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The Behrend Beacon

The Clarks rock Behrend

The Pittsburgh band talks to the Beacon about life as rockers

by Jen Henderson
staff writer

The Clarks have been around the block enough to know what fans want. They proved that last Friday night in Erie Hall.

The Clarks have been together for more than 15 years. Rob James (6 & 12 string guitars, vocals), Scott Blasey (vocals, guitars), Greg Joseph (bass, vocals), and David Minarik Jr. (drums, vocals) make up the band that originated at Indiana University. The band is mostly known in the Pittsburgh area, but with growing success and rocking albums it's becoming a nationally recognized act.

James and Minarik met first, but, by now, all members have grown together like a family.

"We are all really good friends; we have a nice mutual love and respect for each other," said James. "It is a very much a familial type of thing after we have been together for so long.

"I was a music major studying the French horn," said James. "But after I met these guys I kind of let that go by the wayside. I just focused on drinking and playing my guitar."

The band said it doesn't really have any idols, but it does find it has similar aspirations to R.E.M. and U2. These comparisons are made often to the band, along with that of Tom Petty.

"We got together in the era of U2 and R.E.M. Bands that were together for a long time and everyone fit into the picture," James said.

By now every band member is mar-



PHOTO BY JEFF HANKEY / BEHREND BEACON

The Clarks' Scott Blasey is shown rocking Erie Hall last Friday.

ried; the exception is hot lead singer Scott Blasey.

The music business is constant work and touring and some do get homesick, but to James it goes along with the job.

"At the risk of compromising myself here with my wife, family and friends, I don't get homesick. I really love what I do and you hold the opportunity that has

come our way as exactly that - opportunity. I imagine if we had some level of success and this was turning into a grind, I would be homesick. As for right now we are still on that side of our career where we are still working towards something, what exactly that is I don't know," said James.

"Another Happy Ending" was the big-

gest selling record in the Pittsburgh area and No. 143 on the Billboard album chart the week it premiered.

"It is sort of a verification that all the hard work, effort and time we put in has really paid off for us," James said. This is the Clarks ninth album, which James considers his favorite.

Another favorite of many Clarks' fans

is "Let it Go," which was released in June 2000.

The group doesn't seem to get sick of each other but there are limits to their times together.

"When we're not working together we really try and give each other a little bit of space," James said.

However, time off seems to be scarce these days. Most recently the Clarks have been touring the college scene with stops at places such as Slippery Rock University, State College and later on in November at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

James looks for the band to carry on with their success.

"I think that we would all like to continue doing it. I can see that after we get done supporting this project, about another year or so," said James. "We might need to take some time, which we hadn't done for ourselves in the past, and start writing more materials and take some time off."

One of the pluses with the current CD is that 50 percent of sales are out of their region. Things are definitely heading in the right direction for the band to take off.

Though Pittsburgh is their home, the band enjoys traveling and performing.

"I think we really enjoy playing anywhere," said James. "After having so much success in one region we are really excited about getting out and playing in places we don't have that much of a following or any following and getting in front of crowds and turning people on."

Local haunted houses are an Erie good time

by Maria Barron
staff writer

Halloween is just around the corner. Scared yet?

Believe it or not there are actually ample opportunities to scare yourself right here in Erie. No doubt there will be something for every single one of you sick weirdos to sink your bloody wax teeth into. Here are a few options for you to pick from.

For the extremely young at heart the Erie Zoo is hosting "ZooBoo" for children under the age 11. Maybe you have to be a little more than "young at heart" to trick-or-treat throughout the zoo, and take a train ride with Little Dread Riding Hood. Children 2 and under are free, so for those of you who are overly immature, you may still be able to attend as long as you give the Zookeeper a copy of your I.Q. scores.

On a scarier note, there are haunted houses and other related events taking place all over the city. Maybe because this city is called Erie which by definition (if you alter the spelling slightly) means: A) inspiring inexplicable fear, dread, or uneasiness; strange and frightening B) suggestive of the supernatural; mysterious; see weird. Yes, that's right. See weird. No wonder the only time there is anything to do in this town is during a holiday that was created to glorify the frightening, and let's not forget weird, atmosphere after which is fine city was named.

The real question is why even set up a haunted house when the entire city, in essence, is one? Just something to think about, but enough eerie trivia.

