SWAMP THING

Eugene's **The Sawyer Family** has been crafting blistering tales of death, murder and suffering since 2001. The psychobilly-cum-swampy-stoner-metal act has seen lineup changes, growing pains and years of touring since its early rockabilly days, elevating themselves into a genre-defying monster.

As tends to happen at home, though, this act often goes unnoticed.

On the road, however, The Sawyer Family is a force to be reckoned with. Having performed more than 400 shows, hitting nearly every state since 2009, the boys have rubbed elbows with bands like Mondo Generator, Koffin Kats and more. Catching the ear of Grammy-nominated producer John Custer (Corrosion of Conformity), they began work on their fourth full-length album, simply titled *Sawyer Family.*

The latest LP is something of a new beginning, the first to showcase their revamped sound with bassist Zach Sawyer at the helm instead of previous frontman Seth Sawyer (of Beast of Eden). The result is a viciously tight-riff rockin' affair, as well as a nearly flawless introduction to the second era of one of Eugene's most unique and underrated acts.

Hear The Sawyer Family's new album live along with local grunge metal act **Dirtclodfight** and punkers **Xboyfriends** 9:30 pm Saturday, Aug. 29, at Old Nick's Pub; $5. 21-plus. — *Joshua Isaac Finch*

HEAVY LIGHTNESS

When your band is named **He Whose Ox is Gored**, people are going to have preconceived notions about what you sound like.

"We started having that post-hardcore influence, a little bit of doom," guitarist Brian McLelland tells *EW.* The up-and-coming Seattle quartet is touring in support of its latest release *The Camel, The Lion, The Child*, out now on Bleeding Light Records.

But McLelland says it would be wrong, despite HWOIG's epically dark name, to pigeonhole them as a metal band.

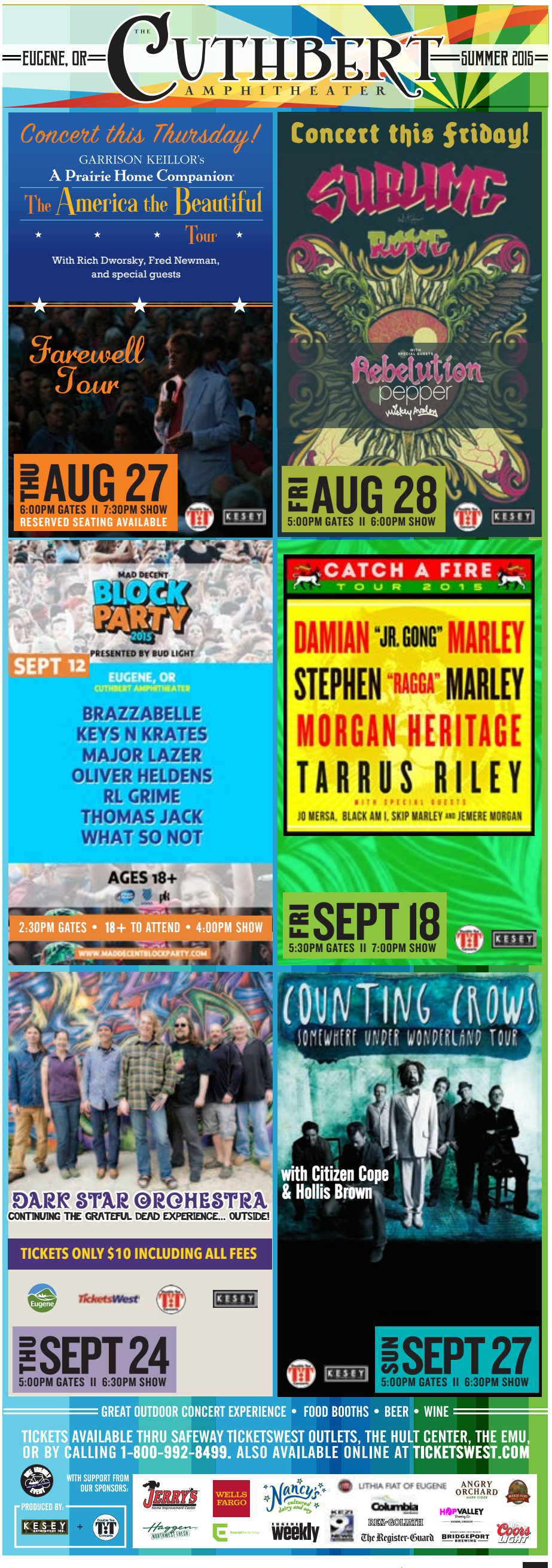
"As a guitar player I have a lot of influence from different metal bands — all kinds of different heavy stuff," McLelland says.

Listen to HWOIG and hear complex time signatures, angular grooves and the drifting, lilting but nonetheless powerful voice of Lisa Mungo. Think the science of Radiohead, the atmosphere of Cocteau Twins and the exhilarating headache of At The Drive In. "We are also big fans of horror movie soundtracks," McLelland adds.

Surprisingly, McLelland says HWOIG started out with more lighthearted intentions. "We were a little bit more like party rock — pounding beers, shredding riffs," he says. "[Lisa Mungo] grew up with a huge amount of knowledge. I realized I wanted to do more than just be in a garage-rock band. We realized we wanted to push it and incorporate more influences — up our game a little bit."

And, of course, heady musical complexity brings comparisons to prog rock.

"We like a lot of different kinds of music," McLelland says. "We also listen to Yes and Rush — classic prog. I'm also a big fan of bands like These Arms Are Snakes and Botch, a lot of that Northwestern stuff."

"You get those prog-like elements of odd time signatures and angular energy," McLelland continues. "For me it comes from bands like that instead of traditional prog stuff."

He Whose Ox is Gored plays with **paleons**, **Moro** and **gazelle(s)** 7 pm Saturday, Aug. 29, at The Boreal; $8. All ages. — *William Kennedy*