

Junior's for your Comedic Emergency

by Katie Przepyszny
staff writer

Everybody likes a good show right? But if you've hit every dollar movie out there, or have seen *The Sixth Sense* for the seventh time, maybe it's time you try something new!

At 1402 State Street in downtown Erie, sits a grand old building that is home to Jr's Last Laugh Comedy Club and Restaurant, along with Doug's Punchline. But "what's this place all about," you ask? Why...it's "Where the laughter begins!"

Jr's is a locally-owned and operated club. To check out a show you must be 21 years of age, and positive ID is required. Now that that's out of the way, let's get to the good stuff!

For starters, several knockout shows are scheduled to take place at Jr's this month. Like *Seinfeld*? From October 14th-16th, adult contemporary comedian Jerry Diner, who has co-starred on NBC's *Seinfeld*, will entertain the crowd by using a variety of characters. Care for more of a consumerist humorist? Check out Bob Somersby, who will be taking the stage from October 21st-23rd. Somersby has been on *Politically Incorrect*, and has performed for President Bill Clinton. Still ready for more laughter? See Tom Cotter from October 28th-30th and enjoy his quality impressions and wacky anecdotes. Cotter has previously been seen on a variety of famous programs, including MTV, VH1, the Disney Channel, and Comedy Central. You've seen

these familiar faces before, but not live in Erie. Now's your chance! Without a doubt, audience partici-

Then, listen up for the Jr's staff to draw names. Oh...and don't worry if you are a first-timer: the Jr's staff

to book your '99 Christmas party, as well as plan for this year's "Forget-The-Darn-Y2K-At-Jr's-New-Year-Celebration!" For \$40.00 you can attend this onetime show only and enjoy a midnight champagne toast followed by a hot breakfast, while laughing it up to Boston comic, Freddy Stone.

In the meantime, make yourself at home at Jr's connecting bar, Doug's Punchline. The kitchen is open and ready at 4:00 PM to serve specialty sandwiches, soups, salads, appetizers, munchies, and drinks.

And, every Wednesday Doug's Punchline brings to you dueling pianos night from 7:30 PM-11:30 PM. Come hear all those familiar tunes with some creative, new lyrics at a show free of cover charge!

So when does the fun begin? Jr's show times include 7:30 PM on Thursdays, and 7:30 PM and 10:30 PM on Fridays and Saturdays. Thursday shows are priced at \$8.00 and Friday and Saturday shows cost \$10.00. In addition, Friday's 10:30 PM show is a special nonsmoking late program. Call today for reservations to guarantee your seating. Tickets and gift certificates are for sale at Jr's during all business hours, or over the phone by credit card. With prepaid tickets, arrive a half-hour in advance to hold your table. Otherwise, plan on arriving one hour before the show to buy tickets at the door. Remember, for all your comedy emergencies...call 814-461-0911!

is always ready to provide some guidance in putting together an act!

While you are waiting for your name to be drawn, why not gather some friends and try your luck in another drawing? By logging onto the website, www.jrslastlaugh.com/contest.htm, and filling out a simple contest entry form, you will be eligible for a drawing to win a free table for ten at the funniest club downtown!

And do you need a way to celebrate this year's holiday season? Keep in mind that it's not too early



Jr's Last Laugh on State Street

PHOTO BY KEVIN BRUNER

patation at Jr's makes for an even greater time. But, would you really like to make your way into the spotlight? Each evening a local guest hosts Jr's shows. Here's a once in a lifetime chance to spend a few minutes performing your own stand-up routine before spending the remainder of the evening as emcee.

So how do you sign up? The next time you hit a show at Jr's, fill out the card on your table. Nominate yourself, a family member, or a friend. The only prerequisite is the previous attendance to a Jr's show.

Behrend rocks with the *Field*

by Leanne Acklin
staff writer

As the crowd assembled on the ski slope for The Gathering Field show, a certain awkwardness was evident between cliques.

And then we were told to move closer to the stage. Why we were so far away in the first place is anybody's guess. I suppose it was out of respect for the popular regional band, to give them their space. Whatever the reason, by the time the sun started to set on September 24th we were standing, no, more like swaying, shoulder to shoulder with our Behrend compadres.

I, for one, was becoming engulfed in the incredible sound that filled the slope, and not just because I was beside the right speaker (where I chose to remain for the rest of the night). The Gathering Field was an enormous

foreign to me, except in name, which I became familiar with by reading the posters tacked up around campus (which goes to show how much I intervene with amazing talent).

