

We like our music Extra Medium, Spring and Summer bring new with a side of fries... season of movie releases

by Leanne Acklin
staff writer

With the 1999 release of their debut album "Happy Accident," the alternative/rock band Extra Medium somehow proved that there is still fresh, original music to be heard.

The group, with ties to Clarion via lead singer Joel Eustice, has existed in its present form since February of 1996. Playing the Clarion, Penn State, and IUP circuits during their years of bandomhood, Extra Medium has managed to earn widespread recognition, independently sell upwards of a hundred copies of "Happy Accident," and become *stationmp3.com's* Featured Stream of the Week. "I like being the stream of the week...that kicks ass," commented Eustice in light of the recognition, which was warranted this week.

Deservedly so. "Happy Accident" contains tracks that far surpass the requirements for radio play. Songs such as "No Truth," "Consequence," and "Fear" all begin relatively soft only to hit hard a few seconds in, while covering topics such as decisions, despair, and distress ("oh my"). The lone chick ballad, "World Inside," captures all the niches of a summer theme song and packs just as much sincerity. Just think of how the slower songs produced by rock groups turn out...groups like Guns 'n Roses, Poison, and Aerosmith come to mind. That's right, smile, you know you've got that song in your head right now! The vocals in this song finally come up from the basement, dust themselves off a little, and intensely shine upscale a couple of notches, proving that Eustice can stretch his range notably, and should consider doing so more often.

The remainder of the songs on this album, "Backwards Glance," "Lost," "Sky Today," and "Can't Stand the Time" bring back the eminence of the lead guitar that has been evident throughout rock. Shamefully this luster has been lost in the shuffle of the bubble gum pop and cheesy techno



Extra Medium practices for the new album. FILE PHOTO

that has flooded the music market throughout the 90s and up to today. Following suit with bands such as Matchbox 20, Toad the Wet Sprocket, and Everclear, Extra Medium's lead guitarist Steve Curl has undoubtedly done his part to respectfully feature this root of rock once again (translation - the guitar in these songs absolutely rocks).

All the songs are written and produced by Extra Medium, with remaining members Miles Altman (guitar), Jerrod Shook (bass), Eric Eisenman (drums), and The Duck (mascot) doing their share to pull this band into the light where it belongs. The future, as long as these guys continue to do shows, looks promising. "[We] recently signed with Taxi in hopes of finding a label," explained Eustice. Additional exposure has and will continue to come from the cyber circuit.

For more information on CDs (buy it!), downloads, booking, and bios, visit their sites at www.welcome.to/extramedium, www.listen.to/extramedium, www.mp3.com/extramedium, and www.stationmp3.com.

(Note: After 2 solid semesters of writing the local band beat for the Beacon, I have had the privilege of meeting some of this area's most dedicated and passionate artists. Extra Medium was actually the only band I knew before hand that I was going to feature, and was the reason I took on this beat. I am now dedicated to the promotion of heartened and hardworking artists and have come to share their passion and love for music. I hope through my articles that I have opened your eyes to the amazing talent this area holds, and encouraged you to enjoy a night or two in the presence of such spirited people and music. Thank you everyone for a wonderful year - Leanne Acklin)



Extra Medium jams out. FILE PHOTO

SUMMER JOBS

Erie manufacturer looking to hire general shop laborers for the summer. Jobs run from mid-May (or end of semester) through August.

A variety of positions are available.

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Call Barbara at 451-0400 for details.

The Dick and Jane column will no longer be appearing in the Beacon.

by Katie Przepyszny
features co-editor

Spring is finally, here and summer will soon be showing its face. This means two things. One, the semester is finally over, and two, a new season of movie releases is about to hit theaters. So what screen shows do we have to look forward to?

A story about strength and adversity will start the wave of must-see movies this spring. *Where the Heart Is* features a 17-year-old girl (played by Natalie Portman) in the pursuit of survival after she is left at a Wal-Mart by her boyfriend in a small Oklahoma town. Not only is she jobless and broke, but she is pregnant. The rest of the star cast includes Ashley Judd, Stockard Channing, and Joan Cusack. Directed by Matt Williams, the movie is based on the best-selling novel by Billie Letts and is set to be released on April 28.

Next on the list is *Big Momma's House*, a story about an FBI agent sent to Georgia to protect a single mother and her son from an escaped convict. This comedy takes shape as the agent is forced to impersonate a southern granny "Big Momma" in order to remain undercover. The cast is composed of Martin Lawrence, Nia Long, and Paul Giamatti. Directed by Raja Gosnell, the movie's date of release is June 2.

Another comedy on the way, directed by Bobby and Peter Farrelly, is entitled *Me, Myself and Irene*. Veteran comedian Jim Carrey plays a cop afflicted with split personality disorder who escorts a woman back to her home town. The trip becomes an adventure as he falls in love with her and tries to win her affections. The cast assisting Carrey includes Renee Zellweger, Chris Cooper, Robert

Forster, and Richard Jenkins. The movie will be released June 23.

When comics hit the movies, the result is a screen version of *X-Men*, a live-action adaptation of the most popular comic book series ever. Directed by Bryan Singer, the movie version features famous faces such as Halle Berry, Rebecca Romijn-Stamos, and Patrick Stewart. To be released on July 14, the movie displays the pursuits of the X-Men with their extraordinary powers as they race to fight to protect a mankind that doesn't understand them and therefore fears them.

Coming to theaters August 11, Brendan Fraser, Elizabeth Hurley, and Frances O'Connor will star in *Bedazzled*. Directed by Harold Ramis, the movie touches the subjects of sex, power, and money as a man makes a deal with the Devil to get the girl of his dreams.

To be released next fall, George Tilman, Jr. directs an inspirational movie about military history. With a cast including such big names as Robert De Niro and Cuba Gooding, Jr., *Navy Diver* recaps the experiences of Carl Brashear, who with the help of master diver Billy Sunday, overcomes a crippling injury, racism, and bureaucracy to become the Navy's first African-American Master Diver.

Entering theaters at a date yet to be announced is *From Hell*, a story based on a graphic novel by Allan Moore and Eddie Campbell. Directed by Allen and Albert Hughes, the movie is set in Victorian London and is a retelling of the Jack The Ripper murders.

Whether it's comedy, romance, action, horror, or drama you like, this coming season of movies has it covered. Check the theaters near you.



FILE PHOTO



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Above: Scenes from the upcoming movies *Where the Heart Is*, *Big Momma's House*, and *Me, Myself and Irene*.

H

Aries (March 21-April 19). Sleeping through class for the sixteenth time this semester might not be such a good idea.

●

Taurus (April 20-May 20). Your birthday's coming up, make sure that it is one hell of a bash and be sure you invite Bongo!

R

Gemini (May 21-June 21). Maybe if you didn't have that last beer you wouldn't be seeing double.

O

Cancer (June 22-July 22). Be careful about what you eat or drink, everything causes cancer.

S

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). Beware of three legged monkeys bering strange gifts.

C

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Give your professors a surprise and show up for class for a change.

O

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Partying the weekend before finals can be detrimental to your grades.

P

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Sorry scorpions, I'm outta ideas for this week, so you're on your own!

E

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Mangos, they're not just for breakfast anymore, nudge, nudge, wink, wink.

S

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). What the heck is a capricorn anyway?

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb 18). Go fishing!

Pisces (Feb 19 - March 20). Deep thought — Isn't it amazing that anyone at Behrend could actually have a deep thought?

by
Bongo the three legged
monkey

