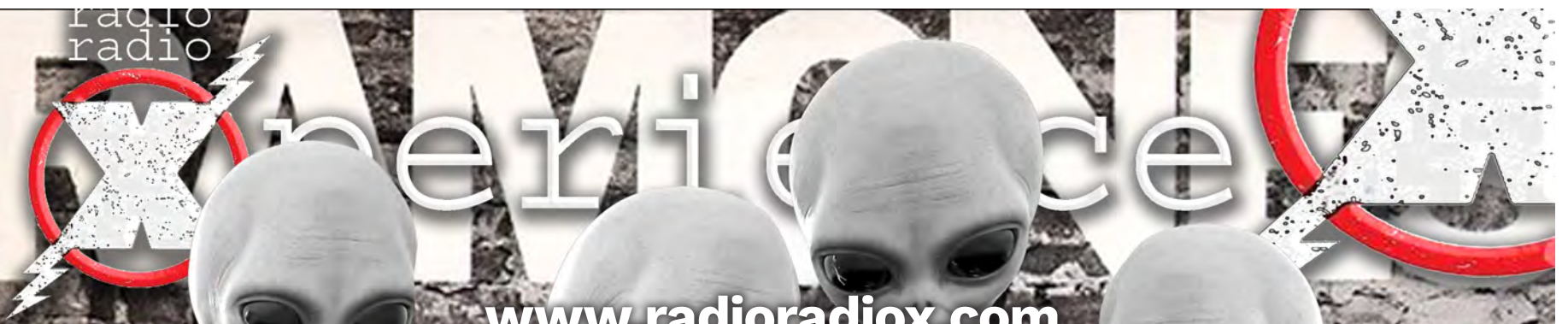


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January 2022
Vol. 4, Issue 1

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EMPIRE UNDERGROUND

BY ROB SMITTIX Photo Provided.

Music fans mark your calendars. On January 28th, 29th and 30th at Empire Underground at 93 North Pearl Street in Albany an event is being held called Hooligan Holiday. Over the course of the weekend, you will have the opportunity to see Murphy's Law, Mad Ball, Sheer Terror, Power House,

Murder's Row, The Take and many more but one of the most anticipated shows to see is Bruise Bros. Today I'm talking with Vegas Nancy of the band about what we can expect and why they chose to do a reunion now.

RRX: So, this show that you're doing with the Bruise Bros., it's a reunion,

right?

VN: It is a reunion, it's also the 21st year since the first release. We thought it was a good time to re-release the two CD's that we did in the beginning together with some nice artwork with the guy that does all the bigger hardcore

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Art Fredette
Publisher

Kit Haynes
Editor-In-Chief

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Creative Director

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Staff Geek

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Photo by Evan Lauber

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bands, Sick of it All, Agnostic Front, that kind of artwork. We were trying to do a 20-year reunion which would have been during COVID, we couldn't make that happen. So, we figured 21 on the card, we do that whole kind of gangster, 50's, rockabilly thing.

RRX: This is all part of Hooligan Holiday, right?

VN: It is part of the Hooligan Holiday, yes. We're playing on January 28th with Sheer Terror and a bunch of local bands too.

RRX: This event is January 28th, 29th and 30th. Three days for Hooligan Holiday. That's going to be amazing!

VN: At first, I was like well it's right after Christmas but as soon as the holidays are over everyone kind of comes down from that high and it's good to have a little pick me up there. New venue, it's going to be great.

RRX: Empire Underground where you are playing is the secondary performance area below Empire Live. I haven't been to Empire Underground yet. I'm just excited that these venues exist in downtown Albany. I always wanted this.

VN: Yeah, it's amazing Empire Underground is really cool. I was nervous at first when I first saw what it was and what it turned into is this kind of... it really looks like this Fight Club-esque... really like an underground... when you get there the vibe is really cool. We're thinking of having everybody there with markers out and they can tag the walls. Graffiti up the walls. Have fun with it. You know?

RRX: I could break out my old tag from my hood days.

VN: Exactly, yeah you got to be on there for sure.

RRX: I know the first release was 21 years ago, how long has Bruise Bros. been together?

VN: I think the end of 1998 was when we started.

RRX: That's when music was good.

VN: I had a band, Bone Box, back in the 90's and we split up and I decided I was going to move to Florida because the guitar player moved there and said he had a band started and it was going to be great. It was winter here, so I said I've had enough of this s**t. Sold the little bit of what I had, went down and nothing worked out musically. It was hard to find a job where I was. Mike Valente and I had always kept in touch, and we always wanted to do a side project. We had some crazy names and we'd probably be banned for life if we had them now. We stayed in touch and actually before Valente, Nick from Murder's Row was calling me and saying he really wanted to be in and do a new project but Nick was busy and Valente stayed on me so as soon as I moved back we got in the room. Rekes (he's an amazing bass player from Attica) was there. I found this drummer who was a jazz kid, he didn't know any of the bands that were current at the time with the heavier stuff. We loved that. He was great but he's also a DJ and he writes for people, and he didn't have any time so I called my old drummer from Bone Box, Matt, and he's a beast, so the line-up is strong.

RRX: This is going to be a great reunion.

VN: Yeah, we decided not to headline this, Sheer Terror is headlining, so we're going to do like a 40 minute set, we decided we'll keep it short and sweet and if something comes along in the future, we've been kicking around some ideas. So, who knows?

RRX: Anything you'd like to see come out of this reunion show?

VN: I don't know. There's a weird niche with the band, the way we wrote those songs, so people are always begging for more. Honestly, I wouldn't mind writing another tune and maybe donating the money to a charity that we're all into. Something like that.



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The Wizard that's Goz

Tom "Goz" Gozowski is raising a media empire, and he seeks loyal subjects.



BY LIAM SWEENEY

(l-r) Tom "Goz" Gozowski, Jeff Levak. Photo provided.

We don't cover sports. This is not a declarative statement. We should cover sports in some way, maybe not the box scores, but sports and art are interlinked, and you can't really say 'culture' without a nod to some healthy competition. So, we have to recognize sports as the product of kinematic art that it is, and welcome some figures in our own way.

Tom "Goz" Goslowski is a true sportsman. Baseball, basketball, football, and now, media empires. He's recently created a business media platform called Gozilla media, and it is competing on a field with few equals.

We sit down with Goz and talk

about triple-doubles.

RRX: You cover sports because you love sports. And it isn't just a set of rules and a miles-long list of rankings and standings; it's about the feeling you get when you see your team's colors and the personal loss you feel at an injury. You must be objective and at the same time subjective to tap the love. Can you think of times they've conflicted?

TG: Yes, and it is the connections you build with coaches, athletes, parents and more. You get to know these people not just as the competitors that they are, but as the passionate people that are driven by success. The times I

am the most conflicted are when I am no longer rooting for the teams I grew up cheering for but instead rooting for the people I have built relationships with to win. That is tough. Putting your personal relationships aside and still doing your job.

RRX: You've been Albany's vote for the Heisman, as well as a bunch of other awards in sports. And again, you have to decide if you're voting for the best athlete or your favorite, and that's gotta be tough. When you have to pick from a group of competitors, is there something hidden you look for that might be in someone you favor?

