

The CoCoBeans!

By Helen Marketti



What first began as a small group of friends who shared a love for music eventually evolved into a rockin' band with a large, solid fan base. Local area band, The CoCoBeans whose current line up is Scott Gast (vocals, guitar), Bryan Gast (bass guitar), Josh Post (lead guitar), Brian Runkle (drums, vocals) and Dylan Kendrick (audio engineer) have been packing the house at area clubs and events. Their hard work, talent and determination have now branched out to performances in Cleveland, Columbus and other areas.

"The band originally began as a trio. Two friends from school were in the band with me. I was a guitarist but didn't sing then," recalls Scott. "We entered the Cold Creek Talent Show and came in second runner up. We lost to the Polar Bear Cheerleaders and an eight year old who sang along with the CD to My Heart Will Go On from the movie, Titanic." (laughs)

The naming of the band came along by chance. "We needed a name to put on the entry form for the talent show and we had never picked out a name or agreed on one," said Scott. "I finally suggested 'The Crazy CoCoBeans' because of someone my grandfather knew. It was kind of a spin off from that but the announcer introduced us as 'The CoCoBeans' instead and then it all went from there."

Taking some time to share how his interest in music began, Scott said, "While growing up, my dad was a huge Beatles fan and so that is what my brother, Bryan and I grew

up listening to. My dad was also in a band so we grew up thinking that Dad was a rock star. They played places around here like the American Legion and I thought that was the coolest thing. I've always liked The Beatles, The Beach Boys and The Eagles. As I got older, then I liked more modern bands like the Goo Goo Dolls and Green Day." He continues, "My dad was a huge influence on me to get me interested in music. He runs Musicians Alley in Sandusky. The first song he taught me to play on guitar was Wonderful Tonight by Eric Clapton. That is my mom's favorite song so I wanted to learn how to play it for her, too."

The guitar is the instrument of choice for Scott. "I like playing the guitar because there are so many unique sounds to make and so many ways you can shape music with it. I like to play with sounds. When I play the guitar, it's more like an extension of me whereas the other instruments don't feel as natural."

Watching a CoCoBeans gig recently at Cabana Jacks in Sandusky brought a diverse crowd of varying ages to the dance floor but the common thread was enjoying the music and having fun. "I think the reason I love The Beatles and The Beach Boys so much is their music was fun," explains Scott. "Many modern bands seem to be angry about something with their music or crying in the corner. Music can transcend your emotions but you don't have to be sad and melancholy. I like to be happy and upbeat. That's what The Beatles had, they were upbeat yet they were all close too. That's what I like to do with The CoCoBeans - hang out, talk about music, guitars or whatever."

What can someone expect from a CoCoBeans performance?

"They can expect to have fun. It's a way to escape reality for awhile too," said Scott. "You can resort back to playfulness that you had from childhood and have a good time. I would like for people to think of rock and roll and fun when they hear our band."

Music from the CoCoBeans set list includes a well-rounded selection of cover songs from the 60s to the 80s.

The CoCoBeans are currently working on original material and tentative plans are in the works for a CD to be released in early May of 2010.

"This will be our first, original CD," said Scott. "It will have a variety of songs. My goal is to have at least 40 songs and then narrow it down to the top 10 - 12 tracks from that. I like that process better than just writing the exact number of tracks and that's it. Everyone puts their own thing into it. Right now, the creative forces are Brian Runkle (drummer) and myself. Sometimes when I write I think it may sound cheesy or it's being forced so I am working on that. I pick



up the guitar and find a sound I like when working on material. As far as topical things go, I just let the lyrics happen. The tracks will fit with what we play live in the essence that it will be up-tempo. There will be a rock "feel" to the songs."

Scott has definite thoughts about being in a band, "It makes me unbelievably happy. I really can't explain exactly how I feel. It's hard to put into words. I have a great appreciation for the people I play with, first on a friendship level and then on a musicianship level. It's really cool because there is an extra special connection between us. When people come out to see our show, they are dancing and having fun. It's a natural high."

For more information on The CoCoBeans including their show schedule, please visit: www.myspace.com/thecocobeanos

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