

Let's Active comes of age to shed garage-pop image

By **ALLISON PIKE**
Staff Writer

The Winston-Salem natives who make up Let's Active have big plans for everybody when they play Cat's Cradle Friday night.

It's been two years since Let's Active released its album *Big Plans For Everybody*, but Mitch Easter and his gang (Angie Carlson, Eric Marshall and Dennis Ambrose) are still intact and still playing what they call "non-boogie, non-Southern pop."

Let's Active began back in 1981 as a trio consisting of vocalist/guitarist/songwriter Easter, bassist Faye Hunter and drummer Sara Romweber (now playing with Snatches of Pink). By 1984, Let's Active was touring the States and England, opening for Echo and the Bunnymen; this was also the year it released its first LP, *Cypress*.

By the release of the fourth Let's Active LP, *Big Plans*, both Hunter and Romweber had left the band. The trio's sound was pure garage-pop and it earned them a following of college students — and

"teenyboppers," as Easter says. "I suppose (they) originally liked us for the famed 'puppies' video ('Every Word Means No')," he theorizes.

Easter says that the new lineup is tighter than the previous one. Dennis Ambrose took over the bass, Eric Marshall is on drums and Angie Carlson handles the keyboards and guitar.

"The old band could sound really charming," Easter says. "Now we sort of sound tougher, and we seem to be pretty tight. I think that the charm is still there, but I think it's a less silly kind of charm. We seem to have gotten a lot louder."

Easter's role as songwriter and nucleus of Let's Active has given him an almost solo artist status in the music industry. In fact, there was some talk of *Big Plans* album to be released under Easter's name. But he says he is not "in charge" of the band.

"I always wanted everybody to be involved and get what they want out of it," Easter says. "Everybody in the band sort of

figures out a little corner they'd like to operate in. It's sort of up to me to write the songs and stuff, and that's the job I want."

Easter is very critical of the music industry and says radio is the "corruptest" end of it. "I think radio has an obligation to let people hear stuff, and they don't do that," he says. "They always like to claim that they reflect the public's taste, but they don't. They really set tastes. I feel like it's just a terrible industry. The only thing that's remotely hopeful is that, now and then, somebody hip seems to slip through."

Another prospect of the music business that irks Easter is Let's Active's reputation for being a "cute" band.

"Seeing myself in the mirror, the word 'cute' is the last thing that comes to my mind," he says. "All that cute business, I think, was probably a necessary evil at the beginning, and it seemed to work. That's how we got pegged, and people seemed to enjoy it at the beginning. Whatever it takes, I suppose."



Let's Active will perform at Cat's Cradle Friday

General College

Due to Spring Break, last week's episode of General College is re-running this week, so we're taking this opportunity to catch you up on this semester's action.

Having alienated and offended

Ken, Jason, Kirk and Steve, Meg is raped by an unknown assailant. Afterward, she finds she is unable to deal with herself and others.

Because Chris files sexual harassment charges against Kingsley, Sarah discovers the affair but agrees to stand by him until the

matter is settled. After receiving a number of dangerous threats, Sarah forces Chris to admit to lying, only to discover while driving that her brakes don't work.

After finally resolving her problems with Brendan, Mary Catherine discovers he has been spend-

ing time with Suzy secretly. The matter is quickly settled, however, when he proposes.

Unhappy with their lives, Anne and Courtney accept drug dealer Tessa's offer to do coke. While things only get worse for Anne, Courtney finds a silver lining in

newly-reformed Jason, but both girls find themselves wanting to toot again.

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