

Supernova solves the party band formula

By **ROBERT PRICE**

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GREEN — The formula is pretty simple, really. Supernova is a party band. Nothing more. Nothing less.

While the members of this eclectic bar band may individually have higher aspirations, as a unit they're happy doing what they're doing — rocking for their fans every weekend.

"The bottom line for Supernova is to stay pretty local, stay close to the fans and go out there and rock their faces off. With the theme events we do and the fun we all have, why would we change it? We have the best fans and we love them," said guitarist Jim Luckey, a resident of Green and former mayor of the township.

Supernova has a rare Sussex County appearance on Saturday at 10 p.m. in Luckey's hometown, at Pub 517 on Route 517 in the Tranquility section of Green. The group will also play the Mason Street Pub at Lake Hopatcong on Aug. 2. Supernova plays often in Morris County and is a regular at The Exchange in Rockaway. The other Sussex County venue where Supernova can occasionally be found is Krogh's at Lake Mohawk, Sparta. The group's Web site is snrocks.com.

The band has been together for nearly eight years. It began as a culmination of successful musicians from various bands, according to Luckey. "The will do to something different was probably what pulled us together," Luckey said.

Mike McCormick, who also lives in Green, plays bass and sings lead. Guitarist and keyboard player Eddie Hoffer and drummer Chris Miller round out the group.

Hoffer, a sound technician who has worked the stage for the likes of Southside Johnny and Manhattan Transfer, sees Supernova almost as a mission. "In Supernova, I'm helping bring that power and the concert



Supernova is, from left, Jim Luckey, Chris Miller, Mike McCormick and Eddie Hoffer. Below, the band is shown in action.

feeling to a club setting up close for you to enjoy live music with us," he relates on the band's Web site.

McCormick enjoyed some recording and radio success before experiencing Supernova. His original band, Second Coming, recorded three albums while playing around upstate New York.

Miller played drums and bass all through school, participated in various school bands, and eventually joined the popular and successful Morris County group, Busterman.

As for Luckey, he is vague about current and past projects. The father of three sons who presides over an 85-acre horse farm, he enjoys his family life and anonymity. "The past was a great ride," said the KISS fan. "I've played and written with lots of talented people."

Because each member has different influences, Supernova plays a lot of different kinds of music. In fact, that might be the secret to their success.

"Our mix of songs is based on what we've seen work in party situa-



tions," Luckey said. "Our job is to create a fun atmosphere so people can cut loose and dance. Our range is from the '70s to current hits. It's really hard to pigeonhole this band because we may go from metal to classic to current within three songs. We've worked hard at making that work. But it all comes down to the crowd. Each one is different and

so the mix of songs will also change."

The group's members all have tried their hands at songwriting. They all have individual session and recording projects. But when the weekend rolls around, they join together to form one of North Jersey's most popular cover bands, flawlessly performing familiar

music that holds people's interest and gets them moving.

"For the band collectively, I don't think we have specific influences," Luckey said. "Supernova is different and has just turned into what it is by each of us bringing a different experience into the fold. Individually, however, it's so diverse between the four of us that that alone would be a long story. Between all of us we come from rock, metal, blues, jazz, thrash, grunge, progressive and punk. We can play anything. But it's what turns the adrenaline levels up that is what Supernova is all about."

Typical of this fan-friendly group, Supernova has eschewed recording CDs for the most part, choosing instead to release video and Web formats. The band's current video, edited and produced by Luckey's son, Matthew, of Peridious Productions, actually includes fans via a photo montage.

Supernova is most at home in bars, but occasionally the group fronts larger parties at festivals and venues such as Giants Stadium.

"Some of our gigs are an extra blast for us," Luckey said. "Whether it's playing at the Meadowlands or large festivals, these are especially fun. How could it not be? When you've got 20 to 30 thousand people it's an enormous amount of satisfaction. We get calls from pro teams, corporate and private events and the band circuit venues. The diversity is amazing.

"But I have to say, having people jammed together, jumping and dancing three feet away from you is the best."

So when Supernova rips into Mountain's "Mississippi Queen" or Cheap Trick's "Want You to Want Me" or Billy Idol's "Dancing With Myself," they can always count on the close-knit crowd coming along for the ride.

"It's all about having fun and making friends. People come to see us and they become part of our extended family," Miller said.

No sweet talking for this band

BY **JEFF SISTRUNK**

For the Herald

Lacey Steinel believes in the power of song lyrics to change people's lives.

"The best feeling you can possibly have in a band is when you positively affect someone's life with your music," she said. "When people take lyrics or melodies you wrote and interpret them to apply to their own experiences, that's awesome."

Steinel, 19, of Sparta, is the front-woman of up-and-coming pop-punk combo So Much For Sweet Talk. The band — which also features lead guitarist Ron Geffen, 17, of New City, N.Y., and bassist Steve Lamarche, 18, of Vernon — has been around in

various incarnations for over a year and a half but has only recently begun to hit its stride. (Auditions are currently being held for a second guitarist and drummer.)

"The shows I played with the previous lineups were fun, but the band has really taken off since we got Lacey and Steve," Geffen said. "We work well together, and our songwriting is really dynamic."

So Much for Sweet Talk have been hitting the road regularly over the past six months to support their recently released EP, "Curiosity." They have played dozens of well-known venues in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania, as well as smaller, private parties.

"We've probably played 20 or so

shows since January," Steinel said. "The key is to play enough to keep your name out there, but not so much that your fans get burned out. You want your fan base to come out strong every night."

The trio has been actively writing new material as well as reworking older songs to accommodate Steinel's vocals (So Much For Sweet Talk's previous singer was male).

"Most of our songs have been around for awhile, and we just rewrote the melodies and words," Geffen said. "We're focusing more on promoting our newer songs right now. I think that the new stuff shows a lot of growth."



So Much for Sweet Talk amid some of their fans.

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