



Special to THE GAMECOCK

Jacob Poole, Ryan Higgins, Ryan Johnson, Colin Brown and David Stringer make up the local indie band All Good Citizens, performing Sept. 16 at New Brookland Tavern.

Band in review

John Murray
THE GAMECOCK

Tired of hearing the same trite, stale and uninspired music saturating the airwaves?

All Good Citizens sure is. This Columbia-based indie rock band is out to "have the most fun ever when they play music" and to play their music with personality.

In striving after these goals, the band has developed an honest connection with its fans. This is quite an achievement considering four of the five members are full-time USC students and the band's oldest member is only 21. But don't let the dates on their driver's licenses fool you — this band has years of experience under its belt.

Nothing could prove AGC's worth more than its debut full-length album "Stories for Your

Friends." The band is throwing a CD release party and show 5 p.m. Saturday, at New Brookland Tavern. Tickets are \$8, and some of the band's merchandise will be discounted.

The album's release is by far the most important event in AGC's incredibly young, but fruitful, career. As the members have only been together for a couple of years, the band's success is certainly exciting and impressive. In fact, the band's music has been so well received that ABC won a battle of the bands sponsored by Modern Music Studios. The four-month long contest put the band head-to-head against some of the biggest and brightest musicians in the Columbia music scene, including Columbia stalwarts Tigerbot Hesh, with the prize being a chance to record a CD.

Singer/guitarist Jacob Poole, a fourth-year exercise science student; guitarist David Stringer, a fourth-year public relations student; and drummer Colin Brown, a third-year music performance student, formed AGC from the ashes of The Farewell Note, a now-defunct local band that experienced moderate success in the Columbia music scene.

Unhappy and just plain bored with the direction of The Farewell Note, the boys decided to say goodbye to their band. Unsure of where they wanted their music to go, they regrouped. What came about after the breakup of The Farewell Note was something different from anything the band had done up until then.

They developed a fresh focus and added Ryan Higgins, a student

at the Savannah College of Art and Design, to play keyboard and fellow USC student Ryan Johnson, a third-year music education student, to play bass. After hours of songwriting and rehearsal, All Good Citizens emerged.

Brown said AGC is "more electric-oriented and dancier" than the average indie bands. The band's sound steers clear of genre labels, and dynamics between its songs allow the band to distance itself from many of its counterparts.

Brown said "Stories for Your Friends" will have a dance-y pop song on one track that might be followed by an acoustic ballad on the next track. The order of the songs is nothing to worry about because arrangements and lyrics are the perfect bridge over any stylistic differences between tracks.

Different styles only add to

AGC's musical integrity, and the diversity between the songs is a direct result of each member's personal musical influences. Such influences range from the commercially successful Dashboard Confessional to indie darling The Postal Service and Christian emcore favorite Emery.

Do not be quick to pin these guys as another run-of-the-mill emo/indie rock band out to cash in on the scene's penchant for broken-hearted love songs. AGC is more than the sum of its parts, and it always tries to draw from the same musical wells as do its influences while maintaining its own musical identity. AGC definitely has an identity all its own, and the best proof of this identity is in the music itself.

Even more impressive than the recorded music is the band's live

performance, so be sure to check out one of its upcoming shows. Playing at the show Saturday will be special guests Capital R and The Letter Red.

AGC's next performance is Sept. 16, also at the New Brookland Tavern. This show is likely to be one of the band's most high-profile performances to date, as AGC, along with Lovedrug and The Goodwill, will open for The Juliana Theory.

You can check All Good Citizens out at www.allgoodcitizens.com. Want to listen to the new CD before the party? Check out www.myspace.com/allgoodcitizens and www.purevolume.com/allgoodcitizens.

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Special to THE GAMECOCK

A model displays plus-size club wear from Torrid, which has a more youthful look than other stores that specialize in plus sizes.

Shop brings plus-size options

Torrid carries plus sizes designed for college crowd

Kelly Decker
THE GAMECOCK

At Torrid, you don't have to be a size 2 to wear the latest fashion trends. Torrid, the exclusive retail carrier of apparel for plus-size women, is proof that the hottest fashions are no longer only for the super-model-sized woman.

Columbia's Torrid opened May 4 and is located in Columbiana Centre off Harbison Boulevard.

Shawn Medley, Torrid's district manager, describes Torrid's style as "junior fashion for women sized 12-26."

What sets Torrid apart from other stores, Medley said, is that it offers fashion for the 15- to 29-year-old plus-size woman.

"The style of clothes hasn't been available before for this age group," Medley said.

Medley said Torrid's plus-size selection does not mean the store is

comparable to such stores as Lane Bryant, which caters to a somewhat older clientele.

Blaire Lowery, Torrid store manager, agreed with Medley.

"It's more than just about the size of the clothes," Lowery said. "It's about the fashion. It's about what's hot right now, the real trendsetters."

Torrid's biggest trendsetter is "denim, denim, denim," Lowery said. "Different washes, embellishments, beading and screen prints on jeans are all really hot right now."

Lowery said that in addition to denim, "shrugs, graphic tees, lace camisoles and chunky jewelry are also big sellers."

Lowery had a few recommendations for those unsure of what kind of fashions they're looking for.

"Every girl wants that perfect pair of jeans, and we offer some

great jeans by brands such as Baby Phat. Also, our knit gauchos not only look, but also feel great. Crochet shrugs are another hot item that I would recommend."

Not all of Torrid's merchandise is for plus-size women, as Torrid also offers a large selection of shoes and accessories for women of any size.

If you're looking for a gift, Lowery suggested a gift card because "it always fits." She added, "Sashes and scarves are also some great gifts."

Lowery suggested wearing scarves and sashes in non-traditional ways.

"You could wear a scarf as a belt and really elevate what you are wearing."

If you think what Torrid has to offer right now is hot, just wait until you hear what Medley said Torrid would offer in the months to come.

In the fall, Torrid will have "a darker theme and feature a lot of crushed velvet," Lowery said. "And there will also be a continuation of the bohemian theme."

Torrid's prices range from \$38 to \$74 for denim and \$6 to \$16 for



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Torrid's fall line will feature crushed velvet and a "darker theme."

accessories.

Torrid is a division of the Hot Topic chain. Other Hot Topic labels include Hot Kiss, Dickies, Paris Blues, LEI and Jalate. There are approximately 116 Torrid stores in the United States.

For more information, call Torrid at 803-732-5266 or visit www.torrid.com.

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