

Dixie Chicks and Jay-Z make new music for a new semester

by Douglas Smith
staff writer

The start of the new semester at Behrend always brings with it an odd excitement for the new music releases to be played in those really expensive stereo systems inhabiting the dorm rooms.

This past week, a wide variety of new releases encompassed all genres of listening with an album or two that embellish the classic college sound. The Dixie Chicks new release and the *Blue Streak* soundtrack are, oddly enough, two of the more anticipated cuts that came out in the past week. The Dixie Chicks popularity has carried over and headliners like Jay-Z

soundtrack.

Most students have abundant music collections that just keep growing for the sake of collection. The Dixie Chicks *Fly* may be one album that most students are reluctant to purchase simply because of the country label that goes with this all female group. In some markets, they have made the crossover to pop/Top 40 stations, but that does not seem to be the case in most areas of Pennsylvania. However, most students have probably heard their biggest hit entitled *Wide Open Spaces* regardless of listening preference.

Fly is the sophomore release from this trio with their previous release still number two on Billboard's country charts and number 24 on the Bill-

board 200. However, the Dixie Chicks have released *Ready to Run* from the new album, and it has risen to number ten on the hot country singles and tracks chart. Most critics would say that this is simply because their popularity has not worn off yet from the first album; however, the group put a lot of time into the new cuts and enlisted some of Nashville's most notable names to collaborate in one way or another. This is why the group deserves more respect.

The group actually started writing months after the release of their first album. Group member Martie Seidel comments, "there are so many demands on our time so we started going on writers' retreats, where we

rented cabins out in the country. I think we were wise to go on those retreats, because it was the only way to really get time to write. It didn't give us a head start on anything, writing flowed more freely. We were ready to record again, but we had more music down on disk than we wrote so much" (Billboard, September 1999).

Such singers or songwriters as Matraca Berg, Annie Robyn, Buddy Miller, Jim Lauderdale, and Larry Griffin helped the group out. The names are more noticeable to country fans, but some might notice Griffin as a famous DJ, since he worked with the likes of Huey and the Blowfish and Lord the Wet Sprocket. The time and effort put

into the album is really respectable, which should allow even the skeptics to add this to their collection.

Two soundtracks to the movie *Blue Streak* starring Matt LeBlanc and Eric Roberts are also top rated. The first of which, *Blue Streak*, by Jay-Z, was featured on MTV's *Movie of the Week* and Home Entertainment on a track called *Cheer Up, Girl*. Rodney Atkins, producer of the latest Brandy album, worked on the album. He produced the third track to be released by the R & B group *South Park* featuring LaBelle called *Down South*.

The soundtrack also has songs by Kelly Price, Keith Sweat featuring Da

Prat, Rakwon, Foxy Brown, 69 Boyz, Playa, and others. As is the case with most soundtrack albums, some songs are lacking in the hooks and lyrics. The star power alone is enough incentive to purchase this soundtrack, but how much it is liked will vary between listeners.

Sticking with the stereotypical college sound Coal Chamber releases *Chamber Music*, and allowing for the more mellow side of college life is Brian McKnight with *Back at One*. These are two more albums that were just released that most readers of *The Behrend Beacon* can look for in stores. The two previously mentioned albums strictly depend on musical taste. The albums are lacking in overall music appreciation.

Toilet humor 'stinks' in summer heat

by Deanna Symoski
features editor

Fat Bastard, Big Daddy and Cartman--though Jedis overpowered us this summer, it was mere mortals who made us laugh. Here's a comprehensive review of three of the summer's funniest flicks and how they fared in the "Summer of George."

Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me: Heather-Shmeather! I demand more scenes featuring Scott Evil, but I'd settle for more screen time from Dr. Evil and Weight Watchers' poster child Fat Bastard himself. The hippest, most entertaining parts of the whole film came when one of these three characters appeared on screen, thanks in part to the witty ad-libbing between Mike Myers and Seth Green.

Though Austin Powers himself is a little less shagadelic than the rest of the cast, it's worth hanging in there just to see what he'll come up with next.

BEST LINE: "I want my baby back, baby back, baby back, baby back ribs..."

Big Daddy: This is favoritism in its purest form: I loved this movie--so much so that I saw it three times this summer. No, this isn't Adam Sandler's *Truman Show*, but it wasn't meant to be. Though less aggressive

than some of his previous films, Sandler does not sell out! He simply made a film that is not comprised solely of tantrums and fits (though, there's still nothing quite as amusing as a Sandler tirade), and extends himself into--hold onto your seats--some depth?

Wait, is this still Adam "Canteen Boy" Sandler we're talking about? Yep, and paired with 6-year-old twins Dylan and Cole Sprouse, he turns in the best performance of his career (and undoubtedly the smartest one as *Big Daddy* was one of the highest-grossing movies of the summer).

BEST LINE: "Aaaahhhhhhh!!!"

