

STUDENT LIFE

Music and Film

In Memorium: Danny Sugarman fiddle up some fun

by Carolyn M. Tellers
beacon assistant



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Danny Sugarman, author and co-manager of The Doors, recently passed away after suffering from lung cancer.

On Thursday, Jan. 6, 2005, Danny Sugarman died at the age of 50 from lung cancer. He was the long time co-manager of The Doors, as well as a successful writer. In his autobiography, "Wunderland Avenue," he described his rise from The Doors fan club manager and friend to the group's manager. He also told of his life and death struggle with drugs, and how he overcame them. Sugarman also co-wrote the best selling biography about Jim Morrison, "No One Here Gets Out Alive."

Jeff Jampol, Danny Sugarman's business partner and friend, agreed to a brief interview with me via phone on Wednesday. There were some questions he wouldn't answer, but here is what he shared.

Beacon: "What do you think Danny would say was his greatest achievement?"

Jampol: "Probably living 50 years. And continuing the Doors legacy for the generations to come."

Beacon: "You have mentioned how much of an inspiration that Danny Sugarman was to you. What advice would you have for college students?"

Jampol: "...He was an awe-inspiring mentor, a cherished, loving advisor and a living, breathing example of honesty, giving, service and, above all, grace and dignity... [He taught me] about life, spirit, and how to be a better human being..."

Beacon: "Is there anything else you would like to share?"

Jampol: "I'm going to mourn him ter-

ribly, but I have the... duty of keeping his light and his legacy alive, through the music of The Doors, the words and poetry of Jim Morrison and the principles Danny instilled in me. I'll consider myself doubly blessed if I can pass on to others even a sliver of what I received so freely from him. I miss him so much already."

Beacon: "Are there any plans for The Doors to visit Erie, Pa. and/or the surrounding area?"

Jampol: "Not at this time."

Beacon: "Finally, what is your favorite Doors song?"

Jampol: "...The End"

For more information about Danny Sugarman and/or The Doors, visit their website at <http://www.thedoors.com>

by Annie Sevin
staff writer

Povertyneck Hillbillies will be performing at Bruno's on Monday at 8:00 p.m. The Hillbillies are a country-rock band that hails from Southwestern Pa, Fayette County. The band consists of seven members: Chris "Abby" Abbondanza (acoustic guitar, lead vocals), Bob "Crafty" Crafton (steel, lead guitar), Dave Cramer (keyboard, vocals), David Guthrie (lead guitar), Chris Higbee (fiddle, guitar, vocals, mandolin, banjo), Ryan Lucotch (Drums) and Jeff Voleck (bass, accordion, vocals, lead guitar).

The Hillbillies began as a group in 2000; they started out playing as part-time musicians in small clubs and fairs in Pennsylvania. In four years, they have grown to a seven-man band of full-time musicians with their own tour bus, a debut album ("Hillbilly State of Mind"), several singles being played on Pennsylvania country music stations, and a second album in the works.

The much-in-demand hit singles are from "Hillbilly State of Mind," and include, "Mr. Right Now," "Born to Be Free" and the title track, "Hillbilly State of Mind."

Cramer says, "Ninety-nine percent of the album is original." The Hillbillies have two covers on the album: Lionel Richie's "Stuck on You" and

Tonic's "If You Could Only See."

Bob Corbin, part of the duo Corbin and Hanner, has helped The Hillbillies on the path of success by being their producer, acting manager and at times their songwriter. Corbin has worked with and written for such artists as Hank Williams Jr., Kenny Rogers and Alabama ("Can't Keep a Good Man Down"). Cramer says, "Corbin is the best thing to happen to us... we're very fortunate to have him."

The Hillbillies have performed with some of Country's top performers, including Charlie Daniels Band, Vince Gill, Lonestar, Reba McEntire and Lee Ann Womack. The Hillbillies have also played in Erie at the Country Fest with Gary Allan and Rascal Flatts. According to John Hayes, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Staff Writer, "They're the region's highest paid regularly performing country band, and one of the top grossing bands in general in southwestern Pennsylvania."

According to their website (www.povertyneck.com) The Hillbillies have a number of noteworthy achievements including selling more than 8,000 copies of "Hillbilly State of Mind" in less than eight months; performing in front of a record crowd of 3,000 at the Fayette County Fairgrounds; they were the first local country act to sell out the 1,000-seat Pepsi Cola Roadhouse in

Burgettstown, Pa; and they were the first country act to perform in the finals of the Graffiti Rock Challenge in Pittsburgh in 2003.

The Graffiti Rock Challenge was "probably the turning point in the decision to become an original band," said Cramer. They competed against about 160 other rock bands to get into the Challenge and wound up in the top five for the finals. They finished in 5th place, and were left with a 45-minute set of original music. After the Challenge they realized they could break away from the cover country band genre and play a lot more of their own creations. Cramer says that now they "definitely aren't your mama's good ol' country band."

"Our shows are not a spectator sport... we don't stand up there and sing music, we'll entertain you," Cramer commented. He says most people are thrown off by the band's name and expect to see another country/bluegrass ensemble and instead they get a band that is on the very edge of mainstream country music.

