

Side A welcomes Calico Bones

Their Aug. 12 show is part of the Side A-ley concert series

By John Vollinger

Go! Magazine

LA GRANDE — On Aug. 12, welcome Calico Bones to the colorful line up of musical acts participating in Side A's Side A-ley series. The music starts at 7:30 p.m. at Side A, 1219 Washington Ave.

In town from Walla Walla, Washington, Madison and McKenzie — the two members comprising the group — will grace the patio. As the band, the duo play “folky originals and interesting covers from many eras.”

Interesting covers indeed — perusing YouTube, you can find the group covering



Calico Bones/Contributed Photo

The duo Calico Bones plays Friday, Aug. 12, for Side A Brewing's summer concert series. The music starts at 7:30 p.m.

such songs as Dolly Parton's “Jolene” and “House of the Rising Sun” by The

SIDE A-LEY CONCERT SERIES

Where: Side A Brewing's back patio, 1219 Washington St., La Grande

When: 7:30 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 12: Calico Bones

Saturday, Aug. 20: Megan Alder

Friday, Aug. 26: Wes Youssi & the County Champs

Friday, Sept. 2: Staci & Co.

Animals. This latter cover, rather than being a direct rendition, certainly has the unique folk feeling that the band strives for; there is a slower, deliberate pacing to the singing, and there is more variety in the backing instrumental volumes in there version, compared to the driving music of the original, leading to a bit more of a dramatic appeal.

Aside from this, the harmonizing of the pair, which is one of their truly defining characteristics, allows for much more interesting fluctuation in sound and tone of the vocal sections.

The band self-describes as having “tight knit harmonies with rhythmic instrumentals and flowing passionate melodies” and this is truly an unavoidable

characteristic of their songs and style.

Though there can be any number of combinations of stringed instruments in their hands — acoustic guitars, a bass guitar, a mandolin — one constant will be the harmonizing vocals of the two. This harmony shows the hours of practice the two must have put in, as “tight knit” is truly the best phrase to describe it. Although the pitch must obviously differ for the two, their timing is truly immaculate.

For a sampling of their original recordings, search for some of their songs from their album, “Salt of the Earth,” on YouTube. There, you will find a collection of songs that really live up to that title.

As a starting place, listen to “Daddy's Makin' Gin.” This song exemplifies a major thematic focus of theirs — the love and awe of nature — and also showcases some of their harmonic prowess, with them both singing simultaneously at times, but also with one singing while the other adds a soaring harmony devoid of lyrics. This evokes, perhaps, the wind blowing through the natural scene, or maybe the flowing freedom felt by the subjects of the song.

Definitely give them a listen, and drop by Side A to hear them live.



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