These guys began to play and the majority of the crowd started to dance around a little. This was a happening born merely from the rhythm of the bass (compliments of Eric Riebling), prominence of the drums (pounded out by Ray Defade), and flattery of the electric guitar (tripped upon by Dave Brown) complementing the smooth, amiable, yet forceful voice of Bill Deasy and his acoustic. The crowd was involved in the actual music, in the lyrics of "Lost in America" and "Slightly Aimless". Sadly, this is a rarity these days, with the dizzying light shows and the glammed up hype of most concerts. Refreshingly, the only light show happening on the slope was an enormous

bonfire, which only added to the sincere feeling of a backyard party, the kind you used to go to in high school where everyone just hung back and relaxed for a good time.

The music itself was (rather, is, as I found out by listening to their CDs) curiously clear. It bears itself openly to you through its lyrics relating to subjects such as finding yourself (often unsuccessfully) and gripping relationships. But the music contrasts the words, speaking to you an unexplainable level deeper than what can be comprehended in an almost mysteriously uplifting fashion. In layman's terms, the music pulls you in and the words make you think.

After the concert, the band did the traditional step-off-the-stage disappearing act. But surprisingly they stuck around backstage, signing CDs and talking to their fans. When I took

my turn complimenting their music and their show, they simply nodded their heads and said, "thanks," as genuinely as their concert was. And when prompted for a quote for the Beacon, they just told me to make up one. That's right, no big time rock star legal lawsuit considerations, just real people involved in real conversation. Who knew that could still happen? So here it is, "Behrend College is incredible and Leanne is a babe." --The Gathering Field.

We love you too, GF!! For facts on their releases (three CDs have been released so far, I believe), history (this IS after all a Pittsburgh based band), or how to become a Gathering Field Representative, among other information, access www.gatheringfield.com. You can also check out www.sgi.net/gathering/ for other info, or call (412) 828-2910.

DiFranco stays on the righteous path

by Douglas Smith
staff writer

Ani DiFranco has released her fifteenth album. It is entitled *Fellow Workers* and is getting much praise from devoted fans. This 18-track release spans the ages in more ways than one.

This album was of course released through DiFranco's own label, Righteous Babe Records. All of DiFranco's releases have been provided to us from this label because of her entrepreneurial spirit to start her own record company. This label has been in existence since 1990, making DiFranco one of the most respectable women in the music business of this decade.

One of DiFranco's most critically acclaimed albums was her last release, *Up Up Up Up Up Up*. It was actually released at the beginning of this year, which shows that DiFranco's folk style has grown over the years to become even more widely accepted.

On the new album, DiFranco teams with another folk singer, Utah Phillips. It is actually their second collaboration having released an album entitled *The Past Didn't Go Anywhere* in 1996. This album's title refers to the corruption of unions in America. Utah Phillips brings back a history and the feelings of those searching for a better life. Despite his feelings coming from many decades ago, it connects to the workers of today because of the domination of corporate power.

"Joe Hill" is one of the most com-

elling songs on the release because of its history of a disgruntled citizen of the union system. It is actually copyrighted back in 1938, so listeners can analyze the connections between the years.

Many of the songs feature more spoken word than actual singing. Also featured are "Stupid's Song" and "Stupid's Pledge." A line states, "All those chum will have to find some other chump to screw." The attitude is very clear. "Stupid's Pledge" is a spin-off of the Pledge Allegiance. The last line refers to "monopoly and cheap labor for all." Lines like these make the disapproval of the way companies are run very clear.

DiFranco is a very creative songwriter and overall musician. She helped write seven of the songs on *Fellow Workers*, but her musical talent is showcased. DiFranco plays acoustic, tenor, baritone, and steel guitars along with the banjo, mandolin, thumb piano, and some percussion besides adding extra vocals. DiFranco uses many different forms of musical expression to help present the mood of Utah Phillips' words.

Expect more from DiFranco and Righteous Babe records, who have been "folking you up since 1990." More collaborations will come, God willing. Until then, look for DiFranco to continue her very unique style as we have come to know her as a solo artist.

Another reason to go out Saturday nights

by Erin Henninger
staff writer

Alright, I'll admit it. I had nothing better to do on Saturday night than sit in my dorm room and watch NBC's new show, *Freaks and Geeks*. What I saw was not a comedy about junior high school. Instead, *Freaks and Geeks* was more of a cross between *The Wonder Years* and *Forest Gump*. But unlike those two classics, it lacks the comedy relief that allows viewers to tune-in without being on antidepressants.

