

Country comes to Side A Brewing

Wes Youssi & the County Champs plays Aug. 26

By John Vollinger

Go! Magazine

LA GRANDE — As summer continues to wind down in its scorching fashion, come cool down at Side A for the weekly iteration of the Side A-lley series.

For the second-to-last show, the brew-pub, 1219 Washington St., welcomes Wes Youssi & the County Champs on Friday, Aug. 26, 7:30 p.m.

Based in Oregon, the band will bring a lively show of original country compositions to the stage for a night of upbeat entertainment. Describing the touring process, Youssi “plays bars, sweats hard and meets all kinds of great people along the way” and this is the type of outlook and energy which

ensures a fun time for all who are willing to come out to the show.

Other members of the band are Don Lawry on drums, Jesse Cunningham playing steel and electric guitars, James Sasser providing electric bass and vocals, Steve Moore on lap steel and Chris Olson on upright bass.

Wes and the band will, more likely than not, stick to a primarily country sound — one that promotes a positive atmosphere and a groove that is hard not to dance to. You will find this even on songs like “Devil Woman” and “Into a Bottle” where the subject matter tends to drift into darker themes and images.

For example, take the song “High Time,” which considers the importance of airing troubles so that we can revel in them and reach some sort of peace.



Robert Delahanty/Contributed Photo

Wes Youssi and The County Champs plays Friday, Aug. 26, at Side A Brewing in La Grande.

As Youssi sings in the song, quite poetically: “Facing hard times, I can’t explain, a million little fires running wild in my brain, and I’m so tired can’t hear myself thinking, I work this thing out, lord, a’shoutin’ and a’singin’.”

He has a great skill of complex storytelling in his lyrics with great economy of words. In the song “Cadillac Man,” Youssi paints the picture of a man who is in love

with Cadillacs his whole life, starting from an accidental encounter with one as a young man — I won’t spoil the story, but it’s definitely a fun tune.

For some further examples of the band’s sound and style, head to their website (wesyoussimusic.com) or plug the band’s name into YouTube, where they have some great examples of their live performances.

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