



**BROADCASTING LIVE** from Avery Hall studios, Rhett McClure disc jockeys a techno program on KRNU-FM (90.3), which is one of the new featured shows on the college station.

## KRNU pledge: Just listen, you'll like it

By **JIM ZAVODNY**  
Staff writer

Since campus radio station KRNU-FM (90.3) switched formats from Top 40 to modern rock in the summer of 1989, three "alternative" stations have come and gone.

The downfall of "alternative" programming in Nebraska began when Omaha's KXKT-FM (103.7) "The KAT" folded after it failed to find a significant audience. That switch to country was followed by a change in formats at KKNB-FM (104.1), which used to be "The Planet." The biggest of the three was KGDE-FM (101.9) "The EDGE," which became classic rock station "The Fox" this spring.

With the death of "The EDGE," KRNU and Lincoln station "The Point" remain as Lincoln's only outlets for modern rock. KRNU's general manager, Rick Alloway, who is best known as the friendly voice of NRoll, said even though no solid numbers were available, it was a good bet that KRNU got some of its local listeners back when "The EDGE" went under.

"One of the challenges of alternative music is whether or not you can make a go of it commercially," Alloway said.

"The closest we come to is 'The Point,' I think, and they're defining themselves as a new music alternative, too. I think that we have a larger playlist than they do, and we're able to take the chance to break some new acts that they really can't as a commercial station."

And because so many of the commercial stations started calling themselves "alternative," KRNU recently changed its tag line after 10 years of "Lincoln's New Music Alternative" to "Just Listen ... You'll Like It."

"Our music directors and I decided

that the word 'alternative' was getting overused as the buzz word of the '90s," Alloway said. "The emphasis in that phrase was always on new music because that's how we were defining alternative, not as a particular sound, but more in terms of it being new or music that didn't necessarily have an established audience."

Working to find an audience has been a challenge for KRNU, especially since the station runs on 100 watts, compared to some that run on 100,000.

KRNU also doesn't worry about offending advertisers: They don't have any. This allows DJs to be adventurous with the music they play.

Rhett McClure, a senior broadcasting major and one of four music directors at the station, said he picks music that is artistically worthy of radio play during his stints on the air.

"We like to play bands you normally wouldn't hear on commercial radio," McClure said. "If you don't like what you hear at any particular moment, wait five minutes and we usually play something completely different."

The only exception to McClure's statement comes every night when the student-produced specialty shows begin. These two-hour shows consist of either a particular musical genre or a talk show, call-in format.

Two new specialty shows that appear on Thursday nights, "Rhett's Techno Show" and "Wordless," shouldn't have problems establishing an audience, Alloway said. "Rhett's Techno Show" is McClure's electronic adventure from 9-11 p.m., during which you can expect to hear groups like the Chemical Brothers, Moby and Atari Teenage Riot.

"The whole rave/dance culture, in a weird kind of way, is like a new sub-

Please see KRNU on 17

## Festival closes summer with blues

By **SARAH BAKER**  
Senior staff writer

The end of summer blues don't have to be a bad thing.

And this weekend, they could even be downright fun.

The Big Bottom Blues Festival takes place this Saturday in Tekamah and promises to make the transition of seasons into one rockin' party.

The second annual festival will offer generous servings of continuous music, along with food, art and activities for the kids.

Brenda Cornelius, one of the event organizers, said she is hoping for an even bigger crowd turnout this year.

"We have seen a lot of interest this year," Cornelius said. "We're hoping for 1,500 to 2,000."

The first festival drew about 800 people, she said.

This year's diverse musical lineup includes the American Indian blues-rock group Indigenous; the 10-piece big band outfit The Fabtones; Blues Caravan, a self-described "Texas Blues" act; and a local outfit, Junior T and the Bones.

Blues Caravan is making its second appearance at the festival after winning last year's Blues Band contest.

Cornelius said although the music is

the main focus of the festival, it's not the only one.

Other attractions include a new arts and crafts fair, food and a beer garden.

Jim Pipher, bassist and vocalist for

were dances all the time with live bands," Pipher said. "They were good bands who made a living playing night after night. There was all this music and all these kids who dreamt of being rock 'n' roll stars."

Although he has played in festivals before, a blues festival is definitely a rarity in small-town Nebraska, Pipher said.

He hopes an event like this will bring people of all ages together.

"The people who are my age are going to remember the songs we play from when they were growing up," he said. "Some are going to want to hear the hard-edged blues, and some are going to be there to support the local scene."

Cornelius agreed, saying the festival aimed its acts at an all-ages crowd.

"The acts are all over the map," she said. "There is a wide age range of people that enjoy this kind of music, so we thought we'd give it a shot."

Gates open at 4 p.m. on Saturday, and the music starts around 5 p.m.

Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$6 for students, \$3 for seniors and children under 12 are admitted free.

For more information on the festival, call Jennifer Gill at (402) 374-1586.



**LONG TIME LINCOLN blues artists The Fabtones join Indigenous and Blues Caravan to celebrate the Big Bottom Blues, the second annual end of the summer bash in Tekamah.**

The Fabtones, said the festival brings back a lot of memories for him.

"When I was in high school, there

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