Ray Balogna, owner of the Pepsi Cola Roadhouse says, "The Povertyneck Hillbillies are great 'live' performers. The band is a charismatic blend of musician with its own distinct sounds and style that has created a diverse fan base. They have a real passion for their songs."

'White Noise' is not Keaton at his best



UNIVERSAL PICTURES

Deborah Kara Unger plays a victim of the mean spirits in Universal Pictures' new film, "White Noise."

by Daniel J. Stasiewski
editor in chief

The morbid video recording in "The Ring" wasn't terrifying, so it's no surprise television static isn't jump-out-of-your-seats frightening. Out of focus TV screens are hardly the only unexciting parts of the insipid supernatural thriller "White Noise." The story is dull and overlong. The acting is uninspired. All this for a conclusion that is as titillating as the "Amen" at the end of a prayer.

Instead of taking more challenging film work, Michael Keaton has gone the route of Robert DeNiro and Michael Douglas. Keaton here stars in a paycheck thriller ("Godsend" and "Don't Say A Word" for example) about the successful architect Jonathon Rivers whose second wife goes missing just after she tells him she's pregnant. Her body is found weeks later, but not before Rivers has a peculiar encounter with Raymond Price (Ian McNeice) who heard the voice of Mrs. Rivers from, of all places, the other side.

Of course, Rivers is reluctant to believe the man. The reluctance is needed so the audience can watch Keaton cry with his back to the camera. No acting is involved, but it is a feeble stab at rousing some good old-fashioned empathy. After some unaffectioning shots of Rivers in despair, his dead wife eventually contacts him on his cell phone. (Can you hear her now?). Rivers is sad, and his recent cell phone experience sends him running for the guy who is contacted by dead people.

Price is obsessed with Electronic Voice Phenomenon (the ability to conveniently pickup the voices of the dead in consumer electronics). His house is full of recording equipment that captures every EVP experience. Sometimes the messages

he hears aren't as nice as the ones River's dead wife is sending. Price and Rivers don't pay attention to the abusive warnings from bad spirits, and their EVP adventures take a turn for the worse.

I tried to convince myself that the film's slow start, usually considered character development, is important. What disappoints more than the laughable thrills is the time the filmmakers spend trying to convince the audience to empathize with Rivers, when it just won't happen.

Every unnatural tear from Keaton forces the audience to step further and further away from his character. Keaton's impotent performance lacks the power and aptitude to even be considered melodramatic. It's a performance that makes his comedic work in "Multiplicity" look like a career best.

Keaton's work, however, is no more than what is required in a paint-by-numbers thriller. The film does try to break out of that mold, it seems, using Keaton and inanimate object early on as failed attempts to create Hitchcock like suspense. Once the dead people are thrown into the picture, all hell breaks loose, and the film quickly becomes a "The Ring" wannabe. The plot contrivances are only outnumbered by the missed opportunities for legitimate thrills.

The film was released on Jan. 7, at the end of the holiday season. Thankfully the release means that there are better movies out there. "White Noise" isn't anything exceptional, and its release during the January dumping ground is no surprise. The wisest thing to do when something like "White Noise" comes out is to see the popular December flicks that are still in theaters. True, you'll miss out on Michael Keaton, but you can watch him in something, anything better on your own TV thanks to crystal clear DVD video-with no static to speak of.



Large 1-Topping Pizza

\$7.99

with coupon

4402 Buffalo Rd., Erie



899-2313

Dine-in, Carryout or Delivery



Lunch Buffet Everyday 11:30 am - 1:30 pm

All You Can Eat Pizza, Pasta & Salad

\$4.99

Wednesday Night Buffet 5 - 8pm

All You Can Eat Pizza, Pasta & Salad

\$5.99 | **\$2.99**

Adults | Children ages 4-10



Large 1-Topping Pizza

\$7.99 

Offer available on Pan and Thin 'n Crispy crust. Offer available on dine-in, carryout, or delivery orders. Up to 4 orders per person. \$1.00 delivery charge may apply. Limited time offer valid only with current student ID. EXPIRES 5/31/05

Large 1-Topping Pizza

\$7.99 

Offer available on Pan and Thin 'n Crispy crust. Offer available on dine-in, carryout, or delivery orders. Up to 4 orders per person. \$1.00 delivery charge may apply. Limited time offer valid only with current student ID. EXPIRES 5/31/05

Large 1-Topping Pizza

\$7.99 

Offer available on Pan and Thin 'n Crispy crust. Offer available on dine-in, carryout, or delivery orders. Up to 4 orders per person. \$1.00 delivery charge may apply. Limited time offer valid only with current student ID. EXPIRES 5/31/05

Large 1-Topping Pizza

\$7.99 

Offer available on Pan and Thin 'n Crispy crust. Offer available on dine-in, carryout, or delivery orders. Up to 4 orders per person. \$1.00 delivery charge may apply. Limited time offer valid only with current student ID. EXPIRES 5/31/05