Both plays run through April 22.

---

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**Melodrama Theater**

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Satisfied customers include: Tiffany Billiards, Newsroom, Pressure Cooker, Barbary Coast, Tiffany, Cosmic Sweetheart, Cabaret, Sugar Daddy's, Close Encounters, Odyssey Disco, Crystal Confectioner (San Angelo), Cabaret D.J. (Houston), and many others...
EDITOR'S NOTE: Joe Conway happens to be the program director of San Antonio's AM country radio station, KCW (90 on the AM dial). This is the second of Joe's columns for Action Magazine. In last month's issue, Conway's essay was lost in the shuffle, and we didn't even identify the poor dude.

Well, here it is, April, and the rememberances of the 30th Annual Livestock Show and Rodeo are behind us... and THANK GOODNESS! I have never been so embarrassed for a country performer as I was during rodeo week.

There I sat with the opening afternoon crowd, waiting to see this year's opening afternoon crowd, Let's hope next year the rain goes to the mud and rain, and I thought there's no way the 40's with scratches and My hat goes off to KKYX for the river festival this year. Although the elements were against any kind of show, they weathered the storm and delivered what they promised. I stood in the mud and rain, and I thought there's no way the sometimes prima donna, Larry Gatlin, would show up in this rain, but there was Larry, playing to a packed river front in the pouring rain. Nice going, KKYX! Let's hope next year the rain God spends the weekend in Dallas.

I spent a few days in Miami and New York last month and couldn't wait to get back to the Lone Star State. I don't think there is any other state where you can hear country music the way it should be played. If you think about all the artists that not only got their start in Texas but call San Antonio home. Moe Bandy, Dotty, Brian Collins, Fiddlin' Frenchy Burke... not to mention our neighbors in Houston and Dallas.

Let's not forget some local talent that have "star" written all over them. The Right Combination have got to be next in line for a major label to pick up. Stardust" has the kind of show that you actually sit and listen to unless they're at Village Inn. Then it's more of a stand and watch thing. But when you have talent like "Stardust" performing, you don't mind getting your toes stepped on.

Oh, yes, least we not forget Wayne Harper. Although not all country, Wayne has perfected a show of sound alikes and an entertaining flow of one-liners and an unusual two-way street with the audience.

Moe Bandy's hit of "It's a Cheatin' Situation" headlines his new album. Yes, there are more cheatin' songs on the album... three to be exact. And for you "chug-a-luggers", you'll get your pops off with "Bar Stool Mountain" or "They Haven't Made a Drunk That Can Get Me Over You". Producer Roy Baker pooled some great musicians, including Johnny Gamble and Charlie McCoy, and with Moe's singing talents, it's a must for your collection.

There are two new "best of" albums, and both are great. ABC Records released the "Best of Barbara Mandrell", featuring her latest number one hit, "Sleeping Single in a Double Bed" plus 9 other Super hits. RCA Records went back in their vault and came up with 10 Jim Reeves classics on this best of album. Songs include "Missing You" and "Little Ole Dime". Both albums will bring back some great memories.

Other honorable mentions go to the Mel Tillis album, "Are you Sincere", which should be the next single as soon as "Send Me Down to Tucson" dies down as a hot request item on country stations. Marty Robbins is back on the scene with "The Performer" album. Included are "Please Don't Play a Love Song" and his current hit, "Touch Me with Magic". Let's now forget Willies "Sweet Memories" album, still a must for Nelson collectors. The one album I wouldn't worry about running down to your record store to get is the new John Denver album.
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RYBODY \\
SSO

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HAS DON -E

IT AGAIN!

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APRIL

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★ Vince Vance & The Valiants-8
★ Texas-11
★ Blitz-12
★ Too Smooth-13 & 14
★ Ram Jam-15
★ American Peddlers-18 & 19
★ Lightning-20 & 21
★ Yesterday & Today-22

★ Blood, Sweat & Tears
Featuring: David Clayton Thomas
April 24

★ LIC-25-28

★ The Guess Who
April 29
% 18 • Action Magazine, April, 1979

It's sort of sad, but Wiley Alexander, the Express-News back-slap ping pro­ fessional good ole boy country music columnist, has been charged with grand theft and attempted bribery in connection with his insurance dealings with a San Antonio school di­ strict prior to starting his "Country Pickin's" column for the daily rags.