Where are all of these goose-bump-inducing activities going to take place? Well, like I said, walk out your front door.

Big scary houses here we come. No, silly, I'm not talking about the TKE house! "Halls of Fear," featuring many creepy crawly attractions including a torture chamber, is located in the Public Improvement Area off Station Road, across from Wesleyville Beer. It will be open Oct. 25-30 from 7-10 p.m., and Friday and Saturday until 11 p.m. Adult admission is \$5.

"The Haunted Gym" offers interactive, yet scary, fun for all ages every weekend in October, Saturdays from 5-9 p.m., and Sundays 2-6 p.m. with cost at \$5 per person, "The Haunted Gym" is located in the Lake Effects Gymnastics School, 6813 W. Ridge Road., Fairview.

"The Haunted Garage," featuring "The Witches of Macbeth" located at 11972 Thurston Road., Meadville (not highly recommended if you were planning on walking) will be open through Oct. 31 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. daily. However, it is closed on Sundays and on Oct. 26.

Here's one for ya, "Finney's Pumpkinville" featuring, "The Haunted Forest of Bloody Butcher Hollow Corn Maze." It is worth visiting just because it has such a cool name. The proceeds benefit the Ronald McDonald House Charities. Pumpkinville will be open Oct. 18-Nov. 2, from 7-11 p.m. It's located on Rt. 99, between Edinboro and Cambridge Springs (call 814-398-4590 for more info).

There are more haunted houses and cemetery tours at www.goerie.com so check it out. About 20 random Halloween events listed under Entertainment. Have a safe, enjoyable, and freaking crazy Halloween. Muhuwahaha!!

Guns N' Roses have an appetite for reunion

by Zac Wassink
staff writer

For the first time in almost a decade, Guns N' Roses will tour the United States beginning, in November. On Nov. 22, they will perform at Pittsburgh's Mellon Arena, which will be followed by a Nov. 24 show at Cleveland's Gund Arena. These two dates are part of a North American tour that contains 25 dates.

The first Guns N' Roses tour in nine years will contain many new bands members, not to mention new material from GN'R front man Axl Rose. The new material will be songs from the long awaited release of "Chinese Democracy."

In an interview at the end of August, Axl Rose was questioned about when fans could finally expect to see the new album in their hands. "You'll see the album, but I don't know if 'soon' is the word," Rose told MTV news.

Recently, it has been rumored the album should be released just in time for the holiday season. Dec. 3 and Dec. 10 are the two dates that are being stated as the possible release of the album. As of now, however, nothing has been made official.

Guns N' Roses, who were out of the U.S. spotlight for more than a decade, reemerged a television performance Aug. 29 at MTV's video Music Awards. They performed some of the hits that catapulted them to mainstream success. They began with "Welcome to the Jungle," followed by "Paradise City." The performance ended with the per-

formance of their new ballad "Madagascar," which is from the new album.

Fans attending the show will have more than just new music to learn. Many new faces will be with the group. In fact,

the only remaining member of the original band is Axl Rose, himself. Keyboardist Dizzy Reed has been with the group since 1991, when he was in the studio for the "Use Your Illusions" albums. The rest of the group is made up of new additions. Added to the group are keyboardist Chris Pitman, guitarists Robin Finck, an ex-Nine Inch Nails member, Buckethead and Richard Fortus, bassist Tommy Stinson (ex-Replacements), and drummer Brian "Brain" Mantia (ex-Primus).

Those expecting to see some rust from the group for lack of touring need not worry. Although the band has not toured the United States, they started a summer tour over Asia and Europe. The band appeared in Hong Kong, Japan, Belgium, and England.

Sales for the tour have been overwhelming so far. Tickets went on sale for the Dec. 5 show in New York on Sept. 30, and sold out within 15 minutes. "We are thrilled with the sales," stated Arthur Fogel, president of Clear Channel Entertainment's touring division. "We knew this was going to be a big tour but this even exceeded our expectations."

Prices for tickets for the two local shows range from \$27-\$52, but they are running thin for both shows. While the shows have not sold out yet, it is believed that only a few hundred seats are available for either performance.



Sweet hair o' mine. Axl Rose sports dreadlocks at the 2002 MTV Video Music Awards.

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