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## Sisqo to join Barbie on the toy shelf

Welcome, fair readers, to the first weekly local and national music news round-up, which pays dotting homage to savvy former Rocket columnist **Johnny Renton**, who, incidentally, is welcome over at the house for a drink anytime. The Rocket and Renton's column sparked my interest especially in indie and northwest rock when I was a wee lad.



**Jeremy Lang**  
The Be-In

This inaugural voyage begins last Thursday at **Built To Spill's** sans-set-list gig at the WOW Hall. The improvised order helped the band play inspired renditions of songs such as "Car," "Carry the Zero," and "The Source," along with **Talking Heads** and **George Harrison** covers, before closing with an obligatory 10-minute jam session. But the band's decision also prompted a pathetic barrage of song requests from the crowd, most of which the band patiently, gracefully ignored — especially the tired antics of one man asking for "Free Bird" — in part because so many song titles were yelled at once, the rabble became unintelligible. Eventually, one sarcastic fan yelled, "Please play every song you've ever done," prompting a chuckle from the otherwise reserved band members. But the verbal pounding continued even after frontman **Doug Martsch** announced the band would devote the last 20 minutes of its set to the songs "they had to play," finally causing one fan to loudly announce he was amidst the worst crowd ever. At times, the claim was hard to refute. Crowd

antics aside, **Built To Spill** are still the **Rolling Stones** of Northwest indie rock and still the closest thing to a jam band Mr. Lang can tolerate, let alone love for an hour and change.

Speaking of **Rolling Stone**, the magazine's Web site featured some wonderful insights from the Energizer Bunny of pop music herself, **Stevie Nicks**, about her new album, "Trouble in Shangri-La."

"It's a little less mystical and a little more clear, because I was trying to be very clear. I wanted to make sure this time around that this was a very understood record," Nicks said, clearly.

A year has actually passed since **Sisqo** rapped his way into our hearts and souls with his anthem to love at first sight, "Thong Song." His follow-up album and opportunity to escape one-hit-wonderdom was released last week, and Mr. Dragon revealed that a **Sisqo** doll will also be unleashed on toy stores soon, an idea he first considered quite corny. "But think about it," he told **Rolling Stone**, "if somebody asked you, 'Can we make a doll out of you?' would you really say no?" Sadly, Mr. Lang would have to. No word on whether the doll will come with your choice of thong color accessory.

The weekend brought a mass pilgrimage up I-5 and over to the Gorge Amphitheater for **Radiohead's** only Northwest appearance. Amid snubbing states like Oregon with uncivil venues, the band took time out to lend their voices to an episode of **South Park**, airing July 11, in which the band somehow becomes a linchpin in Cartman's plan to pass off someone else's pubic hair as his own. The "Amnesiac" track "I Might Be Wrong" will also appear on television promotions for the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City.

Other news from the Emerald City area: Last week **Jennifer J. Lopez** turned Seattle upside down

with her visit to the fair town for a movie shoot, resembling the hoopla when Latin heartthrob **Benicio Del Toro** stopped in Portland and the local media lovingly stopped the presses to cover his every move and sighting in restaurants and bars. The incident has prompted Mr. J. La to question when Eugene will get its celebrity visitor. Maybe **James Caan**? A new **Mark Wahlberg** movie, perhaps?

Or maybe a stop by from **Go-Gos** leader **Belinda Carlisle**, as the countdown continues to her nude spread in August's **Playboy** Magazine. Just goes to show what happens when they let **Fred Durst** into that place. Notice **Carlisle** not referred to as "former leader." The band actually released an album in May titled, "God Bless the Go-Gos." If you also knew that little tidbit, congrats; you also know too much about music in general.

Finally, from the TV side of things, MTV is still reeling from the news that its show "Fear" gained both zero fans and Emmy nominations. Wanting to assure that an MTV series doesn't bomb again, the network has signed up for a sure-fire hit called "Skirts" starring none other than **Paula Abdul**. Casting is underway for the pilot, which (gasp!) will be about cheerleading and dancing. **Abdul**, who will play the cheerleading coach, told **Entertainment Weekly** the show will mix the sexiness of "Baywatch" with the drama of "Melrose Place." Forecast calls for scattered showers of Golden Globes.

Best bet for live music this week: **Kelly Joe Phelps'** swampy blues performance Saturday and Sunday at the **Dexter Music Festival** will be the perfect medicine for those feeling the blues in the wake of **John Lee Hooker's** death last week.

Jeremy Lang is an associate editor of the Emerald, and probably listens to **The Dandy Warhols** more than he should. He can be reached at [jlange@gladstone.uoregon.edu](mailto:jlange@gladstone.uoregon.edu).

## Bar scene

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With the students gone, she added, more of the "regular Eugene people" come out.

"Years ago, when I was actually in college, I probably would have liked it less," she said. "Now, I almost like it better."

"I find that refreshing, actually. There's a lot more interesting conversation."

**Chase Fairbairn**  
co-owner,  
Max's Tavern

Self-described "seasoned drinker" **Bruce Knoll** said while he isn't going out more than usual in the summer, he appreciates the more "mellow" atmosphere around town.

Knoll, a senior, said with the exception of a few downtown bars, the bar scene seems to slow down over the summer. But Knoll said he enjoys the change of pace at his favorite campus bar, **Rennie's Landing**.

"Campus is laid back," he said. "It's nice."

While there are fewer students around during the summer, business is still pretty good, said **Tim Shipley**, a bartender at **Taylor's Bar and Grille**.

"It dies a little bit, but it's not



Jessie Swimeley Emerald

**Joggers** overflows on Tuesday night with a crowd of people watching the souls brave enough to karaoke.

bad," he said. "A lot of people go to summer school."

And when the weather's nice, he added, people tend to drink more.

Some crowd-drawing specials at **Taylor's** include \$1 well drinks from 9-11 p.m. and \$1 microbrew beers from 9-10:30 p.m. on Tuesdays. On Thursday, all domestic beers are \$1 for ladies.

Down the street at **Max's Tavern**, co-owner **Chase Fairbairn** said his business drops about 15 percent over the summer. But, he said, because he has a lower cost of labor over the summer, he doesn't mind the drop in sales too much.

And with many students gone for the summer, he said, the crowd changes as well.

With more graduate students, locals and University professors coming out to the bars over the summer, "you end up with a more interesting class of folk," he said.

With summer school, he said, many of those attending are serious students — and their intellectual presence often makes for lively bar-room discussion.

"I find that refreshing, actually," he said. "There's a lot more interesting conversation."

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