

# Now WE'RE TALKIN

By Helen Marketti

## A chat with Mark Farner formerly of Grand Funk Railroad

Mark Farner, former front man for Grand Funk Railroad will be at The Ritz Theatre in Tiffin, Ohio on Friday, March 24. It promises to be a rockin' show bringing back ole memories while making new ones! Listen to the hit songs that will take you back, Some Kind of Wonderful, We're an American Band, Locomotion, I'm Your Captain and more!

Taking some time from his busy schedule, Mark shares insight on his life, career and inspirations.

"My father was a city fireman in Flint, Michigan," remembers Mark. "He was a WWII Veteran. He was a tank driver for the 7th Armored Division. My mother was the first woman in the United States to weld Sherman tanks at Fisher Body in Flint, Michigan." He continues, "Our entire family would get together every Sunday without fail and have jam sessions. These would occur at either our house or my Aunt Dorothy's who was my mom's sister. We would enjoy Southern fried chicken, hockey puck dumplings (laughs) and sloppy joes. After dinner, everyone would sing and play instruments. My dad played the saxophone. Other family members played banjo, fiddle and guitar. When all the women sang, it was like listening to angels. There is something very special about families when they sing together. I was just a little shaver at that time but I remember marveling at how much I loved it."

"My mother showed my sister, Diana and I how to dance when we became older. I loved to dance! My sister and I entered dance competitions and came away with a few trophies! Music back then was fun, upbeat and happy. It made you want to dance."

Mark originally had excelled at junior varsity football but an injury curtailed his promising career. That's when he discovered that he had a talent for the guitar and creating music. "When I was 15 years old, my mother purchased six guitar lessons and rented an acoustic guitar for me. I found that I enjoyed playing the guitar. After that, I remember watching a band in high school that my sister sometimes would play drums for. They would let me sit in with them and sing. Eventually, my mom bought me a Harmony electric guitar with a matching amplifier from Fingerhut Catalog. Music became second nature."

The railroad line that stretched from Ontario, Canada, through Michigan and into Ohio was called, Grand Trunk Railroad. "Terry Knight



who was the first manager for us had actually written a song called, Grand Funk. He asked us to consider calling ourselves Grand Funk Railroad and that's how our band name was created."

Mark shares his thoughts on why the music of Grand Funk Railroad still appeals to the original fans as well as new generations. "I think the newer generations of fans want to experience the same joy that their grandparents had. They want to have the same upbeat, fun time and we deliver that to them."

Mark is currently working on new material with Mark Slaughter from the 80s band, Slaughter in which he describes their collaboration as uplifting and highly spirited. There is talk of a documentary about his life that is possibly in the works.

For more information about Mark, his work with our wonderful Veterans and updates on his career and performances, please visit: [www.markfarner.com](http://www.markfarner.com)

[www.helenrosemarketti.com](http://www.helenrosemarketti.com)

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