TG: That's the great part of 2022.

You can find information to help build your case for voting for certain athletes for end of season accolades. Many media members go with "the eye test", a player just "is really good". That was almost the old school way of voting and those hidden things media members looked for in the past. Luckily, the laziness of those takes is disappearing, and I know the end of season awards winners of the past decade have been the most deserving of them yearly in sports history (I'm sure some fans would disagree).

RRX: You've covered some of the biggest events in sports, like the NCAA Tournament, the NBA and NFL Drafts,

and the Travers Stakes. When you have to cover any sporting event, I can only guess at the things you have to have on your back burner that the average listener wouldn't think about. What are some secrets from behind the mic?

TG: Sharing those stories is my favorite part of my job! Some television anchors or local writers may never get a platform to share those stories. I am fortunate enough that on my podcasts, videos, social media platforms I can share those unique experiences and moments. Anyone can read a box score. Being able to share the moments behind the mic has been the most rewarding part of my career. But because I like you, I'll share a sports media member secret.... shhh!!! Here it is: The broadcasters do not hate your team. Almost every media member has the same goal covering live events. The game goes fast. The game is exciting. You get your work done and you get home safe. That's the dirty secret.

RRX: You played football in offense and defense in college football before suffering an injury. When you cover sports, injuries on the field or the court have to hit you in your heart as something more than just a happening in the game. Have you ever followed any one particular injury because it hit close to home?

TG: I truly try to avoid it. I suffered a torn labrum in college and that type of injury eventually ended the careers of NFL players like Andrew Luck, Mark Sanchez and almost Drew Brees. The issue with using too much of my personal experience is I don't know the medical terms/diagnosis behind each athlete's injury. Each athlete's body is going to respond differently to surgery, physical therapy, and eventually physical contact. Sadly, the injuries to athletes are not like a video game and they just go away the next season you play on PlayStation. The injury is a part of you for the rest of your life. That is

tough for especially young athletes to understand.

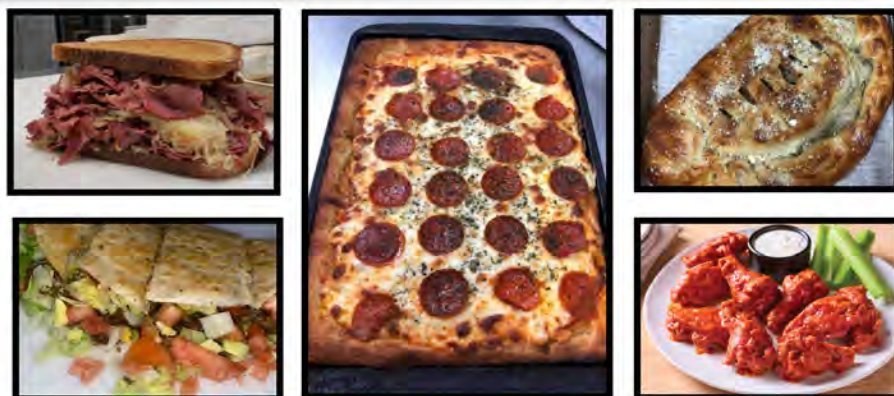
RRX: Let's talk Gozilla Media. It's a multimedia business platform out of Albany. Sports is big, but it's not every part of Gozilla. You partner with other businesses and other organizations, using the platform you've developed to help them meet their goals and get their messages out there. So, can you tell us a little bit about the platform?

TG: I like to say Gozilla Media is your message. Your story. Your way. The biggest frustration I had with traditional media is the change that has happened since the mid-2000s. If you ask anyone I have worked with that had more experience than me in the field, I would constantly ask them about the past. Why did you want to do this as a job? Why did this segment work? Why did listeners respond to musicians/artists in that way? Those conversations became the inspiration for launching one of the podcasts I host

called Getting There with Goz, where we discuss those stories (Art Fredette appeared on a recent episode to discuss the history of RadioRadioX).

The best way to summarize much of their feedback I would hear from them is that 15 years ago your bosses in traditional media (radio, television, newspaper) wanted you to "be you." They hired you for that reason. Be entertaining and the audience will respond to you. What traditional media bosses want in 2022 now is, "We would prefer this version of you better". In other words, do not be completely honest, transparent, opinionated, or controversial. Anytime anyone ever gets offended about anything you will hear something from your bosses even if you were right about it. Sadly, that's the future of traditional media. I cannot believe I am about to use a Kid Rock quote, but it really sums up why people are embracing Gozilla Media/

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The Stream Keeps MOOving

Kids are continually talking about streaming. Here's an inside look.



BY CORA FREDETTE

FGMoo. Photo provided.

During the pandemic, we were all stuck at home with limited entertainment. Adults and older generations clung to streaming movies and television. However, the term streaming is more than movies and shows – it merely means broadcasting live to an audience. So, while you were watching Netflix and Hulu, the younger generations were joining online communities centered around video games, reaching hundreds of thousands of live viewers around the world.

The host of the video (aka the “Streamer”) broadcast content in the form of their game play. Basically, the Streamer allows you to tune in and watch them play video games. The most popular recently was centered around Minecraft which allows the player to create a fantasy world from blocks. The Steamers create a community for their fans where they can chat, participate in group discussions or even just lurk.

I have a few Streamers I enjoy, one of my favorites is FGMoo who is better known as Moo. She is one of the few successful female gamer Streamers. Moo is a 17-year-old content creator who primarily creates on the Minecraft platform and has begun to grow her following.

On a whim, I reached out and asked for an interview. I was thrilled to get a response.

RRX: What got you into content creation?

FGMoo: Watching my brother do it before he joined the dream SMP and helping him out with videos inspired me a lot. Once I got on Twitter and would interact with my community, I just wanted a way to talk to them more. I was nervous about streaming but one of my best friends helped push me to do it and I’ll always be thankful because I don’t think I’ve ever been happier with something.

RRX: What’s your favorite part of streaming?

FGMoo: My favorite part is definitely talking with everyone in chat and when people say I make their day better or how watching my streams helps them. I love getting to play games with chat and have inside jokes with them. My community is definitely my favorite part of streaming.

RRX: What's your least favorite part of streaming?

FGMoo: My least favorite part about streaming is probably getting my headaches. I've had a concussion for about three years now and my constant headaches are a huge issue because I either have to stop streaming or cancel streams and it just really breaks my heart because I never want to disappoint or let down my viewers.

RRX: Who's your biggest inspiration? And why?

FGMoo: My biggest inspiration is my brother, watching him go from streaming for one or two viewers to now 17 thousand people watching it's absolutely insane. I love his attitude when it comes to streaming and seeing how his energy makes people happy.

RRX: What's a passion of yours

outside of content creation?

FGMoo: I don't know if you would count this as something besides content creating but helping small streamers platforms grow. Since content creating is more for myself and my own thing, I feel like it's different. I made my own SMP and invited some friends but mainly smaller streamers on it to help them get followers, and some have already hit milestones and have reached affiliate since joining. My brother helped me grow a lot in the beginning and I want to be able to give back and help other streamers. I'll definitely be trying more things with helping them grow in the future or just give a little push.