The focus is on two teens, Lindsay and Sam; a sister and brother living in a household with an authoritarian father and a submissive mother. Lindsay is having issues with the recent death of her grandmother. Also, she doesn't fit in with the crowd at school. Sam's issues center around the high school bully. They include gym class, and a particularly violent introduction to Dodge Ball.

A bit of romance is the only time the show takes on a lighter tone. A boy asks

Lindsay to cut class with him, and later invites her over to hear his band play in the basement. Unfortunately, Lindsay gets caught by Jeff, the high school guidance counselor, (possibly the only known helpful high school guidance counselor in the world) and is given the ultimatum of being "The Wonder 'Mathlete'" for an academic decathlon, or serving punch at the Homecoming dance. Lindsay chooses to serve the punch, gets a big lecture on truancy from Dad, and misses her prince's garage band performance.

Cinderella's night isn't completely ruined, because she's able to make amends with the mentally challenged boy she tried to befriend. She also witnesses the young Sam asking his dream girl to dance.

Freaks and Geeks, although not the show I expected from NBC's advertisements, was an honest look back in time at junior high. The truth can be painful, so travel down this twisted dark portion of memory lane with caution.

Drive Me Crazy is driving crowds wild Her Side His Side

by Kristin Grudowski
staff writer

One word can be used to describe this movie: cute. Cute actors, cute characters, just all-around cute.

Drive Me Crazy could be compared to the movies *She's All That* or *Clueless*, or the TV show *90210*. That doesn't matter though, this movie has a repetitious theme found in many stories that we, especially us girls, will never grow tired of.

Once again you will find yourself rooting for two characters to get together, and as half of the couple hooks up with their ex, you will angrily question, "Why are you kissing her?!" This movie will make you want to fall in love, and if that is too extreme, you'll at least want to develop a crush.

Whoever took part in writing the script for *Drive Me Crazy* went out of their way perfecting the portrayal of teenage life. This movie makes

me miss high school, as I began to reminisce over pep rallies and football games. The ideas of conformity, cliques, jealousy, back stabbing friends and dysfunctional families are also represented in the plot. These, along with the main "how to get the girl/guy" theme, are issues everyone can relate to in one way or another, pulling in a variety of people and therefore attracting a diverse audience.

The acting of the two main characters, Melissa Joan Hart as Nicole and Adrian Grenier as Chase, her friend turned boyfriend, is convincing and fun. The music is also noteworthy, but I, as well as everyone else who has seen promotions for this film, was obviously looking forward to hearing Brit sing, "Drive Me Crazy."

Girls, this is a worthwhile movie. Go see it with a group of friends or drag the potentially crush-worthy guy from math class along for the show.



FILE PHOTO

In this romantic comedy directed by John Schultz, Melissa Joan Hart and Adrian Grenier are next-door neighbors since childhood who grow into opposite personalities. Nicole and Chase played by Hart and Grenier, respectively, find themselves falling in love after faking a relationship that only started out as an attempt to get back at each of their previous lovers by whom they were dumped.

by Jermaine Hardy
staff writer

O.k. fellas, if your girlfriend insists on dragging you to see this movie it's alright because it won't be as bad as you think. Melissa Joan Hart is the bomb, and, oh yeah, the movie is good, too. The movie's hype may have some expecting the average "run of the mill" teenage romantic comedy, (a.k.a. girlic movie) but with *Drive Me Crazy* this is not quite the case.

Unlike some other clueless efforts, this movie actually makes some valuable points while depicting teens of the 90's in their true light. As the main plot focuses on the romantic relationship between Nicole and Chad, there are multiple themes that suggest the state in which teens are living today with relative accuracy. The movie is rather easy for most teens to relate to. You and your girl should have a great time watching it together. However you will have to give it a chance.

It has a slow beginning that maybe be hard for a guy to take. At the beginning you may say to yourself that "this is going to drive me crazy," but as the movie progresses, it builds to a climax that makes perfect sense. For the fellas, I advise that you prepare yourself for this movie experience. Enter the theatre with an open mind and try to watch the movie from a different point of view. It's a good movie to watch for symbolism. The school at which Nicole and Chase attend is named Time Zone High School, a name that probably serves as a symbol to imply that the movie wants to put emphasis on the current times in which teens live. The movie will also provide good discussion between you and your girl after it's over, so I advise you to watch carefully so that you are able to give her feedback. This will score you big points! Maybe next week she will let you pick a movie of your choice.