

# Homecoming

Misty River joins a great lineup this week.

It's an exciting week of folk, funk and blues here in Eugene. These upcoming shows are guaranteed winners so check 'em out. **Misty River's** June 4 show at the Hult Center will debut songs from their brand new CD, *Willow*. Misty River is four women with Eugene and Portland connections. UO grad Carol Harley plays guitar, banjo, ukelele and mandolin and taught at a 4J school before relocating to Vancouver, Wash., where she now lives. Accordionist Dana Abel lives in Eugene and attended South Eugene High School, as did Harley's daughter Laura Quigley, who plays acoustic bass. Guitarist and fiddler Chris Kokesh lives in Portland.

*Willow* is an appropriate name for a CD that shows the foursome branching out from their traditional Americana roots, like a healthy, spreading tree reaching for the sky. While staying true to their powerful vocal harmonies and fresh bluegrass/Americana arrangements of original and traditional songs, the group has melded new rhythms, such as the song "Homegrown Tomatoes," a Guy Clark song updated with reggae and swing grooves. *Willow* is a great collection of songs that feel very comfortable together. One of my bluegrass favorites, "Shady Grove," is well done, as is Irish traditional tune "These Are My Mountains," and Dave Carter's song "When I Go." There's the deeply personal as well, such as "Baird's Lullaby," written for Abel's new baby, and "Box of Lace," a Kokesh-penned award-winning song about love and family.

The Misty River women, though they might not live in the same town, have an amazing connection on stage and never leave an audience dissatisfied. Their take on traditional forms of American music is loving, warm and generously shared.

**Tracey Grammer** and special guests will perform two shows at Cafe Paradiso on June 4 and 5 to benefit Friends of KRVM, a support organization for Eugene radio station KRVM 91.9 FM. Grammer forged an intense musical partnership with the late

Dave Carter, but she has continued to erect her own folk career. Calling herself an interpreter and an instrumentalist, Grammer was born in Homestead, Fla., and raised in Southern California in a musical family. Her cousin Leo Fortin played trumpet in Lawrence Welk's band. Her mother and grandmother played keyboards and accordion, and her father played lap steel and electric guitar, which was what developed her ear for harmony. At 9 Grammer began classical violin and choral training, which she continued until her college years. She iced those dreams while earning an English degree, then during a semester off her father introduced her to Curtis Coleman, formerly of the New Christy Minstrels, who invited Grammer to perform with him at coffeehouse shows. She realized that her abandonment of music left her empty, and she welcomed it back into her life.

Grammer met Dave Carter at a show just weeks after moving to Portland in 1997, and their music magic began in earnest. The duo recorded three albums together. Grammer's goal now is to continue to share Carter's musical vision by performing his songs and the songs they were known for together.

John Henry's will host **Leo Nocentelli** on Friday. Nocentelli is a fast-fingered funky guitarist who rose to fame as a New Orleans funkster and lead guitarist of the legendary Meters, who were awarded the Grammy's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2001. Nocentelli was the sole songwriter on such eternal hits as "Cissy Strut," and "Look A Py Py." With other writers, he's credited with song triumphs like "Hey Pocky Way." Over the years, he has added a wide range of musical styles to his repertoire, performing blues, jazz and hip-hop, but always remaining true to the spirit of his early days. The Meters are highly respected musicians among their peers, and artists from across genres have sampled Nocentelli's music into their own songs.

Nocentelli will appear along with **Little Hercules**, a Colorado-based funkified band that specializes in self-described "greasy grooves."

Blues fans take note: **Curtis Salgado** is in the house! The McDonald Theater that is, on Saturday. He has a brand new CD as of March 2004 called *Strong Suspicion*, and on it he explores his soulful side. He gives his songs the full Memphis-style soul treatment, such as on the Beatles' gem "I'll Be Back." As always, Salgado bases his work in the blues, and he puts his own stamp on whatever song he's performing, whether it be his own song or one by someone he idolizes. On *Strong Suspicion* he sings the Bill Withers song "Who Is He (And What Is He To You?)." Guest performances by slide guitarist Sonny Landreth and singer Bekka Bramlett give this album another layer of interest. Salgado himself has been known as a stand-out harmonica player, and on this album he lets it shine.

Luna will host prominent finger-style guitarist **Buster B. Jones** on Saturday. Raised in Ames, Iowa, Jones never took formal guitar lessons, he just plugged away at it, teaching himself. Now, he's considered a legend, and he's passing his knowledge

onto one of our own, Brooks Robertson, who won the recent talent contest on Keillor's "Prairie Home Companion." Jones is called "The Machine Gun" because his fingers are lightning fast, and though he's mastered the stylings of Chet Atkins, Merle Travis and Jerry Reed, he's put his own recognizable spin on his technique. He is also the producer of 10 teaching videos for Stefan Grossman's Guitar Workshop.

In Eugene, when it rains good performances as it does this time of year, it pours. Visit the Cozmic Pizza stage Sunday for **The David Nelson Band**. Since 1994 Nelson has been combining "healthy doses of psychedelic country, blues and bluegrass with an improvisational style." Nelson is revered as a founding member of both The Wildwood Boys and New Riders of the Purple Sage. With both those bands Nelson was an early architect of that "San Francisco sound" we still love today. It's Nelson's vocals you hear on the inimitable NRPS song "Panama Red," and he performed with Jerry Garcia Acoustic Band on their recording *Almost Acoustic*. And he contributed sounds to classic Grateful Dead albums *American Beauty*, *Workingman's Dead*, and *Aoxomoxoa*. **EW**



The women of Misty River play the Hult, June 4.

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