RRX: Do you have any advice for people trying to become an influencer?

FGMoo: I mean I wouldn't consider myself an influencer, but I think, do what makes you happy and do it for yourself not because you think it'll get you views or followers. Also don't compare your numbers to a friend or someone, that'll just drag you down and make what you're doing less enjoyable if it's just a competition.



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The Strange Case of Phil and the Frantics

BY JOHNNY MYSTERY

Welcome to Mondo Rock 'n Rolla! Let's talk about rock 'n roll records. Obscure rock 'n roll records to be precise. It's the stuff you've probably never heard but should have.

For instance, a rag tag band of forgotten losers from the forsaken hills of Arizona called Phil and the Frantics. Phil wore a saxophone around his neck that he never seemed to play. Kitschy, huh? The rest of his band was nothing to write home about. The rhythm section was pedestrian, at best. The guitarist played like he was half asleep. The keyboardist played like that dude on Lawrence Welk.

Yet, they had the unmitigated gall to rip off a song by The Zombies called 'I Must Move' and turned it into 'I Must

Run'. Which is what they would have done if the lawyers had the chance to go after them.

But here's the kicker, as great as The Zombies song is, Phil and The Frantics somehow, by their sorcery, made it better.

It's a moody lament about a guy who has realized his girl doesn't give a squat about him anymore, and he spent too much time with his band and not enough time with the girl. So, he got what was comin'.

The melody of 'I Must Run' works great and unlike most obscure "garage" records put out in 1965, it is driven by a creepy reverberated Farfisa organ and fuzzy guitar is nowhere to be heard.

Another noteworthy item here, is that it was produced by a certain Waylon Jennings. Yes, that Waylon

Jennings! The Waylon Jennings who was Buddy Holly's last bass player. The Waylon Jennings who was to become a future Country Music Hall of Famer.

But this ain't no country record. 'I Must Run' is a bonafide mid-tempo/wanna drown myself/ teen doom anthem. Phil's voice sounds like he's on his way to the gas chamber after his last meal of canned ravioli and birch beer. No where do you here the snotty blues based vocals that are so common on these unknown records from no name bands.

I think it should have been a hit, at least at the local level, but I'm pretty sure it didn't happen. Every copy of this record I've ever seen has been a radio promo, including my own. Who knows if it ever made it to the public.

It also looks like Phil was a tough

guy to work with. The Frantics seemed to change members weekly, with Phil the only constant. Seek out 'I Must Run' online and give it a quick listen. I would also listen to 'I Must Move' by The Zombies, so you can compare both tunes for out and out plagiarism on the part of Phil and The Frantics. Both songs are enjoyable, but I give it to Phil and The Frantics for having the guts to pull off such a coup. For it is written you are only as cool as the people you steal from.

The only question that remains is why the hell and how the hell did they get Waylon Jennings to produce this sappy platter? Perhaps another story.

That's all I got. See next-ish and until then, get out to the records shops and hit the bins! Johnny Mystery out.

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Steve Candlen. Photo provided.

Putting Words Aside the Beat

BY LIAM SWEENEY

Area drummer Steve Candlen talks on the broader scope of songwriting

There's a magic in music, a mysticism, only less in the way of sorcery, and more in the way that a bonfire is mystical. But at its heart, music is a communication. Whether it's a call to your mind with moving, or novel chord progressions, or the simple backgrounds overlaid by a smooth voice telling a tale of better times, music talks to you.

Steve Candlen has been a communicator in the Capital Region for decades, as a drummer, and as a singer/songwriter. His communication is culled from the deepest part of him, and his words are art at the tip of his brush.

We sit down with Steve and talk about Christmas cheer.

RRX: You've been a drummer for a great many of your years, both locally and not-so-locally. We're talking about touring nationally with The Young Rascals in the late eighties – early nineties. And now, you're really taking hold as a singer/songwriter. Are you still drumming and splitting your time? Or is songwriting a new whole turn?

SC: Lately, I've been splitting my time between the two, I was in singer/songwriter mode exclusively for quite a while over the past decade but, recently, I have rekindled my passion for drumming. With the formation of Family Tree a few years ago, along with bandmates Chad Ploss, Lori Friday, Kenny Hohman and newest member Chris Carey, my love of playing the drums has me in the woodshed practicing daily. I'm loving it! The band features, not one but, two drummers, Chad Ploss and myself. Chad is a great player and keeps me inspired and on

my toes. The group has a current artist residency at Putnam Place, every Monday night in Saratoga Springs N.Y.

Putnam Place and Sly Fox of (Sly Fox and The Hustlers) have been instrumental in helping us create a very special night of music on a weekly basis. Also, thank you to all the folks at RadioRadioX for featuring the group in one of their latest issues.

Family Tree is an ever-growing creativity lab of sorts. I'm excited to see where it takes us in the future.

As for songwriting, it is still a daily endeavor. I love the process of fleshing out song ideas. As for performing, my schedule is still primarily based around me playing guitar and singing in and around the capital region.

Supplementing my 2022 schedule with Family Tree shows is under way, if any venues or event planners are interested in booking the band or solo acoustic dates, please reach out.

RRX: Songwriting is something you don't take lightly. You look for poignancy, art beyond the simple function of filling rhythm. You seem to approach your words in the way a poet would. Do you think poetry and songwriting are synonymous, or are there other differences? Do you think the poet and the songwriter could easily swap roles?

SC: I think they're somewhat interchangeable, sure. Songs are short forms similar to poetry, there is rhythm, and rhyme, and content. I've always enjoyed the turn of a phrase and the sharing of personal perspective. Songs have that musical element which can support and influence the actual content quite a bit. Sometimes you don't need a lot of words to get a point across. Sometimes you don't

need to say anything, just write something instrumentally.

RRX: I've seen your performances on WMHT and NPR, places which showcase music as a purity, as in 'music for the sake of music', or perhaps 'music isolated.' You've also played the bar with the rowdy crowd, who become a part of the performance too. Do you think these are just different outlets, or do they make the music itself different?

SC: Usually, the space and atmosphere dictates what is happening, no doubt. I enjoy all the opportunities I've had to perform in any number of settings. I always walk away having learned something. Small intimate concerts are my personal favorite.

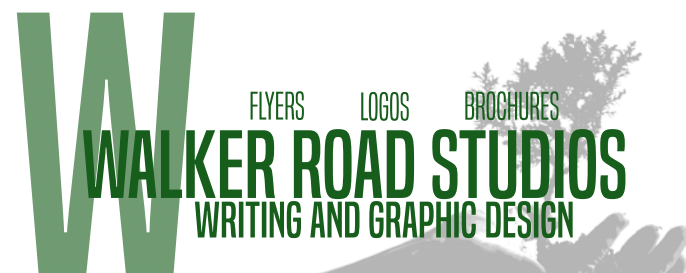
RRX: You've played, perhaps still, with Kevin McKrell. He was one of our early interviews. And this is commonplace that we interview people in different issues that have connections with each other. What kind of music do you play with Kevin, is it strictly Irish, or does it branch? And how did you two connect?