Indictments claim Alex­ ander took insurance money for Edgewood Independent School District but never bothered to insure the $100,000. Alexander's "Country Pickin's" column without the "Country Pickin's" logo or name of the "Wiley's Byline.

It's too bad that we can't
indict and try people like
Kilpatrick for gross and
malicious phoniness and
impersonation of a journalist.

PUBLISHER BEBE WANDEL
has decided that Movement magazine will no longer be a free-distribution journal for the San Antonio area which is supported solely by its advertisers. And Ray Benson, lead singer for Asleep At The Wheel, says Action may be the only free-distribution enter­ tainment magazine in the coun­ try to make it over as a hobbyist. Action, meanwhile, remains as the only established free­ distribution magazine in the San Antonio area which is supported solely by its advertisers. And Ray Benson, lead singer for Asleep At The Wheel, says Action may be the only free-distribution enter­ tainment magazine in the country to make it over as a hobbyist. Action, meanwhile, remains as the only established free­ distribution magazine in the San Antonio area which is supported solely by its advertisers.

And if the price of paper continues to rise as it has for the past 10 years (more than 40% since Action was born) we may all wind up in the poor house before it's all done and said.

A COUNTRY NIGHT club known as Country Gold opened last month with Moe Bandy. And we doubt the rumor being bandied about that the joint is partially owned by a local booking agent. The local group Mesquite will back up John Anderson and Lynn Barclay late this month at Turtle Creek. And some nut from an outfit called Financial Management Associates, Inc.

THE PLACE NEXT DOOR SALOON

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APRIL

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19,20, & 21
26,27 & 28

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APRIL

BAND SCHEDULE
5
6-7
13-14
20
21
27-28
29

Ace In The Hole
King Peach
Joe Bob's Bar & Grill
Berger Mills Symphony
Morning
Doug Sahm
Doug Sahm & Alvin Crow

On April 29, the Gruene annual softball tournament will be held. Player-coach Doug Sahm will be leading his defending championship Soap Creek Saloon team against the Muene Gruene Team. Others are already signing up for the tourney, and anyone else interested is invited to enter.

Take Canyon Lake exit west off IH 35, Go 1 1/2 miles, then turn left and go 1 mile to Gruene Hall.
OLLY OTTEN OF THE Swiss Chalet says he’s sick of reading newspaper bulletins each morning until only recently, San Antonio has been without a decent adult weekly newspaper since the Swiss has been from the beginning.” Olly’s Barnes & Noble, once a program director for old KELK here, is now programming Denver’s KLLR, an album rocker which is formatted to the young listener. Hamilton may soon be part of a book concerning his long association with the legendary actor Chill Will... And Jack Newman to his Antonio Light did a fine feature on his German immigrant on his payroll. And since he’s running a business. And since...And check the payroll.

BILL SPENCE has replaced Dick Davis as head of Graphic Studios International, the Rick Davis who shot that great Lone Star photo setup which is affiliated with the old Bijou crowd about two years ago and the local folks’ fickle tastes. Mr. Stage Presence is still underway. And just the other day, a couple of regular customers from Alaska walked in demanding advertising...are read, each talk with Johnny Luce has one too. Meanwhile, at Fitzwillys of the San Antonio steak house, the bar is hopping. And landscape expert Pete Haynes, 25-cent beer while it lasts, and three bands furnishing live entertainment from 2 p.m. till 2 a.m.

Bill Lister, Son Weldon, Dawn Davis, The Alafia Brothers, Vicki Paoletti, Dawn Davis, Joe Haynes, Kent Finlay, Cathy Chivers, Monte Montgomery, Jacinto fiesta party on April 25. And while we have nothing of his time to the Lee food desperation. And his wife keeps the day bar hopping. On Sunday, April 22, there will be a free afternoo...Alley barbeque, 25-cent beer while it lasts, and three bands furnishing live entertainment from 2 p.m. till 2 a.m.