South Park: Bigger, Longer and Uncut: Quite probably the most surprising movie of the summer came from the cast-aside creators of the Comedy Central series. I mean, c'mon, how were they going to stretch a half-hour of sloppy animation into a feature-length film? Smarten it up! Not only did Trey Parker and Matt Stone battle the MPAA for an "R" rating (originally they were tagged with an NC-17), they tackled censorship within the film itself. *South Park* is a sly maneuver in the wake of a new political-Hollywood, where the blame for demoralizing America's youth is chucked back and forth daily between senators and filmmakers. Plus, the kids swear A LOT!

They also brutalize such timely tar-

gets as Bill Gates and Jar Jar Binks, and any film that knew enough to terrorize Jar Jar before the rest of us has to be a sure bet.

BEST LINE: I don't think we can print that.

So now that Labor Day has marked the end of the summer season, how do our boys stack up against aliens and any movie starring, oh I don't know...Julia Roberts?? Well, *Austin Powers* and *Big Daddy* are both in the top five (2 and 5 respectively) according to projected final domestic grosses by *Entertainment Weekly*. Though *South Park* didn't make the cut, money seemed less important than the David v. Goliath battle that the filmmakers won. The film could also help to bolster ailing ratings for the series.

And finally, what does this all mean? Well, the good news is that with the exception (again) of *South Park*, critics were only mildly appreciative of these comedic efforts and they were essentially ignored. Mediocre, even bad reviews at times, could not, would not shake the faith of the average moviegoer, proving that the pen (though still mightier than some things) is not stronger than our need to laugh. Critic-proof movies made a lot of money this summer, but they also gave catch-phrase success to people who aren't, oh I don't know...Tom Cruise.



Adam Sandler stars as Sonny Kofax in *Big Daddy*. Photo: Myles Aronowitz

STUDENT CLUB OF THE WEEK: Student Government Association

by Elizabeth Hayes
associate editor

Have you ever seen the sign hanging around campus inviting students to join SGA? Did you consider getting involved, but weren't sure what you would be getting into? Well, here is your chance to find out! In a recent interview, the current SGA President, Andrea DiPlacido, gave us the scoop on the organization.

The Student Government Association, otherwise known as the SGA, is the legislative organization on campus made of and, more importantly, for, the students of Penn State Behrend. As Andrea DiPlacido put it, SGA strives, "to give voice to the student body on opinions of academic and co-curricular affairs." It basically acts as a mediator between the student body and the administration and faculty, working to keep both in tune with one another. "Basically, we are the people to complain to if you want any changes made. We do something about what people complain

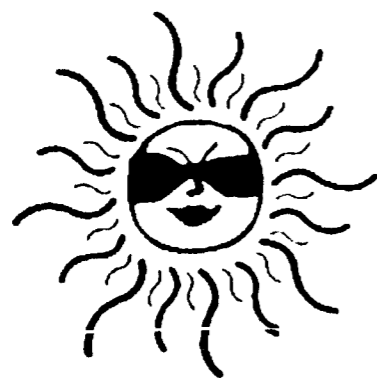
about," DiPlacido said of SGA. Have an issue to complain about? Just show up at one of the organization's weekly meetings. These meetings are usually held every Wednesday at 8:20 p.m. in Room 114 of the Reed Building. At these meetings, SGA discusses and decides on issues concerning the student body. Students are always more than welcome to attend.

SGA also oversees all legitimately registered organizations on campus and administers their funding. Although they can't directly sponsor one event, an annual Book Sale held in January. SGA has a hand in numerous on-campus events. At any given time there are various committees working with various aspects of student life. Any student can get involved in Student Government. Aside from the usual officers (President, Vice President, etc.) there are various Senate and Council Representative spots as well. These positions are usually filled only during elections in the spring semester and freshmen senator elections held in the fall. Special elections are also held when the

need arises to fill vacant senate seats.

However, a student does not have to have an elected position to be involved. As previously mentioned, there are numerous committees that anyone interested is welcome to serve on. These students won't have the voting privileges Senate members have, but they can still be more than sufficiently involved.

If you have further questions regarding SGA, or if you would like to join and you need more information, there are several avenues by which you can access the Student Government Association. SGA has a new office in the Reed Building, located in the rear of the first floor near the Back Room. Office hours listing times when the office is staffed are posted on the door, and the office number is extension X6220. DiPlacido comments, "if they [those who should be staffing the office] are not there at their assigned times, let me know!" Also, you can contact Andrea DiPlacido directly at extension X7435. So go out there and get involved!



Come to where the Sun shines all year long...

Erie's NEWEST Eastside Tanning Salon...

A Total Tan

1920 E. 38th St. at Zimmerman

Erie, PA 16510

(814) 824-5031

A Total Tan

10 tans

\$30

w/coupon only

expires 11/30/99

A Total Tan

15 tans

\$40

w/coupon only

expires 11/30/99