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Tuesday, February 5, 2008

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Readers love these groups

The Daily Record's fifth annual Best Bands poll

BY ELLEN S. WILKOWE
DAILY RECORD

Friday, January 25, 2008

DISCUSSTHIS Post Comment

Most met at bars. Others coffeehouses. Even -- gasp! -- the library.

And then they moved you -- as good musicians often do.

Now you, a faithful fan, stand behind your band, in hopes of moving them.

"I knew Michael could play football, track and swim -- he received 13 varsity letters in high school -- but I never dreamed he could sing and perform on stage like he does," Al Colledge wrote in an e-mail to the Daily Record.

Ah, father does know best after all.

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Drunk Uncle Bob



Breaking the Cycle Band

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"His unique talent for writing words/music, and then playing/singing them has strictly been inherited from his mom. He continuously impresses me with his energy and originality."

Moved?

(Michael "Joe" Colledge received Best Male Vocalist picks from fans last year.)

Welcome to the fifth annual Best Bands edition of the Daily Record.

("American Idol," you can now leave the building.)

More of a shout-out to overall showmanship than contest, this is our means of seeking out new talent and reintroducing the well established.

If numbers do speak volumes, then you the fans, have spoken in surround sound.

However, when it comes to performing live in front of a non-studio audience, everyone here is a winner.

Throw in random acts of charity and there's no contest.

And now without further ado, let's have a sound check.

(Check, one, two.)

COVER TO COVER

ALIEN HANDS

John DeLuca -- lead guitar, vocals

Maria Brock -- guitar, vocals

Frank Pensa -- bass guitar, vocals

Behind their scene: The Alien Hands trio has kept Morris County Earthlings entertained for about 10 years now, said lead singer Maria Brock.

(Alien Hand or Alien Hands Syndrome is actually a rare neurological disorder in which the affected hand takes on a life of its own. "Our name probably isn't the most politically correct," added Brock. "But our guitar player works at neuropsychology.



Supernova

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"We're unique in that we play in an unplugged format," she said. "We all sing and have developed a good ear for harmony."

What they play: Classic rock and roll with an emphasis on three-part harmonies. "We do anything from 'Bohemian Rhapsody' (Queen), Kansas, The Eagles, Crosby Stills Nash and Young, Fleetwood Mac."

What you say: "Rock doesn't have to be loud or electric to be good, and having a beautiful and talented front singer in Maria adds visual appeal, even when there's no chance of dating the singer. Frank and John add to the musical talent and the three together have a great rapport on stage which increases audience appeal."

-- Mitch Kolesaire, Morristown

Sneak peek: www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJl1jzmdNg

Showtimes: Tonight, 8:30 p.m.

Warehouse Grille

161 Route 181

Lake Hopatcong

(973) 663-3222

LEDGE

Mike Panciello -- lead vocals

Jim Holey -- guitar and vocals

Bill Fredericks -- keyboards and vocals

Joe Quatrella -- drums and vocals

Behind their scene: Founded in the mid-'80s by core members Jim Holey and Joe Quatrella, Ledge busted onto the scene at the same time as The Nerds, only took a different route. (Nerds signed with S.T.A.R.S. Production in Newton.) While the lineup has changed through the decades, longevity keeps Ledge plugged in.

"We're still going," said Mike Panciello, lead vocalist and newcomer. "We'll be playing out and people will come up to us and say, 'Are you the same Ledge?'"

As for the name, "it was a street," said Panciello.

What they play: An A-Z classic, Ledge runs the gamut from Allman Brothers to

Zeppelin and U2 and Springsteen in between. "We'll cater to the fans," said Panciello. "We can go from classic AC/DC to dance and throw in some new stuff, too."

What you say: "These guys play a very broad-based range of music, they always are smiling and truly look like they enjoy playing for the crowd."

-- Ed Comerford, Parsippany

Sneak peek: www.myspace.com/ledgerocks

Showtime: Feb. 2, 9 p.m.

The Exchange

160 E. Main St.

Rockaway

(973) 627-8488

www.exchangefood.com

DRUNK UNCLE BOB

Kenny Stagg -- frontman, lead vocals

Dave Anderson -- guitar, lead and backing vocals

Ozzie Pardilla -- drums, backing vocals

Lou Verile -- bass, lead and backing vocals

Kenny Sidotti -- keys and Hammond B3

Behind their scene: The last man standing of their first incarnation, Dave Anderson, has kept Drunk Uncle Bob propped up since 1995.

"At the time, each of the original members had a male relative that would be the one at family gatherings that would eat and drink everything in sight, get obnoxiously loud, and then pass out on the couch, leaving no room for anyone to sit," he wrote in an e-mail to the Daily Record. "We decided on the name Drunk Uncle Bob based on that family member for each of us, and Bob would be a really easy name to remember."

At more formal affairs, they refer to the acronym DUB.

What they play: Name a genre, any genre and they've got it, well, covered, or as

fans claim, covered well.

DUB packs a 300 song punch -- from punk rock to classic rock, Blondie to Billy Joel, Monkees to Matchbox 20 and special requests all around.

What you say: "We love Drunk Uncle Bob. We make sure we are there every time they perform at our local bar. Their music is great! They are very talented musicians and put on a great show. The guys are also very nice and personable. They began to recognize us since we were always there and took the time to talk with us and get to know us."

-- Diane Lam

Sneak peek: www.drunkunclebob.com

Showtime: Feb. 8, Brady's At the Station

5 W. Main St.

Ramsey

(201) 327-9748

www.bradysatthestation.net

Feb. 16, The Black River Barn

Route 10 West

Randolph

(973) 598-9988

www.blackriverbarn.com

UP AND COMERS

Breaking The Cycle Band

James Rainey -- drummer

Robert Mielke -- bassist

Jon Adkins -- guitarist

Miguel Morales -- guitarist

Christian Farrell -- vocals

Behind their scene: Students by day, hard rockers at all other hours, this Whippany Park High School contingent joined musical forces two years ago and is on the brink of releasing its first full-length CD.