Continued on page 259.

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Continued on page 259.
Ezra Idlet, electric guitarist and vocalist for St. Elmo’s Fire, tried to explain how a band so highly acclaimed for its instinctive creativity and an original sound was still without a national recording contract. "You can't play bluegrass, rock and roll, and acoustic rock and roll in one set and expect to get an album. Record companies want some- one set and expect to get an album...Record an original sound was explain how a band so...

...one copy of a united thing you can put a name...thing. A copy of an excellent research paper crowded into the envelope. Attached was a manager who strictly monitored time between sets. Last show in town, rather than facing frigid weather and rapt silence, St. Elmo’s Fire reached across the S.A. Scene, tales of wondrous performers and dazzling performances stirring the blood and drawing hordes in pleasant autumn weather and amidst a ballet craze. Freezing nights in the post - New Year's-Eve funk ain't likely to draw much of anything except rock bands playing bars and their own music. "It is sort of like limbic," Idlet said. "We are not doing this or that. We've been traveling through Texas lately. It's like a lot of bands in our state are going through now."

An unexpected pay off to the bar work is the sound of dancers. Besides aesthetic considerations of improving the sound and getting tighter, there are the dance floor enthu- siasts. "Every kind of dancer you can possibly imagine. Single girls who are in to spiritual dancing or others really into couple dancing with routines and patterns worked out. It's nice to inspire that reaction. We aren't aiming at any particular response as dancing or listening." Idlet said. That's why the band is hoping and waiting for that nationally distribu- ted album. Absence of commercial "gotcha" means no "united" sound. St. Elmo’s Fire has one single on a private label. Released about two years ago, it did "competitively" in the hometown-Houston market. Instinctive creativity, as the press packet defines it, means, in the words of Idlet: "Most of us are writing from what we think rather than music theory because except for Keith nobody else has musical training. There's a minimum of music knowledge as such." Idlet's exception was Keith Grimwood, gnome-like bass player and vocalist. He left the picket-line of the Houston Symphony Orchestra for the limelight of the stage. Grimwood and drummer Damian Hevia thump movement into the music. "Drums and bass provide the musical core that moves the music," the long-shanked rhythm guitarist said. "The drums and bass are the rhythm section."

Oddity applies equally to the band's rock-related venture into ballet. One night at a local Oil City saloon Houston Ballet choreo- grapher James Clouser sat in the audience, dreaming about what became the full-length rock ballet "Caliban." Caliban was a savage
and deformed slave in Shakespeare's play "The Tempest." The band's tune "Cruzan' Time" fit. St. Elmo's Fire has collaborated on and played in two rock ballets, the second called "Rasputin." "There was really good response to the ballet, but we have kind of done ballet. Ballet was very successful. We had sell-out crowds, but the ballets were never picked up by a national touring company. The thing was we worked with really good dancers. And this made an impact on the dancing world," Idlet said.

The flirtation with ballet made for contrast to the medium hard sell stage leader Craig Clavert made. The challenge he met was building up the crowd drinking during performances. Impact on the bar world translates to ringing cash registers. Take at the door picked up during the three nights. Singer Connie Mims plays piano and guitar and dances a bit herself. Her natural, untrained voice is "scary," Idlet said. He noted that her style emerged after she tired of comparison to Joni Mitchell.

Life of the roads strapping the Lone Star State isn't romantic. The band realizes they work together better as a unit rather than as solo performers. The living on the run takes hold. "It is a bitch. You get involved in it. You can't stay in one place because you over-play yourself. You can't write enough songs quick enough to stay in one town that long. You have to travel to stay alive," Idlet said. The caravan adds up to about 10 people, two vans and individual cars. Time at home amounts to perhaps one week each month.

