

The Babes ARE BACK

■ A favorite Eugene band, Babes with Axes, returns tonight for its once-a-year reunion concert

By Yael Menahem
Oregon Daily Emerald

Much to the delight of Babes with Axes fans, the band returns to Eugene's WOW Hall tonight for its Sixth Annual Reunion Concert.

The group consists of four female singer-songwriters, Debbie Deidrich, Katie Henry, T.R. Kelley and Laura Kemp, and have a loyal local following.

The Babes formed in 1993 and had their first concert at the WOW Hall as part of a songwriters' showcase. They are considered some of the Northwest's best singers and songwriters.

The 1993 performance was supposed to be a one-time event, but the audience's response was so enthusiastic, the band members continued to appear together while pursuing their solo careers.

"We got really, really great audience response and people were asking us when our next gig was going to be, so we decided we better do this again," Kemp said.

Since band member Katie Henry moved to Chicago in 1997, the

band only gets a chance to play together once or twice a year.

"The band's on extended hiatus," Kemp said. "People have followed our individual music careers and they get pretty excited when the four of us all come together."

Their last show in Eugene was in April 1998, and due to popular demand, their reunion concert has become an annual event.

The Babe's three to four part harmonies keep audiences coming back for more.

"The harmonies seem to be the thing that really have given us our name," Kemp said. "That's what we're more known for, when our four voices sort of collide into one voice."

"We bring a song to the group that we can hear being 'babe-sized' and we'll work it out."

The Babes have performed at the Eugene Celebration, High Sierra Music Fest, Oregon Country Fair and Willamette Valley Folk Festival.

They've also toured in Seattle, the San Francisco Bay Area and Portland.

They have released two CDs, both recorded at the WOW Hall. The 1995 release, "WOW Live Babes" and 1997's "Live Axe" are available at CD World, Face the



courtesy of Babes With Axes

The Babes with Axes' three and four part harmonies are highlights of any show.

Music, House of Records and other local music stores.

The "axes" in their band title refers to their instruments. Kelley plays bass, Deidrich is on keyboards, Henry plays the banjo and Kemp is on guitar, while all share their voice on stage.

Their mutual respect is noticeable on stage and is what keeps

them in touch when they're not.

"[We have] a real respect and love for each other's music, and a respect and love for each other as people. We're really good friends," Kemp said.

Babes with Axes are performing at the WOW Hall tonight at 8 p.m. Doors open at 7:30. Tickets are \$8 at the door.

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Caroling Madness



courtesy the Calamity Carolers of Doom

The Calamity Carolers of Doom will premiere an all-new holiday musical satire, "A Christmas to Forget," tonight and Friday at 8 p.m. at the Lord Leebrick Theatre, 540 Charnelton St. The kooky Carolers celebrate and satirize "all things Christmas" through four-part, a cappella parodies of traditional holiday music, original "twisted" carols and other musical excesses. The Calamity Carolers include composer/arranger Greg Bowers of Portland, and Scott Hossner, Susan Schoaps and Jennifer Stark, all of Salem. The show skewers subjects ranging from crass holiday commercialism and politically-correct spirituality, to Jane Fonda and Julia Child. It also features the spectacle of a Motown-singing Christmas tree and a "you've-got-to-see-it-to-believe-it" Scottish bagpipe fantasy. The show climaxes as the Calamity Carolers' ill-equipped, out-of-date "stupor computer" threatens to destroy the entire production, Y2K-style. Due to some adult material, parents should leave their kids at home with the sitter. Tickets for the shows are \$10 general admission and \$8 flex price. Advance tickets for the Calamity Carolers of Doom show are available by calling the Lord Leebrick Theatre box office at 465-1506.

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