

4 Austin American-Statesman

Thursday, April 30, 1992

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# Two Nice Girls make amicable split

One of the musical mainstays of alternative Austin, **Two Nice Girls**, has decided to call it quits. The band had discussed the split since stopping home in the midst of months of exhaustive touring, and made the decision at a Monday meeting following Saturday's concert at Liberty Lunch.

"There's only so much time and room and attention we have within the band, so that can diminish each songwriter's direction," explained **Gretchen Phillips**, who formed the band with **Kathy Korniloff** six years ago, with **Pam Berger** and **Meg Hentes** joining later. With all four members writing material, the decision was made collectively that those four directions might be better explored independently.

"We always genre-hopped like crazy, but over the last couple of years it has been like four different genres," continued Phillips, who plans to leave the folkier aspects of the band's music behind and move toward loud, hard guitar-heavy rock. "The main thing is that it's got to be fun. And I think we all decided that maybe there could be more fun if we were free to do completely independent projects."

"It was real mutual and real amicable," added Korniloff. "It was like one of those times in a relationship when you realize you have to move on."

Though the band stresses that the decision didn't result from the folding last year of Rough Trade records, and the inability to land another contract, there's no question that constant touring without any record company subsidy (or album to promote) took its toll. The differences in musical direction became more obvious during the recording of a recent demo.

The band is continuing to work with New York filmmakers **Fran Reznick** and **Zinka Benton** on a documentary feature titled *Out on the Road with Two Nice Girls*, and will complete a West Coast tour as previously scheduled. Plans call for a farewell September



Two Nice Girls, a popular Austin alternative band for the last six years, has decided to split and allow each member to move on to different projects.

## Austin beat

show in Austin, with a live album possible as well.

**JAZZ AT PEDERNALES:** **Willie Nelson** has been wearing his jazz hat this week as he and jazz guitar legend **Herb Ellis** have been recording at his Pedernales Studio for a Justice Records album due late this summer. The album, with the working title of *King of Swing*, will be Ellis' first foray into Western Swing. Justice Records' president and producer **Randall Jamail** also enlisted fiddler **Johnny Gimble**, pianist **Floyd Domino**, bassist **Tommy Alesup**, and pedal-steel star **Herb Remington** for the project with the idea of re-creating the classic *Bob Wills and the Playboys* sound.

**A SUITE-HEART DEAL:** Call it a borderline collaboration. On Monday, **Robert Skiles**, who can normally be found at the helm of *Beto y los Fairlanes*, will instead be wielding the baton at the conductor's podium of the Laredo Philharmonic Orchestra. Under his direction, the orchestra will perform Skiles' third orchestral work, *A Portrait of Juan Seguin*. The piece incorporates the Texan patriot's memoirs, which Skiles has edited and set to

music.

The program also will include six songs Skiles wrote with singer/songwriter **Tish Hinojosa** (who will also be on the Laredo bill), along with **George Gershwin's Cuban Overture**, and a selection of short pieces. But can you mambo to it?

Closer to home, Hinojosa will help celebrate *Cinco de Mayo* with three performances: 9:30 p.m. Friday at La Zona Rosa, 9 p.m. Saturday at Scholz Garten and 7:15 p.m. Tuesday (the actual holiday) at Pan American Hillside.

**SO LONG, BARBARA:** A torch should be passed on when **Barbara Amaral** leaves town next week for Fresno, Calif. Her romantic songs have filled many rooms since 1975, including her acclaimed renditions of *Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*. Although she is accompanying a friend making a career move, she said she'll continue singing in the Golden State and will release an album this summer recorded recently at Lone Star Studios.

**TOWNES' TRY TWO:** The last attempt by **Townes Van Zandt** to carry off a show at La Zona Rosa (with **Guy Clark** several weeks ago), didn't work out very well and was cut short. The obvi-

ously impaired **Van Zandt** was taken to Brackenridge Hospital that night and later to a rehab center in Nashville, said his management. But he's back and promising to do better at a Wednesday night benefit for the Oak Springs Treatment Center here (\$3 cover at La Zona). His recording profile lately is increasing: the new *Cowboy Junkies* album has two TVZ songs, *Silenz Records* will be releasing *Rain on a Conga Drum/Live in Berlin* and an album of songs by others that TVZ recorded, and his 1989 Sugar Hill album *Live & Obscure* is being re-released in Europe.

**YOUR NIGHT TO SING:** Applaud these brave musicians: **Jeff Helmer**, **Hugh Sparks**, **Russ Scanlon** and **Roger Schupp**. They will back up your song if you've always wanted to cut a tape and never been brave enough to try. For a fee, of course, the Music Umbrella of Austin and Saxon Pub will provide the band at "Your Night to Sing with the Band" Wednesday from 6-9:30 p.m. For registration info, call 476-1324.