"Sometimes you get discouraged after working really hard with no visible signs. You stay in one place. Still playing bars. But you got to keep pushing," he said. About that time, manager Bob Burton lined by, making signal that the show must go on. Idlet ambled off, going stage-ward with drummer Hevia who was finished with leaning on the bar. St. Elmo's Fire again appears in San Antonio this month at a new location, Skipwilly's on Bitters Road. The dates are April 5, 6 and 7. With clear skies and warm spring weather, the hope for a multitudinous produces.

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WHERE SAN ANTONIANS FIND THE ACTION

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HAPPY HOUR DAILY
4 P.M.-7 P.M.
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Amaretto Offers Good Times

By Pat Lalley

The good times rolled for more than the audience when fun-loving Amaretto struck up a tune.

Four musicians obtained happy release for energies pent up during music-related day jobs.

Guitar throbs and cymbals clang jollied the Place Next Door Saloon. The live performance was a frolic. Mike Brown and Pete Carey and guitarists John Ramirez and Skip Mascorro formed in May. The original group featured guitarist Steve Boyes and vocalist Beth Williams. He is now in Austin. Ramirez and Mascorro are also original Amaretto members. The two go back 10 years to a friendship formed in the rock band Rocksand. In 1969, Rocksand led off a local concert billing the Grateful Dead, Quick Silver Messenger Service, John Mayall and It's a Beautiful Day. After his departure, Mascorro spent four years in Aspen ski resorts where he mastered the complex technique of drumming and singing simultaneously. His musical start came when an equipment man replaced a 14-year-old drummer passed out from too much booze. Once in Colorado and inspired by the fact that the Eagles' drummer sang, Mascorro again had to get down and pick. Carey described his fellow guitarist as the "heart and soul of rock and roll." Ramirez first gigged in 1966.

"I play by feel. I have no musical training. I don't know what I am doing until I have done it," he said and pointed out the contrast to Carey's technical excellence.

Carey noted a special interest in jazz guitar, expressing particular favor for Jim Hall. His appreciation for complex, difficult harmonics doesn't blunt an ability to get down and pick. Carey started with the rockers Flagship in 1973, played jazz while obtaining a degree in classical guitar at St. Mary's and joined Jasmine before woodshedding in Beeville for two years.

An interest in the pedal steel began three years ago and traces to Poco, the Eagles and the Souther-Hillman-Furay band. Carey rated his work as basic, saying: "I just get by, I know some good steel players, and I don't claim to be good. It adds a little color to the band. I saw Tiny Williams one night, Man, that the beat is always counter to what is sung. It takes a while to learn. I've been singing now about three years and playing drums about 10 years," he said. About the time Mascorro started singing, Ramirez began practicing business skills. The River City Music store owned by Morris Kalt and directed by Ramirez became a professionally-oriented outfit with a little luck and much stout-hearted pluck. It now assists the emerging San Antonio Musicians Association once a month in producing a Sunday jam session.

Onstage, Ramirez was a ball of energy. Mascorro head-rolled, torso-writhing playing to a Raggedy Ann doll in motion. Carey described his feeling as guitarist as the "heart and soul of rock and roll." Ramirez first gigged in 1966.

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Double Trouble Is Loud

The last song of the first set was just too much. Body-shaking rhythm and blues from Austin-based Stevie Vaughan and Double Trouble vibrated a table's worth of customers out of swinging doors of Reed's Red Derby. The band turned down, took a break and ate their dinner to taped and sedated rhythm and blues playing from overhead speakers.

"Right now, we're looking for a total sound from the band," Vaughan said, "I don't know how to describe it. The band is fleshing out a concept or attitude for the music we're playing. We end up having to be more realized with all the crap coming down like tonight."

Rhythm and blues is roadhouse music. At the crowded bar, early bird carousers feasted on raw sound. As far as Vaughan was concerned, Reed's was a giant step up from his Dallas gig in 1972 when he played till six in the morning for no money.

"We went to Austin for the gigs. You can grow in Austin. Plus there was moving out of home," the Dallas native said. "Really, there's a clan of musicians in Austin who are interested in getting across soulfully, playing music from inside you. You bring it out for real."