SC: I played drums with The McKrell's for a few years about 15 years ago. It was always a lot of fun. Kevin is such

an incredible talent. A great musician and a wonderful writer who is also an accomplished painter. When we perform together onstage it always gets pretty tribal and we take the Irish tunes in an exciting direction. I'm looking forward to an upcoming date with him and his band on March 17th, St. Patrick's Day, at The Parting Glass.

RRX: You've been a presence in the Capital Region for decades, both as a drummer and as a singer/songwriter. You've watched the area grow, and at the same, the area has watched you grow in a sort of Zen way. I like to ask people how the area has changed, but I'll ask you this; how do you think the area is going to change in the coming years?

SC: The Capital District is hot bed of talent and opportunity. We are blessed to have such a variety of successful venues to play. I see no end in sight as far as growth goes. Since the pandemic hit, I think our collective population has grown significantly. I've met quite a few folks who have moved up from the city looking for a bit more space. In turn, our clubs, restaurants, and entertainment venues are busier than ever.





Tim Gant

*A Man Who Followed His Dreams
and it Paid Off!*

BY ROB SMITTIX

Tim Gant. Photo provided.

RRX: How you doing?

TG: I'm good.

RRX: My bass player moved to Montana and he was flying back in for a show we were going to and unfortunately due to COVID the show was cancelled. So, because of that we haven't played since December of 2019.

TG: Unfortunately, the whole COVID thing did that to a lot of events. But now I've been playing, and things really got super busy from late spring, all through summer and even up to around the end of September. I was doing two and three gigs a day. It was like everybody was trying to make up for all that time. It was funny that as busy as it was now it's cold and we slowed back down.

RRX: But on a happy note, I'm glad we get to talk and catch up.

TG: Oh yeah. I got a little bit of extra good news a couple of days ago that a tune I recorded, a tune I played on with Ten City got nominated for a Grammy.

RRX: It doesn't get any bigger than that!

TG: That's amazing. Hoping for the best for that and keeping it going.

RRX: I mean even a nomination is good enough, you know? They introduce people as Grammy nominated. You know what I mean? You don't have to win. But you've had a lot of success over the years. I know you recorded this with them but what's your relation to Ten City?

TG: I've been involved with them for like 25 years. Yeah, I'm always involved in some things they might do. Shows here and there when they come up. The lead singer Byron Stingily has always been recording even after the group technically split up. So, he's got several projects out and they've done pretty good for him.

RRX: I was always amused by some of the stories you've shared with me, being into music so much myself. Now Ramsey Lewis is a group that

you've been playing with as well.

TG: Yeah, I was with Ramsey for 12 years. He retired, our last show that we did was January of 2020. He technically retired a little earlier than that but he had obligated himself to do these two shows, both in Cozumel. It just required us flying to Cozumel for an actual jazz cruise. Fly down there and get on the boat for two shows and then jumping off before it took off. So, we did that in January, we were supposed to it again in March and after we did January Ramsey decided that he was done, he didn't want to do it anymore. So, he cancelled but ironically virus hit.

RRX: It would've been cancelled anyway. But yeah... what a legendary group to be performing with all those years. I know, I talked to you years ago and you were going to Japan, you probably got to see a lot of the world with the type of acts that you toured with.

TG: Well, my real first touring experience was leaving Chicago with a local band and going to Japan. We were a national act, but we weren't nationally known. What made us national was that back in the day Anheuser Busch used to sponsor a band competition, a battle of the bands basically and it was called The Budweiser Showdown. Groups competing from all over the U.S., they had as many as 30,000. We beat out all of those and came to the finals in DC, now there are only five bands. Us being from Chicago, there was another band from Richmond, Virginia that came in second, there was another band from some place in Georgia, another from LA and I can't remember where that other band was from. But at any rate we ended up winning, signed a record deal with Warner Brothers, ended up doing some Budweiser commercials, television appearances, Lou Rawls Parade of Stars, which was a big deal back in the day. So yeah, a lot of good things came from that but one of the best things that

came out of that for me was a buyer from Japan was given the chance to see us and we got the chance to audition for them and actually go over there and play.

RRX: Man, out of all of those acts you took the prize.

TG: It's weird you know? This is why I really understand this whole American Idol, The Voice stuff, you know I love to hear the talent, I love that part of it but the part of it when they get to picking a winner.

RRX: Yeah, a lot of it is image.

TG: It's not fair if you're dealing with talent but the band that came second to us musically, they won, to me. Awesome musicians, great arrangement and nice original material. To show you how good that band was their drummer was Carter Beauford from Dave Matthews. Me and the keyboard player are still very good friends till this day and I used to have Carter's number but it changed few times. Last I talked to him, he was a real great dude. But yeah, we had a nice image, we had a real handsome lead singer up in front.

RRX: It helps.

TG: Of course. I was happy to take the trophy, I wasn't turning it down, but I understood what had happened. So, when I watch these shows I see the same thing.

RRX: Oh yeah, all the time.

TG: The recognition was cool, but I learned that I could make a good living doing this.

RRX: And you have. I know that you've had a chance to record and write for some pretty well-known artists and one of the names that stuck out for me when we last spoke was Aretha Franklin.

TG: It was a really good experience. I had co-written a tune on her *A Rose is Still a Rose* album, a tune called "In Case You Forgot". Ironically after you and I talked I actually played on two tunes from *Sings the Great Diva*

Classics an all-cover album by Aretha Franklin.

RRX: Cool. Which songs did you play on?

TG: I did The Supremes "You Keep Me Hangin' On" and I did the Alicia Keys tune "No One."

RRX: And you did something for Destiny's Child too, I think?

TG: Yeah, it's funny that you mention that. I played on the remix of "Bills, Bills, Bills" and I was just talking to someone about that, and I asked what did that song ever do? And they said oh yeah, it went gold. I said it did? I was like nobody ever said anything to me. I said I would love to get my plaque.

RRX: I would say so. So, I know we covered a lot but what would you say is one of your greatest musical achievements?

TG: There's really nothing out there publicly to solidify that it happened but to make a long story very quick; when I was about 11 years old my brother took me to go see Earth Wind and Fire. It was the most invigorating and exciting thing ever. It's like a kid that loves riding rollercoasters. It's like when it gets up to the top and it does that drop, it goes higher and higher then another drop and it keeps going, that's kind of how I felt. I was the biggest EWF fan there was. Fast-forward years and years later when I was playing for Ramsey Lewis. Philip Bailey (Earth Wind and Fire) called us up and said he wanted to make a record and he said he wanted to use us. So, we recorded four or five tunes. So, while we were in the studio I had the opportunity to tell him the story I told you and to thank him. I said you influenced a little black kid from the West Side of Chicago to see the world and to pursue his dream. That meant a lot to me.



Capital Region Creative Economy

Entrepreneur, designer and ringmaster Corey Aldrich introduces us to the mojo behind the money.

BY LIAM SWEENEY

Corey Aldrich. Photo provided.