**BULGARIA'S BEST:** Wedding music is the most popular music in Bulgaria today, and **Ivo Papsov** is a true superstar of the genre. The virtuoso clarinetist will bring his unique brand of jazz-inspired improvisation set against the complex time signatures of Bulgarian dance music to a performance with his orchestra Monday at 8 p.m. at Top of the Marc. Papsov and his orchestra play fast and loud in an aggressive jazz-rock style, with the lead instruments trading solos against the stated theme. The similarity to jazz ends there though; the approach is purely Balkan.

**JAZZ WITH A VOICE:** **Tina Marsh** and the Creative Opportunity Orchestra continue their 1991-92 season with the third concert Friday at 7 p.m. at the Vortex Theatre. This show will feature **Collaborative Voices** and the **New Cactus Band** in a performance of original jazz as well as updated versions of jazz and gospel classics and open-ended improvisation. Voices is an eclectic group of seven female vocalists: **Marsh**, **Suzi Stern** (back from Portland especially for the show), **Donna Menthal**, **Sabrina Cummings**, **Hope Morgan**, **Beth Ullman** and newest member **Suzanna Sharpe**. The Cactus Band is the core group from the Orchestra with **Marsh** on vocals,

**Bob Rodriguez** on piano, **Ken Filliano** on bass and **Billy Mintz** on drums. Tickets for the show are \$10.

**BUTCH THE RIVER RAT:** Can't get enough of **Butch Hancock** at the relatively tame clubs in town? How about a trip down the rapids of the Rio Grande with him? **Far Flung Adventures** is offering a three-day, two-night trip June 20-22 through the Rio Grande Gorge west of Taos, N.M., with guides manning the rafts by day and Hancock his guitar by night. For information and reservations, call (800) 359-4138.

**I SHALL BE RELEASED:** Fans of **Susan Lindfors** eager to continue to fete the release of her new tape have their chance today when Lindfors makes an in-store appearance at Waterloo Records at 5 p.m. Later that evening, at 8 p.m., she moves the festivities over to the Chicago House for a show that will include singer/songwriter **Michael Fraccaso**, the **Big Guns** rhythm section of **Roland Denney** and **Paul Pearcy**, and others.

Next week, on Wednesday to be exact, **John Roy Reed** (one half of the perennial "No, the other John Reed" conundrum) will be celebrating his new release, *Ghost of Another All-Nighter*, with the **Wayward Saints**, and guests scheduled include A-list mandolinist **Paul Glasse**, singer/songwriter **Champ Hood**, producer **Mark Hallman**, and many more. The ensemble will be holding forth at 9:30 p.m. at the Waterloo Ice House's Sixth and Lamar location.

The long-awaited release by longtime Austin favorite **Alejandro Escovedo** will be celebrated with several appearances over the weekend. Friday at 5 p.m. at Waterloo Records, Escovedo will preview selections from *Gravity*, his first CD release produced by **Stephen Bruton** for the local **Watermelon** label. It features Escovedo in a variety of musical settings including the intimate voice and piano only *She Doesn't Live Here Anymore* and *Gravity/Falling Down Again*, which is livened by background vocals from daughter **Maya Escovedo** and her friends at **Zilker Elementary School**. Later that evening, the show moves to the **Cactus Cafe** and winds up Sunday at La Zona Rosa.

This edition of Austin beat was compiled by **Don McLeese**, **Greg Johnson**, **John T. Davis** and **Michael Point**.



Joe Ely and band will be performing all over Austin in the next few weeks to promote his upcoming album.

## New album brings Joe Ely back into the touring scene

For more than a year, **Joe Ely** has restricted local performances to a couple of special occasions (New Year's Eve, Aqua Fest), but he'll soon be busier than ever. With a new album due in June and a new band raring to go, Ely will devote much of May to a whirlwind tour of Austin. Over the course of a couple of weeks, he'll play the Continental Club (May 7), the Lumberyard (May 8), Steamboat (May 9), Antone's (May 10), La Zona Rosa (May 15), the Broken Spoke (May 21) and Liberty Lunch (May 23).

Such a flurry of activity antici-

pates a touring summer for Ely and band, which now finds guitarist **Ian Moore** and keyboardist **Reese Wynans** joining the hold-over rhythm section of drummer **Davis McLarty** and bassist **Jimmy Pettit**.

Before the Austin dates, Ely will play a homecoming reunion at **Lubbock's Depot Warehouse** Friday and Saturday, with former bandmates including **Jesse Taylor**, **Lloyd Maines**, **Ponty Bone** and perhaps even **Bobby Keys**, as well as special guest **Terry Allen**, expected to join Ely and his current band.

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