It was Vaughan's rare animal energy springing out of two amplifiers which bit the unsuspecting late evening diners and drew their blood. Playing guitar is the man's life.

"To me it is a gift. And I am going to take it as far as I can," he said.

Vaughan played 2½ years with the Cobras, another rhythm and blues band out of Austin, before breaking away with his own Triple Threat band. Last May he and vocalist Lu Ann Barton assembled the present cast of characters.

Miss Lu Ann, as she goes onstage, was a bitch in heat by night's end. The "sex act" played because the feeling was there, she said at performance's close. Usually, she's just plain sultry. The Ft. Worth beauty was formerly with Vaughan's brother Jimmy Vaughan and the Thunderbirds. She quit working for the one bro and signed up with the other.

"Don't remember how I got into this. Kind of raised on it. As a girl, I listened to Little Richard and Jimmy Reed. I was in second grade when my brothers were marrying. Grew up on basically hard driving rhythm and blues."

"Around 15 I went wild and never came down. Didn't go to high school. Stevie didn't go to high school. I quit school to start singing. Rock and Roll was just too much."

Amaretto Concluded...

Mascorro began plucking at 16, a time when no one could afford to buy a bass guitar and bass amp. He started in a country band, musical inspiration springing from an uncle who played in a South Texas conjunto band and from a priest who blew a horn and tickled the piano.

The bass player spent six years with Stepchild, a money-making San Antonio band popular with local clubs and high school dancers. As a band, Amaretto leans to a country-rock brand of music. Original songs included "The Point," a good-natured country song by Ramirez, "Time and Money" by Carey and "Got To Find a Way" by Mascorro.

Important as the original material may be, it was the joy of playing that counted. All the guys are contentedly married. But getting out for some rocking and rolling keeps the musicians young.
DOUBLE TROUBLE

roll and blues then. We just liked blues so we would throw some of that in too. The Allman Brothers and Stones did blues so we could get away with it. After that first band I went straight blues.

"I knew some people in Fort Worth that did. Worked out of a black club. We were the white kids, Robert Ealey and the Five Careless Lovers. When I joined it became Robert Ealey and the Driving Heartbreaks. I went to Dallas one night and sat in with Stevie’s brother’s band. He hired me.

"So I went with that band to Austin. Then I quit working with him and went to work with Steve. Steve and I wanted to stay together. I was out of a gig when Steve quit the Cobras. Steve and I put the band together about 1½ years ago. We started off with the Triple Threat. Then we got tired of the arrangements and reformed the group last May," she said.

That’s when bass player Jack Newhouse joined. He was one of those Fort Worth friends of Miss Lu Ann who shared a passion for the blues. Newhouse finished up a brace of final exams, checked the band out and stayed.

Drummer Chris Layton was last with Greasy Wheels. His memories of the beat traced to 78s of Gene Krupa and Chick Webb his dad played for him. The time Layton sat in, "we just clicked," Vaughan said. "It felt like we were playing together.

Playing together was certainly the effect that Saturday night at Reed’s. At closing time, even the cigar smoking cop was tapping his feet. Unfortunately, he was keeping time to the clock and a 2 a.m. shut down.

FAIR FUN

Upcoming fairs and expositions in Texas are legion and diverse. Abilene features a West Texas Fair in September, Beaumont a South Texas State Fair in October, Lubbock the Panhandle South Plains Fair in late September, Pampa a Top O’ Texas rodeo in July, Paris the Red River Valley Exposition in August, Rusk an East Texas Regional Arts and Crafts Fair in early October, and Waco a Heart O’ Texas Fair in October.

Tyler claims it puts on the East Texas Fair in late September, Texarkana stages a Four States Fair in October, Alief floats an Autumn Festival and Trade Fair in October, while Amarillo plays a Tri-State Fair in September. Grandaddy of ‘em all is the Dallas-located State Fair of Texas in October.

