



Unshakable Race plays for the first annual EMU Beer Gardens.

Beer gardens kick off with Unshakable Race

Ming Rodrigues
Contributor

They call themselves the Unshakable Race because they believe that race, creed, sex or religious belief play no part in a world where everyone is created from the same life force.

"We trust in unity and a common goal," stressed bandleader and co-founder Rob James.

And true to their philosophy, not only does each band member hail from different parts of the country and musical backgrounds, their high-energy, spiritual-funk-reggae music speaks of universal harmony.

Though formed just early this year, the Unshakable Race has quickly branched out and gained quite a following with their danceable performances and opening acts for famous artists including Desmond Dekker, Curtis Salgado and Human Rights.

But the Unshakable Race is not a band out to just make a name for themselves. They have an independent record label, Covenant Records, that not only releases the group's own material but also that of other up-and-coming artists. And you'll often find the group calling themselves "The Substitutes," the pseudonym they use when they play back-up to these fresh bands.

"We want to give talented people the chance to do what they do best," said James. "These folks are probably stuck in jobs that can't give them that choice, but we believe that everyone should have the equal opportunity to go ahead with what they want."

Unshakable Race performs tonight at the Beer Gardens (EMU Fountain Court) from 5-7p.m. There's free chips and salsa from 4-5p.m.

"We're going to have bigger and better entertainment this

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John Henry's offers new option on local club circuit

Dave Charbonneau
Associate Editor

A group of Eugene music lovers have taken what's good about bars and clubs in Eugene, put them all together and opened a bar for people who enjoy good music.

The bar is called John Henry's, but don't let the word "bar" fool you. The emphasis of John Henry's is not the drinks, but the music.

"This is definitely a place for music lovers," Lucy Lizzard, who is in charge of booking bands at the club, said.

John Henry's, which is located at 136 E. 11th Ave., was opened in August by Bruce Hartnell, Tom Tracey and Al Jenkins with the sole purpose of giving the Eugene music audience and touring bands another option.

"We approach it as a music venue that sells beer," Hartnell said.

Currently in Eugene, there are many places to see good musicians, but the owners of John Henry's have tried to combine all of Eugene's current music venues into one.

New Max's, Taylor's, Good Times and the WOW Hall are the places most noted for cater-

ing to the music-conscious public.

John Henry's is a combination of all those venues.

It has a huge 24x16-foot stage, which Hartnell said is the same size as the stage at the WOW Hall. The WOW Hall, however, is an all-ages club and alcohol is not permitted in the main room. In order to drink, one must go downstairs in a basement, where it isn't possible to see or hear the music upstairs clearly without the use of a video screen.

New Max's has traditionally attracted some of the top alternative and rock bands that come to the area, but the bar is so small that it is usually packed from wall to wall, especially on the weekends.

Taylor's is a bigger bar with a bigger stage than New Max's, but because of its campus location, it is also usually very crowded.

Good Times has a decent size stage but veers away from booking most alternative bands, opting for a more mellow blues-influenced sound.

John Henry's, which formerly was called Club 136 and Club Hollywood under different owners, is smaller than the WOW Hall, but a great deal



Dancers shake it up on the dance floor at John Henry's, which isn't just an alternative music dance club.

Photo by Michael Shnyder

more spacious than New Max's. Taylor's and Good Times, giving the audience plenty of room to dance, mingle or just plain drink.

"It's so much bigger than the other bars," Lizzard, who has brought bands like L7 and Melvins to Eugene, said. "It's not a place where someone just

slapped in a stage." The owners have spared no expense in creating a good of a sound system as possible. The stage is complete with bass

holes and the walls are equipped with tube-like structures that help put a halt to reverberation.

"At most places in Eugene," Hartnell said, "the stages were put in as an afterthought. Here the stage is as big as the WOW Hall, but the layout of the place is a little more intimate."

Bands such as The Daddies, Two Minutes Hate and Jolly Mon have already graced the stage at John Henry's, but the owners say they will not limit bookings to strictly "alternative" bands.

"If they can sell beer, they're in here," Hartnell said. He has been a member of many bands himself, including The Detonators. "We don't want this place to be known only as an alternative place. We had The Guardians, a drunk country western band, in here a while ago. They weren't a big draw, but their crowd drank a lot of beer."

Because he is a musician, Hartnell says he knows how to make bands happy.

"In order to make everything attractive to the musicians, we give them the take at the door."

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