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Pledge allegiance to the Presidents

The Presidents of the United States of America hit the road and CD racks after a five-year hiatus

BY AMY LICHTY
SENIOR PULSE REPORTER

In 1995, The Presidents of the United States of America exploded onto the music scene with smashing, catchy hits such as "Peaches," "Lump" and "Kitty." Now, 10 years after their self-titled album hit the airwaves and put this Seattle-based trio on the map, The Presidents of the United States of America, or simply PUSA, are back and ready to rock the socks off of everyone they come in contact with. Lucky for those in Eugene, this is one of their stops.

PUSA have been touring across Europe to promote their newest CD, "Love Everybody," which includes their latest hit, "Some Postman." They're back in the States to play a few shows down the West Coast, including both Portland and Eugene before heading back to Europe next month. But for tonight, brush off "Puffy Little Shoes" and "Kick Out The Jams" because PUSA will be rocking at WOW Hall.

After a five-year hiatus, PUSA, whose members include vocalist and two-string basitar player Chris Ballew, guitarist Dave Dederer and drummer Jason Finn, have been out celebrating their comeback as a fun, "absurdist rock" band. During the break, each member dallied in his own projects, teaming up with members of other bands and even collaborating with

each other and "Baby Got Back" rapper Sir Mix-A-Lot for a project called Subset. In 2000, they recorded and released "Freaked Out And Small" on MusicBlitz.com, but that record, which Dederer described as his "favorite Presidents' record," seemed to have gotten lost in oblivion. PUSA didn't perform live for almost five years.

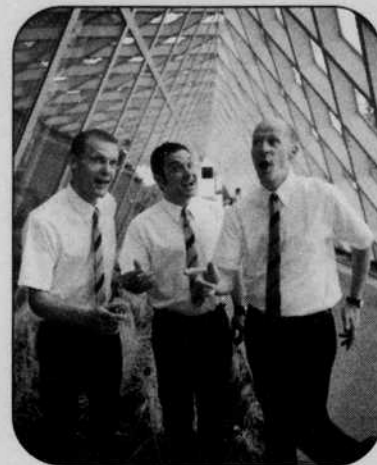
Now they're back and ready to rock and roll for all of the fans out there, old and new. Surprisingly, there are more new fans around than they expected.

"We're seeing mostly new people," Finn said. "We're constantly blown away by how young our fans seem to be. I mean, we have our fair share of people who used to be around back in the day, and we're seeing a lot of people who say, 'Hey, you were my first concert back when I was in sixth grade!' But there are a lot of young people out there, especially in Europe where our fans seem to be a lot of teenagers."

But for the old fans, there's no need to worry because they still take pride in being the same goofy, fun-loving, jokester rockers that shot to the top when the primary music leaking out of Seattle was grunge rock.

"I don't think we've changed very much," Finn said. "Our newest record is very similar to our other records."

One thing that has changed is that "Love Everybody," which was released



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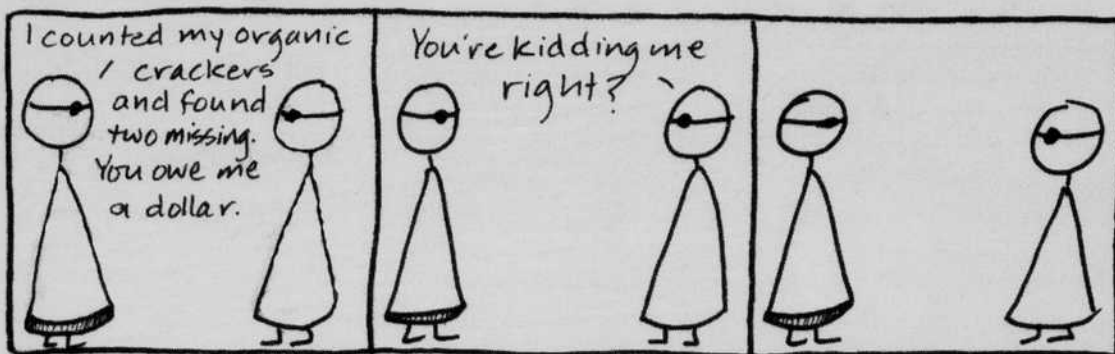
in August, was the first album to be re-released on the Presidents' own record label, PUSA Inc. Since then, the Presidents have re-released and re-mastered their self-titled album, making it a "Ten Year Super Bonus Special Anniversary Edition (with bonus DVD)," as well as re-releasing "Freaked Out And Small" on their own label, which has given the Presidents some much-needed freedom.

"We have control of our own destiny now, so there's no pressure to when our next record is going to come out," Finn said. "We're just enjoying taking it at our own pace."

But fans can rest assured that they have plans for a new album once their tour has come to a close and they've taken a few months off. Until then, be sure to catch The Presidents of the United States of America at WOW Hall, 291 W. Eighth Ave., tonight at 8 p.m. Opening for PUSA will be Eugene's own alterEGO and Portland-based rock band The Village Green. Doors open at 7 p.m. and tickets can be purchased for \$18 at the door.

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Heads up Penny



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