Miss Lu Ann

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BLUEBONNETS

Lupinus texensis or Buffalo clover or Wolf flower or “el conejo” smells as sweet, looks the same and is equally protected by law. The bluebonnet was voted Texas State Flower on March 7, 1901. Annual member of the pea family, the clusters of blue, bonnet-shaped flowers appear in spring on gravelly limestone hillsides and fields from the top of Texas down to Mexico.

AIANA2

Should these particular California license plates drive by, the original owner Lawrence Weik purchased the prestige plates for his car.

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Parlor on San Pedro. The new
place—called Bananas—should
be swinging open about the
middle of this month.

MACHO MILTY MET his match,
according to information
provided by Benny Hatanaka,
sales supervisor for Williams
Distributing Co. Linda Dunn of
Floresville held the winning
raffle ticket. Schlitz Beer of San
Alley leading to the riverwalk is
Bexar, Wilson and Atascosa
weekends.

Action Magazine, April, 1979 • 25 •

NUMBER ONE Roy Acuff finished first
as most popular singer in a World War II poll of
American soldiers in Europe.

still more and wilder lighting
effects at the Hallelujah
Club here, has taken over the
place. But he finally convinced
authorities he had nothing to
do with Choo-choo, and the Doll
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* * *

This ad is good for 1 FREE DRINK each SUNDAY in April!
Fabulous Thunderbirds Flash By S.A.

By Pat Lalley

The Fabulous Thunderbirds of Austin likely agree with the local pitch of nowhere else but San Antonio. The top-notch, nationally-travelled rhythm and blues band recently played at Ricardo's Cadillac bar on an evening when the hired help about outnumbered the paying customers. The band took the sparse showing in stride, delivering a performance as much for the select audience.

"This band is the first one I've been with that has done anything outside of Texas," said guitarist Jimmie Vaughan, a 10-year veteran of the Austin music scene. "We've played New York, Providence, Boston, D.C. and Canada. We've done well in Dallas, Houston, New Orleans and everywhere else. This is probably the slowest place in the world that I have played."

Vaughan quieted and watched the band set up. A couple of employees at Ricardo's stalked by and complained that the Thunderbirds weren't playing by 9:30. One hissed about the refunds granted.

"Who ever heard about a band starting before 10 when the gig lasts till two," Vaughan asked. His humorous musing recalled a rocky start when he was spot among various places the band played.

"In Boston or New York they know more what is going on musically," he reflected "but you can't always say that. Like tonight. The people here just probably like it. Rhythm and blues depends on where you are. It's always been big on the East Coast. It hasn't died out as it has here. But there's always something happening in Austin and California. It never really dies out."

Once in gear, the band knocked out a blended sound made smooth by some three years of existence. No single instrument dominated.

"We try to play like an orchestra," Vaughan said.

The confident performance reflected both the musical savvy of each player and progressive development as a unit. Bass player Keith Ferguson, who displayed several of 13 tattos on his arms and fingers, recalled a rocky start when he was spot gigging and Vaughan recently departed from the band Storm.

"It was kind of a dodgy business when we first started. A lot of good
guys didn’t think we would go anywhere. Now they are all sorry. Every one of them is sorry,” he said.

Ferguson lived in San Antonio for a bit while growing up, starting with a polka band and moving over to Mexican music and rock. He’s worked the spectrum from Doug Sahm to Freddy Fender to Sunnyland Slim.

“I started playing bass because I couldn’t figure out what to do after getting out of high school. It was an easy way to meet girls too. This was about 18 months earlier. Vocalist Kim Wilson spoke with a lingering Detroit nasal hoarseness unaffected by years growing up in California but completely transformed when singing. He started singing blues and playing harmonica around 1969 when as a high school senior he tired of status as a jock and “all the school shit.” “I needed a change,” he said. “So this started out as a hobby. I could always sing. But for a while there I was not all that serious about the harp because I did not consider it my life. Couple of years later I met people and started backing up blues guys like Eddie Taylor and George ‘Harmonica’ Smith and Lowell Fulsome, a Texas guitar player, and Albert Collins. I played two years in a Goleta, California bar.”