So you're at the show. She's onstage singing her head-off, and the band backing her is liquid fire, as is the drink you just ordered from the bar during the summer festival the city puts on, why the girl singing her head off is onstage in the first place, a delicious little interplay between the left and right public life called the creative economy. The creative economy is often mysterious and nebulous, and if your not careful it might steal your cornflakes, but designer and event marketer Corey Aldrich is here to take us through the ins and the outs of this new landscape (and he might sell you back your cornflakes.) I sit with Corey and we discuss sidewalk chalk murals.

RRX: You work with Upstate Alliance for the Creative Economy, or ACE. This is an amazing group of people from different backgrounds who explore the impact of creativity on the local economy, though I'm perhaps oversimplifying it a bit. How did ACE start? Was this a concept that developed over a conversation, or did it have a long history?

CA: My company is 2440 Design Studio. I work on individual and series based events, branding, doing commissioned work and project management including contractor oversight, creative and interior design work and photography. I also run a bar program for the Arts Center of the Capital Region called Arts Bar.

ACE is one of my gigs. I have been with ACE since it was a group of institutional level creative leaders from not and for profit's meeting around a table to figure out ways to get the larger story out about the economic power of the Creative Economy. I was brought on to represent freelance creatives. ACE has gone through many iterations, always with the commitment to drive awareness about the Creative Economy of the Capital Region.

RRX: When I think of a creative economy, two sort of visuals come to mind. One is the murals the City of Troy

got someone to paint on the pillars of the Collar City Bridge underpass, the other is my friend playing at a pizza joint for fifty bucks and a slice of pepperoni. I imagine the creative economy to transcend my view. How so?

CA: Both are correct! The project called The Uniting Line includes the City of Troy, The Arts Center of the Capital Region, TAP Inc and Collar Works. The design is by artist Jade Warrick. This is actually a great example of the creative economy as an economic jobs generator and a quality of life project.

About ten years ago I had a standing gig playing guitar at the original Lark Tavern with producer PJ Katz and regional hip hop performer Shyste Chronkyte. The gig was fifty dollars and several pints of beer. It was the best thing ever! I love Tess, she is a great supporter of live music and entertainment and continues that story at McGeary's.

RRX: There is a creative scene in the Capital Region much bigger than people may believe. We interview artists and advertise venues, and so we're sensitive to what affects each; it affects us too. How does talk of the creative economy find better synergy between the business of entertainment and the art and music that entertains?

CA: All parties need to understand that we each have our supportive roles. The venue needs to promote the shows, the artist also needs to work with that. If I book an artist, there is a list of things that I need to help promo the event. Professional photos, up to date online representation, well written bios, quality video or music links. All these things can help the producer to get a professional package out to the media and marketing channels.

Our venues need to make sure they are doing what they can to be hospitable to artists as well. Have the check or cash ready when it was promised. Make sure they feel taken care of. Give your artists a proper space to prepare before the

show. If its music, be responsive to the sound needs to help ensure a good experience for all. I have witnessed many a venue that barely posts more than once on their social media with no real campaign. We can do better than that.

RRX: Latching on to the last question, when we talk about the economy in any form, it can have a 'wing-clipping' effect to some artists, who, few of them started their craft from a business space. More are the people who just wanted to get rich. How can artists take advantage of the creative economy aside from just being the labor, so-to-speak?

CA: We want our art to be unencumbered by 'market' expectations or directives. Also, we need to be able to afford a place to live and things like health insurance, car payments and other normal expectations. Get your business professionally set up so that you can do things like claim legal tax write offs or protect yourself from losses by having proper insurance on tools, gear and space. Trademark and copyright. If your doing creative work (writing, performance, fine arts, painting, music, interior design, game programming, architectural design) and your a freelancer, you are also a business person, your expenses should be properly accounted for.

Know your value. Do your research. Creative work is work and deserves proper compensation.

RRX: You are a designer, and you look at event design, and according to the website, you "design events that support story-based narratives." For the layman, I think that may need a "for example." What I do get is the importance of how a thing is presented. How do you design, present, and "frame" an event beyond just advertising?

CA: Anything I do needs to feel like it has a contribution to the greater world around us. When I am putting together an event or series, I try and understand what that purpose is for it so that I can then program accordingly. We learn

best with story based narratives. If we want to make an impact with what we are doing, we need to understand what we are trying to say.

RRX: You own a design company that works with other design-area and artistic professionals. This has got to be a coin flip between very rewarding and very frustrating. I say the frustrating part because you're getting paid to impart your vision on someone else's vision. Do you have any philosophies you take to work with you every day?

CA: I have worked with a large percentage of the creative arts and cultural institutions in the area. Most people that come to me are word of mouth. They want me there to help create the vision, that is what I am known for. I don't need to have the final say on everything in a project. I do need to drive the collaboration into a cohesive sense of the there there. If that is there, I am less dictatorial about every detail.

RRX: This is where you get to answer the question I didn't ask. Educate, enlighten, emote. The floor is yours.

CA: As creatives we need to understand our value and have expectations that the larger business environment and governmental authorities take us more seriously (STEAM not STEM). ACE commissioned a study on the impact of creative industry on our region. At the time of the report, the creative economy employed 47,282 people and was generating \$1.4 billion in earnings in the Capital Region. From a financial perspective, we were larger than the insurance and construction industries. Make no mistake, our region is amazing to live in because of us.

Have a project your not sure what to do with? Hit me up, we can talk.

IG / FB: @coreyaldrich | Linked In: Corey Aldrich

EMAIL: corey@2440designstudio.com

New Year Ramblings

BY VITO CICCARELLI

I woke up recently and realized that I've spent the past 53 years in the music business. Holy Keith Richards Batman!!

I've been lucky enough to have worked over the years as a player, manager, event organizer, promoter, and radio host. The only thing I missed is manning the sound board (no easy task), and I'm smart enough to leave that chore to pro's like Bill Reinhart, Rocco Mazzarello, John Chiara, Greg Gamache, Jayme Albin, Leo Bouchard, and Pat Parvis. Having the opportunity to work with many extremely talented local artists, along with some music industry giants, I've truly been blessed in life.

A long parade of 518 music legends have marched through my career. Most genuine, some phony, but all extremely talented. Having spent 25 years on stage myself, I fully understand the grind. You work a regular job, and after a 40 hour week, you're asked to now go entertain folks till two in the morning. Like I said, it's a long haul that the average person doesn't understand. The really sad part of today's music scene, is that most musicians are making less than I did in my heyday of the 70's & 80's. Most folks don't understand what goes into preparing for a gig. You don't just roll in, plug in and play. If you're doing it correctly, there's an incredible amount of prep time involved. From equipment maintenance, rehearsals, loading in, loading out, and all of the unexpected roadblocks that always seem to hit you at the last minute.

One of the hardest things you face after working in the business for so many years, is the losses. Not money, but the people. For me, it seems I lose drummers I'm close with. Over the

past decade alone, Joe Montepare, Joe Rocco, Josh Bloomfield, and most recently, Gino Nistico – gone in a heartbeat. They're sitting on your stage one minute, and then an empty hole, with only your memories left. I'm proud of the fact that I was able to have produced the final gigs for both Rocco (Out of Control Rhythm & Blues) and Bloomfield (Soul Serenade). Emotional shows to say the least, knowing that they both had little time left on this Earth.