Breaking the Cycle refers to an expression that drummer James Rainey heard from one of his teachers.

All other aspects of these up-and-comers are original down to the core.

Take the song "Gone," for example, written in memory of the bassist's father, or "10/11," which channels raw emotion over the loss of a classmate who died from an overdose.

In addition to juggling classes, homework and musical composition -- not necessarily in that order -- other claims to fame include opening for the Good Rats in upstate New York.

What they play: Original hard rock

What you say: "Our school has loved Breaking the Cycle since day one and has been more than supportive ever since their first show. Every show that they have had since, whether it be in a different state or just a few towns over... Breaking the Cycle has been lucky enough to not only have a great support of fans from our school but from other schools in other towns and even the parents have become involved and love their music."

-- Elizabeth Guella, Cedar Knolls

Sneak peak: www.purevolume.com/breakingthecycle

Showtimes: Saturday, 7-9 p.m.

Café Arabica,

78 Speedwell Ave.

Morristown

(973) 984-2300

www.cafearabicanj.com

METAL MANIA

Sweatin' Bullets

Randy Upp -- drums

Glen Bixler -- bass

Brad McKinnen -- lead guitarist, singer

Behind their scenes: Armed with heavy metal, this trio -- then a quartet -- debuted our Best Bands edition, took a break and returns fully loaded, minus one man.

(Actually their name has more to do with the phrase 'Man, I'm sweatin' bullets,' than guns.)

We're still rippin' it up for fun," said Randy Upp, drummer.

What they play: Sweatin' Bullets puts their pedal to all the metal, paying special homage to Metallica, Megadeth and Pantera.

What you say: "They are a kick-(expletive) heavy metal cover band that delivers the goods. They don't play nice rock 'n' roll, they play the heavy tunes that everyone wants to hear. Brad, Glenn and Randy always put on a great show and get the crowd involved and rockin'."

-- Kimberly Kimberly Schwartz of Highland Lakes

Sneak peek: www.sweatinbulletsrocks.net

Showtimes: Feb. 9, 10-11 p.m.

(Opening for Freak)

Dexter's

92 Route 23 North

Riverdale

(973) 839-3030

www.dextersentertainment.com

NEXT GENERATION:

Cliff and the Notes

Behind their scene: Under the tutelage of Tim Dewey, these RITs-rockers in training took the stage for a test drive and had the audience in overdrive by the end of their set.

Adorable, talented and charitable, their debut concert helped raise money for the Mount Arlington Library audience.

What you say: "The children got together weekly over the Summer of 2007 to rehearse some covers -- Neil Young, Buddy Holly, Tom Petty -- and wound up writing three original songs."

-- Proud parent Mark Rinaldi

Sneak peak: www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0rYZgS4GqM

www.youtube.com/watch?v=OqpQ11Hj_Tk

Showtimes: Stay tuned.

STANDING OVATIONS

Since our inception five years ago, these bands bring a flock of followers who continue to flood our mailbox with love letters.

SUPERNOVA: Long before the rise and fall of Rock Star (Supernova) and its ensuing lawsuits, this Supernova already had their territory, well, covered. Living up to their scientific name, Supernova is an explosive rock force on the Morris County music circuit: A rock and roller coaster ride through the '80s, '90s, back to the '70s and forward to the future.

Love note: A New Jersey transplant, Adriene Jazuk of Mount Arlington found her second home in the form of Supernova. A military wife, she thanks them for serving.

"When my husband, who is active duty Army, was transferred to North Jersey, I felt like a small town girl lost in the high-speed confusion of this area," she wrote in an e-mail to the Daily Record.

"In an effort to find 'our bar' here, we stumbled upon Supernova at The Barn in Randolph. I instantly felt at home listening and singing along with them. They're great guys who play music everyone loves. There's nothing pretentious about them, and when you're at one of their shows, everyone becomes your friend because there's such a positive energy. Rock on."

Sneak peek: www.supernova-band.com

Showtime: Saturday, 10 p.m.

Mason Street Pub

24 Mason St.

Lake Hopatcong

(973) 663-4412

BAND X: Fronted by vivacious vocalist Ann Murphy, these rockers revel in the classics, dishing out generous helpings of Aerosmith, The Beatles, The Eagles and Leonard Skynard -- which barely scrapes the surface of this endless buffet.

Bar tested and mother approved, Band X won over Darlene Walther of Rockaway who booked them for her son's wedding.

Love note: "They are truly a great bunch of talented musicians. We even had them play this past fall for our son's wedding and everyone loved them," Walther wrote in an e-mail to the Daily Record.

Sneak peek: www.bandx.net

Showtime: Feb. 15, 9:30 p.m.

Rattlesnake Ranch Café

559 E. Main St.,

Denville

(973) 586-3800

FRANKIE GOES TO ENGLEWOOD: If you missed the '80s -- as in say, having not been born yet or too young to remember -- or simply miss the '80s as in nostalgic for Atari but not The Ataris, then Frankie Goes to Englewood is for you.

Love note: "This band really rocks the '80's. They are tight as musicians and play the songs just like the original artists.... Fun, and entertaining for all ages, especially us '80's 'kids'.... Not only are they a great band but they are also charitable," said Michele L. Gounaud of Denville.

Sneak peek: www.frankiegoes.com

Showtime: Saturday

Murphy's Third Rail

3 S. Bergen St.

Dover

(973) 366-1212

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