After yoyoging between Austin and a subsequent Minnesota gig, Wilson decided to go with Vaughan whom he had met briefly on his first look-see at Austin. Since joining the band, Wilson admitted, his voice has really come along. “It takes a lot of listening to people same as with the harp. You find a guy that is pretty much into your bag and range or whatever. Fortunately I got a pretty good range. I can sing a lot of those other guys’ tunes in the range that they are supposed to be played in. Songs are written in a certain range to be sung in. Lot of people change them. It doesn’t sound right. I used to change them around to fit my

range, but it didn’t work out. I changed my range to fit the song,” he said. The Fabulous Thunderbirds wound the evening up scattered along the bar sipping drinks and talking shop with acquaintances. Whether they returned to Ricar-do’s or San Antonio was not even a question. The band played their rhythm and blues for the folks who were there.

P. T. BARNUM

Among hustlers he is known respectfully as the Prince of Humbug. Phineas Taylor Barnum supposedly stated “There’s a sucker born every minute and two to take him.” Thronges of Americans in days prior to television, radio and movies paid to prove the observation correct. They flocked to such

legendary presentations as General Tom Thumb, the Bearded Lady, Wild Man of Borneo, Jumbo the Elephant, the Feejee
San Antonio Community Radio has an application with the F.C.C. for a 50,000 watt stereo F.M. radio station at 89.1 on your dial. The station has recently received a $5,000 grant from the H.E.B. Foundation, $1,000 from Coca-Cola, plus the offer of operating space and studio equipment from U.A. Columbia. Pleas McNeel sez he expects the station to be on the air 24 hours a day by early next year. The station will carry national public radio and will concentrate on airing local talent and local points of view. Additionally the air controlled studios will be made accessible to the blind, which means the board is set up in such a way that it can be operated by a blind person. This radio station will belong to the people of San Antonio - Ya Hoo!
The Wommack Brothers, our identical twins (fruits) from Austin, have added a guitarist, phased out the jazz, and are rocking and rolling in the old Wommack Brothers fashion. The Wommacks are due in the studio in April where they will be recording some tunes for Epic (CBS) Right on dudes. Alma Alcala (singer) showed up at a recent S.A.M.A. jam session and floored lots of people with her outstanding voice. Alma claimed she wasn't prepared to sit in but none of the less impressed many of the lookers.

Roy Garcia, our now fulltime coordinator, has replaced Ruth Klause. Ruth is kinda overloaded with work at Villarreal's Ice House where she is in charge of renting the place out for outdoor concerts and things. I wanna express my sincere thanks to Roy for helping me get S.A.M.A. off the ground and of its present status. Our S.A.M.A. is strictly nonprofit and volunteer and Ruth Klause has "muchu" work and time invested. God Bless you Ruth and come help us whenever you can. S.A.M.A.'s offices will always be open to you. You can reach Roy at 431-9869.

Joe Conway plays some good country sounds and comes out with some crazy rap when he gets in the mood. Check him out on K.C.C.W. 93 a.m. (country)

Pat Lalley, Action staff photographer, has been helping out quite a bit snapping pictures here, there and everywhere. Pat has volunteered to take some live shots at future jazz sessions on Sunday afternoons.

Victor Lopez and "Los Keyes" will make a special appearance at our Sunday, April 22nd afternoon jam session. Lopez and the boys appear nightly at Ricardo's on the River.

The songs of the Holland jazz band seemed so familiar, but the tunes weren't quite the same as of old. "Revival jazz is the idea," said Pieter Holland, saxophone and synthesizer. "The bass is basically into bebop. Charlie Parker is the background really. We do the old tunes with a new sound through electronics."

Holland's saxophone frequency triggered a specially-rigged synthesizer sensitive to sound frequency. The special effects suggested an entire horn section. Holland wound up with chords rather than single notes which filled the spacious room at Ricardo's Cadillac Bar.