Through it all, there's been so many uplifting performances, and truly magical moments I've been part of. Whether it was talking music at a White Castle in Pittsburgh with the late Ronnie Van Zandt and Steve Gaines of Skynard in '75, having a few drinks with Elvis Costello in Saratoga, or producing shows for groups like South Side Johnny and Molly Hatchet, it's been one hell of an interesting ride. But believe it or not, some of my favorite experiences have been producing regional shows. Many are completely oblivious of the fact that the 518 has some pretty incredible performers. I remember my friend Frank Annunziata, who has played, and toured with many of the top musicians in the world, telling me that he's never seen so much talent in one area, after doing a gig at Revolution Hall.

Over the years, I've produced 100's of concerts, and the best part of all that for me, are the bands, and the characters that I've crossed paths with. Guys like Tommy Love go into a gig on a mission to entertain, and leave it all on the stage. Groups like Blue Hand Luke, Legend, Emerald City, The Accents, Skeeter Creek, the Refrigerators, Ten Most Wanted, and so many more

always make me look smart. Music is my lifeblood, it's what I live for. The fun, excitement, the roar of the crowd, and a great performance are what push my buttons. Radio fills that void during the winter months. Being at RadioRadioX for the past two years has rekindled the passion I had in the beginning. Working with pro's like Jim Barrett, Rob Smittix, and Art Fredette, inspires me to take my show to another level. The vibe at the X is strong, and many in our music community have taken notice. We're by far the strongest supporter of the 518 music scene, and will continue to do so as we grow. Many forget that this station is only three years old. It's gotten as far as it has

because of multiple factors – but in the end, it boils down to the hard work of station owner Artie, who kept us afloat during those difficult days of 2020.

For 2022, look for the X to be involved with plenty of live shows. Our banner will be flying proudly at a surprising number of local concerts, street festivals, and major shows. We're committed to putting RadioRadioX in front of the local line, and promise to continue bringing #RadioMagic into everyone's homes, cars, and phones. Happy New Year to all, and to all a RadioRadioX night!!!

Tommy Love was not harmed in the composition of this column.





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01/14 Mike Cohen, Side B and I'm Getting The Skelton 8pm

01/15 effs, more bands TBA 8pm

01/21 Father Figure, Tunic and The Business 8pm

01/22 Black Belt Jones, Ikes Wasted World 8pm

02/04 Will and Friends 8pm

337 Central Ave Albany, NY 12206

Carole Pope is a genuine original. Singer, songwriter, half of the duo that created Rough Trade. A true agent provocateur.

BY DICK BEACH

Carole Pope

Carole Pope. Photo provided.

RRX: We're speaking with Carole Pope. Thanks so much for your time.

CP: Glad to be here.

RRX: You were born in England and moved to Canada and subsequently all around. When did you start to become interested in music and the arts?

CP: I think that started when I was nine. I don't know. I seemed to always get into circumstances where I can make things happen. I started playing music and meeting other musicians, who helped me along the way. Eventually, Rough Trade was born. Rough Trade is still happening. I have a whole solo career.

RRX: As I counted it, you had

many interesting gigs, from the time you moved out. As I guess some would say, you were on the dole for a year. You found a job as a hat check girl. That lasted two hours.

CP: Yeah 'cause I'm hostile.

RRX: Let's fast forward a bit. You met Kevan Staples. The impression I have of that is that you guys are soulmates. There's a sensibility about who you are and what you do.

CP: Yeah, we just connected right away. He was just great to hang out with. All we did was talk about music, and play music, and go and see music. We were just obsessed with all of that. He's like family to me. I really love him to pieces. He's an amazing person.

RRX: When you and Kevan put what we now know as Rough Trade together, there are two things that jump into my head over that. The first of which is that for its time, the production is amazing, just the sound. The second thing is that the lyrics are, in one space of the world, perhaps a little upsetting. In my space of the world, they're sarcastic and sardonic in an entertaining way. Where did that come from?

CP: I don't know. I often have a very dark sense of humor. I think the whole family was like that. I read a lot. I think I'm more inspired by writers than other musicians. I remember being a kid and reading six books a week. But I

read dark. I'd read Henry Miller, Anais Nin, William Burroughs, and Violet-le-Duc. Not a lot of happy reading. I think that influenced me. And I definitely have a dark sense of humor.

RRX: If you were to take from the *Avoid Freud* period one song, do you have particular piece from that period that maybe you're most proud of or you think says the most about who you are and what the band represents?

CP: Oh god, that's a really difficult question. It's hard to pick one song. I would say "All Touch No Contact."

RRX: Great song.

CP: Thank you. But yeah, if I listen to Rough Trade, I just obsess on different songs, so. I guess I would say that

one.

RRX: You're very public about the time you spent with Dusty Springfield. What about her personality and the time you spent with her has lasted this long? What would be the thing that was maybe the fondest experience or thought you carry forward?

CP: Wow.

RRX: Yeah, I don't make this easy, do I?

CP: No. Well, she was an alcoholic. That was difficult. But she had an amazing sense of humor. We used to laugh our asses off. We talked about music all the time. She loved music. I was fascinated by her recording process and how she'd just fight for her sound. I just think of her very fondly. But also, I will never, ever date anybody who is an alcoholic, or in recovery, or anything, at all. That really pushed me over the edge. 'Cause it's a lot to deal with. She was a brilliant musician and kind of underrated.

RRX: The lyrics and the nature of "Lesbians in the Forest"- on the one hand, it's an anthem for people in one direction. On the other hand, it's oh jeez, look at all of these crazy people running around. Where the heck did that come from?

CP: Well, it comes from being at the Michigan Womyn's Festival, which I wrote about in my book, and the fact that I don't think lesbians have much of a sense of humor. 'Cause I just did this EP called "Music for Lesbians." That's where it's from. I love, love, love the Michigan Womyn's Festival and I'm so sad it's not happening. But I had to do a little bit of a parody of it. Because lesbians are funny. They have funny, quirky things about them.

RRX: My wife worked at Fire Island pre-AIDS. She and a bunch of people would go out and they'd go to a bar. Her male friends would just look around the room and go, "Mine, mine, yours, yours, mine, yours, yours,

mine," in that sort of way that says okay, I know who these people are, and I understand it. There is a community, whether you are straight or gay, but there's a community of people who understand that not all of us are playing the same card game all the time.

CP: Of course, of course. And it's so great to have that community. And yes, more straight people are getting it now and don't care, which is what I want. I don't even want the whole thing to be an issue. I don't think it is as much of an issue especially with the younger people. They're much more experimental and who cares? There's so many more important things going on in the world. Who cares?

I don't care who you sleep with. I just care if you're a good person. That's the way I wish everybody would approach everybody else.

RRX: I know your brother passed of AIDS, which is heartbreaking. But you've recently turned to putting a

musical together that follows his life. Where are you with that? How is that going? Where do you expect it's going to premier and all of the things that go along with creating what really is a big project?