Equally unusual was the twanging presence of a pedal steel guitar, soul to many a fine western band. Bobby Darderman practiced jazz tunes some 10 years in his Hildebrand Music Store before joining a rehearsed jive band. "It's something I've always wanted to do, but the instrument was based around the western-type situation. I started out with San Antonio country bands. Bubba Littrell and Johnny Bush. Even Willie one time before he became famous. Went on the road with Charlie Walker. Then I decided to raise a family. Took 10 years off but practiced every day. Learned jazz tunes. I heard a sax player doing jazz along the way and said that's what it sounds like," he said.

The bass player recently stepped out of the country club music circuit after 11 years with the Kenny Fisher band. Bill Torres decided to play jazz after a 14-year lapse and have fun again. His instrument is an Ampeg in an Ampex console, he said and explained: "My bass was intended to replace the acoustic upright so you could bow it. But the design could not sustain high notes.

For the last five years I have been jacking with it to make it sound like an acoustic upright able to sustain modern sounds. It's a very frustrating experience, but I am almost there. The pickups are working against each other. There's no use of a volume control which distorts and muddies the sound. It makes for a unique bass," the Mexico native and daylight real estate agent said.

Behind these strange if not wondrous instruments was drummer Albert "Footsie" Catan. His plunging stabs at the skins provided jumping beat. Catan normally clips at a barber shop.

Holland rides herd over the bunch, which has played for the public since mid-January and with the intention of grbbing national recognition. The band practices four nights a week. They're working on new tunes by the likes of Tom Scott and Hubert Laws. Songs by Miles Davis and Stanley Turrentine are now in the repertoire. "The life of a jazz band is rehearsal. Otherwise you get so dead tired of it all. It's a necessity to always present new material. It takes dedicated musicians. Playing jazz in San Antonio is quite difficult. There are almost no places that support that. Our regular gig is at Here's on Friday and Saturday. The first set is instrumental. The second set is with singer Vivian Wharton. There's a concert format over three hours," Holland said.

Holland is the name of the band, and it's a catchy monicker at that. But the unique musical match of sweet pedal steel and eerie synthesizer was the sound that stuck in the ear.

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Holland Jazzes Up Old and New

Holland Concentrates on Rehearsals and Building a Following. He talked about a single soon. Likely, he prays San Antonio will support his jazz band.
Early Music Ensemble Retrieves Past

The San Antonio Early Music Ensemble plays golden oldies ranging from the 12th century to about 1600. Such odd instruments as gemshorns, bowed and plucked psalteries, rackets, recorders and cup bells rang, clanged, reverberated and tinkled. The strange sounds in centuries-old scores varied from near noise to the sweetly melodic at a recent concert in McAllister Fine Arts Auditorium at San Antonio College.

George Gregory, a SAC professor of music for 20 years, directed the ensemble which grew out of a class in the early instruments. Most of the group started as his students eight years ago. They share a desire to play the old songs on the "right" instruments. The music-making devices were either copies of museum pieces or conjectured from pictures. England and Germany remain centers for reproduction with the United States a growing competitor. Over the last 15 years a huge market has developed, Gregory noted, and the waiting list for some instruments stretches to 10 years. The copies don't come cheap. A set of silver cup bells took $1000. The viola da gamba, resembling a bulky fiddle but played down the leg of the seated player, cost $1,400. Gregory has never added up the total price of SAC's collection. The scores derive from collections and private research. The task of locating a suitable piece leads to the necessity of editing according to available instruments. "The problem is to decide what instruments you will use. In the one case where there was singing, the song was monophonic so the use of instruments greatly altered the particular sound of the piece. We are probably practical. We play what instruments are available. If you were to hear the same pieces by someone else, they could sound different because of the instruments and how they are played," Gregory said.

Among the instruments available at the concert was the gemshorn which is drilled out of a wild African ox horn. The craftsman sent out for the exotic bone when the domestic horn wall proved too thin. Played from the base rather than tip of the prong, the gemshorn is deep and gentle in tone. Another interesting device was the rackett. Squat and compact, the wooden, barrel-shaped instrument looked as much a pipe for weed smoking. After a puff into the stem, Gregory expressed amazement at the low growl it emitted.

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