CP: I call it a rock musical. We just did a reading on Zoom with seven actors reading and a sing-through, which is really hard to do on Zoom because everything has to be pre-recorded. There's a time lag. So, we did that. In-December, we're doing a scoring workshop. Then next year, we are going to workshop it live in Toronto and hopefully in New York. But yeah, it just costs. It costs a million dollars to put on the crappiest musical because you have to pay all the actors, and musicians. It's a very expensive endeavor. But I'm very happy with the direction that it's going.

RRX: We've spent nearly the last

Continued on Page 29...



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Goz (Cntd.)

nontraditional media companies and leaving the old ones behind: "If it looks good, you'll see it. If it sounds good, you'll hear it. If its marketed right, you'll buy it. But... if it's real... you'll feel it."

RRX: And maybe saving the best for last: the shows. We're talking about Levack and Goz, Getting There with Goz, Goz and close to 20 other shows aside from your own. Looking at this, the platform you spoke about does start to take form. If someone, say, me, wanted to start a show, what could we expect, in terms of know-how and equipment?

TG: Just like a sports coach I'm recruiting some new shows/personalities to join Gozilla Media in 2022. Those coaches cannot just give out the playbook to anyone! Just kidding but if you are interested in launching your own

show and joining the Gozilla Media network, email me Goz@GozillaMedia.com.

RRX: This is where you answer the question I didn't ask. Speak of anything. Educate, enlighten, emote – the floor is yours.

TG: Lickety Split's verse was better than B-Rabbit's in 8 Mile. Terrible coaching job by Coach Boone for not replacing Alan Bosley earlier in the season in Remember the Titans. Also search Gozilla Media on YouTube and subscribe to our channel. Our podcasts are available on Apple/Spotify and wherever you listen to podcasts so please feel free to leave a review, it really helps.

Carole Pope (Cntd.)

two years basically sitting with our thumbs firmly placed. How do you manage to keep your head together during a time like this? How did you keep yourself in a good place?

CP: Well, I just stayed away from people, got vaccinated as soon as possible. I went to Toronto to hide out, which was a really stupid move because of the Premier. We did a socially distance "Lesbians In The Forest," some footages of Peaches that I had that I've never used before. What else did we do? I recorded "World's a Bitch" about COVID with my friends Church of Trees, which is getting a lot of airplay in Europe and Canada still 'cause it's funny, it's very funny. What else?

As soon as I could, I went to New York to get vaccinated because they didn't have that together in Canada. Yeah, I got vaxed. I'm still masking up.

I'm just trying to be as safe as possible because I don't trust anybody, really. I trust my friends that they've been vaccinated, but in general... You have to be really careful.

RRX: You're having a hard time finding an apartment in New York. There's a surprise.

CP: It's insane. Well, I'd love to live in the West Village, but I can never afford it. That feels like New York, but not New York, you know? I like the whole vibe. I've lived in the East Village and yuck. I don't know what's going on. New York is really getting very corporate. They really need to straighten up the whole housing thing. Just applying for an apartment is insane. You have to make 40 times the rent and blah, blah, blah.

RRX: Exactly. Thank you so much for your time.

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Observations and Ramblings From a Cranky Old Guy

BY JEFF SPAULDING

Happy New Year!

Fingers crossed this year will be better than last. Funny, we said that last year, how did that work out? Let's just hope.

I start off this column with a question for those who are old farts like me. Not looking for an answer, but maybe it's crossed your mind as well as mine.

When do you call it a day?

When do you throw in the towel?

When do you say I don't wanna do this anymore?

In my case, I'm talking about potentially but eventually ending my career and retiring. I'm sure there are so many of you who have an easy answer, the instant I financially can.

I'm sure there are many of you who have a job, something to make a little scratch, something to set aside for that big day. I will use my dear darling wife as an example.

She works for the State of New York, and at the end of this coming May, she's able to earn her gold watch. Well maybe more like cubic zirconium, times are hard in the Empire State. Thinking about retirement is essentially what keeps her going at her job. She has more than earned it, she's a hard worker who goes above and beyond on the job, and she hates people...just like me.

When she does retire, things are naturally going to be tighter than normal, but we're prepared. We're fortunate that she has a pension from the State or we'd have to learn different ways to prepare meals that features Friskies.

That's what separates the two of us, being in broadcasting, especially with so many stops and starts over the

decades, all I have is my good looks, and that won't even pay for a senior coffee at McDonald's.

We also think for the moment she will wait before taking Social Security, letting that grow a bit more. It's scary but doable. We have a little nest egg, and the grandkids are growing up, so our financial obligations there will be easing. I can't wait for her to start singing "Take This Job & Shove It" on that

last day.

That's her, then there's me. This month I turn 66, come Spring I will qualify for Social Security if I choose. The problem is, even at this age, I am still a workaholic AND still love what I do and have been doing since 1977.

I have a long-range goal, one of a few bucket list items.

My plan is, if I can, health wise, and if "they" still want me, I will continue

with this career until I am 71. That would round it off to 50 years of doing what I do. I'm not expecting a reward. I don't expect a bonus.

I know most people will not give a crap one way or another. But I will.

As of today, I can say I am still excited to wake up and head "to the office." I can say I am still learning my trade. I can say I get better every day and want to improve on that. Besides, if I retire, it's a fact I will drive my wife bat shit crazy.

I have to be doing something every day, mostly.

With all that said, I'm not totally a fool.

Reality creeps in slowly, and gets more real every day.

After my heart attack and bypass, I knew I had to change my ways or there would be someone else writing this right now. So as much as I try to eat right, exercise more, blah blah blah, there's more years behind me than in front of me.

Am I so stubborn I will keep working until I hit my goal, then drop dead the very next day? At one time in my life, I would have said absolutely. More and more, however, I can see a time when I start singing Johnny Paycheck. I can see a time when I don't need an alarm clock, when I don't have to drive back and forth to work in crappy weather, when I don't have to be nice to people.

But not today. On second thought, I don't have to be nice to people now, just tolerate them. If they could read my mind, I'd be in prison for life.

Be hearing you.



"Youth" Gone Wild?

BY SASSY AUBURN

For several years now, I have been denying my age. I admit it! If you ask me how old I am, I will tell you. It's just not going to be my age that day. In fact, I may have reached the point where I've lied about my age longer than I say how old I am now. We all know that time is fleeting. And I seriously feel that a decade+ has fledged all the way to the AARP website over the past two years. This pandemic is playing hard on how I present myself to not just others but also to me. Lately, I have become softer on those I see shopping in their pajamas. I think I get it. Mild respect.

I think it was shortly after I turned 35-ish that I discovered my head was way younger than my body. Many of us see that happen. We don't really understand why the song we once skated to by Leo Sayer (and remember every word to) is an unimpressive thing to know. Especially when you are trying to pass yourself off as a want2B millennial. Singing along to the store music in a store like Walmart isn't really a good thing either. If I want to keep the farse going, I need to put in ear pods and mouth the Preamble to the US Constitution so it looks like I'm talking to someone important. FYI? I learned the Preamble from Schoolhouse Rock. You're welcome.

Then it happens. The mind starts to slip. Kind of like our bodies do when we don't have yellow hospital tread-socks on. We don't remember certain things as much as we used to. Yet, some things are clear as a bell. Like phone numbers. OLD phone numbers. I can remember my nephew's home phone from when he was a kid, but I can't remember the name of the woman who just answered the phone at the dentist 15 minutes ago. It's random. And it's annoying. I blame most of the mind fuzz on being a parent. Oh, we love those kids to pieces! But damn, they suck the lucidity out of us most of the time. That slow sanity deterioration happens over time so you really don't even know it's happening. But it does. Eventually? You will get to that point. You know... the one where you get up to get something from the fridge, and completely forgot why you are staring at coffee creamer & relish, so you organize the Jello boxes and go sit back down. It's okay, you will remember it. When you get in bed. I actually try to blame those specific incidents on my medical marijuana card, but when I'm not lit the parenting excuse is very

believable.

No matter how old or young I feel, I still get up each day and do my hair, put on my makeup and fashion it up so I look fleek AF. (I sounded young there, right? Right!) Of course, those are the days I have to go to work. Or go to the post office. Sometimes the market too. When it's an at-home day? Yeah not so much. I change from pajamas to yoga pants and a t-shirt. Of course no bra, you silly reader. Being a writer in the makeup and glamour industry has its advantages to keeping me feeling young though. Great products in wonderful colors, with ingredients to keep me looking young. Ah, they get it. I am sure I will look like Brittney if I wear this glitter mascara right? NO. That was a line Sassy and you just crossed it. Stop it. Go take your Vitamin D and cholesterol medication and sit in time out for the rest of the of this episode of Wheel of Fortune.

I will absolutely try to defy age (and

gravity?) as long as humanly possible.

Not only does it help me in my career but it helps me feel good about myself. It isn't easy to just feel "good" with everything going on right now in the world. I could tell you about how my body laughs at me every time I try to act younger than I am. Hell yeah I go zip-lining and walk a challenging rope course when I get the opportunity! But it usually requires a couple of Tylenol, some Aleve, maybe a muscle relaxer too. You know, before I hit the adventures. Maybe after too. For a week or so, *sigh* Work with me. Please, work with me.

If anyone wants to ride the "acting younger than I really am" wave, bless your soul. If you can pull it off, enjoy it as long as possible. You go, dude! I am going to try my hardest to stay ahead of the curve (even if I need cataract surgery to see that curve on a rainy night.) Take care of your skin, treat your body right, get some vitamin D, go for a

walk. It all helps. You know what helps the most though? Being happy with yourself. I know that if I want to take my day off and just lay in bed with a

hot pack on my shoulder, eating microwave popcorn. watching 80's Brat Pack movies in flannel pajamas all day, I can. And I will! Because that makes me happy. And being happy is the best



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Instro-Rock Surfmatic

The Jagaloons bring hardcore and punk to the beach, or the riverbank.

BY LIAM SWEENEY

The Jagaloons. Photo provided.

Surf rock is a very fun kind of music. It's energetic, irreverent, and it's persisted throughout the decades. Its guitar sounds are iconic, you can hear it mixed with three other musics at the same time and you'll be able to pick it out. And its transcended beach and board to become a true facet of Americana.

The Jagaloons are a surf rock band. Well, partly a surf rock band. Partly, they're just out there. And if you show up at their show, or load up their album, you'll be out there too.

I sit down with the Jagaloons and we talk about white sand.

RRX: I've interviewed more than a few surf- or surf-vibed bands in the Capital Region, and maybe slightly beyond. It's kind of big around here, which, unless people are wake-surfing the Hudson, might seem odd to people. What is it about our area, do you think, that lends itself to a surf sound?

JAGS: The ebb and flow of the mighty Hudson churns up the primal

energy within the human spirit that yearns for release through reverb-soaked guitars and pounding drums... or maybe people just like good fun music... One or the other. Also, climate change.

RRX: The Jagaloons aren't a "quiet" band. You're out there, tagging your name on plywood in the street (presumably your plywood) and I'm sure that was for some basic reason, but everything I've seen of your band evokes a sense of fearlessness. Does that come from the practice as a team, or are you all just like that?

JAGS: Don't know about fearless but we're older hardcore/punk guys, so I think being a little boisterous just comes naturally. We come from the days when we would be out all night, stapling posters to telephone poles around town or wandering college campuses trying to get people to come to shows. Things are just different now and we want people to know that while we want to be a great band, we will

never take ourselves too seriously. And yeah, if people want to spray paint our name on things, go for it.

RRX: You guys have won awards for your music. They're great to have under your belt, especially when exposure is so hard; every little thing helps. But is it a double-edged sword? Are there suddenly laurels to park your butts on? Does the hunger get fed at all? Or does it put pressure on you to even get better?

JAGS: It's because we're real-ass dudes and people get it. We're not a bunch of mid-century LARPer wearing their grandfathers' slacks. We just genuinely love music and do our own thing. We thought 2020 was to be the year of the JAG, and a global pandemic threw a wrench into the gears. We had some fun tours and stuff that were canceled. This year, we pivoted as everyone did and focused on what we could still do. We played a handful of shows, worked on some new music and are wrapping up some recording for

various releases. So, maybe 2022 is the year of the JAG?

RRX: When I checked through your social media, I saw a lot of shout outs to other groups, and it made my coffee just a degree warmer. I love it when the love is spread, and it broadens my musical knowledge, so thank you. Do you think every band should do that? How do you get a new band to realize the value of cooperation over competition?

JAGS: Again, it goes back to our roots in the scene from when we were younger. We have been lucky enough to play with a lot of great bands who we've developed friendships with over the years. Friends helping friends builds a community and community is what defines a music scene.

RRX: You guys have genres like 'space' and 'spaghetti,' and as a fan of spaghetti, my humble thanks. But you call yourself 'instro-rock.' But you're not instrumental, right? What is instro-rock, in the context you use it?

And do you think that defined genres are as important now as they may have been in the past?

JAGS: Well technically we don't have any vocals, but if you buy our record and play it backwards, you can hear first person accounts of such legendary mysteries as, the Bongoloid, intergalactic time travel, reptilian overlords, The Moth Man and Area 69. You must buy our record to hear that though. We have a lot to say for a band without lyrics. We also really love spaghetti, both Westerns and the pasta

RRX: You have a great artistic side to the band. Logos, merch, and beyond... I just see some very interesting themes that run through each other. And I think, IMHO, that bands that embrace art do better than bands that are strictly music. Do you think that your artistic stuff enhances the "band concept" at all? And if so, how?

JAGS: We're thankful to have a great band wife, Beth Mickalonis,

(really, Josh's wife) who does most of our art and design. She's made some great short videos for us that have given us some great promotion and established a strong online presence. Our whole schtick and instrumental surf music in general, leaves a lot of room for creativity.

RRX: This is where you answer the question we didn't ask. Educate, enlighten, emote – the floor is yours.

JAGS: "No, not like The Beach Boys"

We mentioned 2022 being the "Year of the Jag" and really hope we can make it happen. We have great things in the works with new releases, fulfilling some pre-pandemic show commitments around the country and making a lot more friends here in the great scene we have. Oh yeah, one more thing.... Vote for Ritz.



Photo provided.

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