

Parish teens 'band' together to rock out at festival



Airborn members are (left to right) Mark Ogila, Doug Moore, Mel Ona, Rich Buck and drummer Mark Kehrig.

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

PITTSFORD — One band seeks its fortune in the skies, while the other has its feet planted firmly in the ground. But both groups of Rochester musicians are in the music business for the fun of it.

Airborn and Green are two rock 'n' roll bands scheduled to play at Festival 89, the first festival for the Church of the Trans-

figuration June 9 and 10. Transfiguration's fest will provide the two bands a chance to show off their distinct musical styles.

Airborn favors playing other artists' material, explained Mel Ona, guitarist and lead vocalist, and a senior at McQuaid Jesuit High School. Potential fans can expect to hear some current hits from Guns 'n' Roses, or "Twist and Shout" with the Beatles. Older fans might like their Chuck Berry renditions.

The five-member band also plays one original, "We Can Make It," an optimistic song about friendship, Ona said. Written by Rich Buck, a McQuaid senior, the original has a soft-rock feel to it, Ona noted.

Originals make up most of Green's earthy, folksy repertoire, commented bassist Chris Burrows, a sophomore at Pittsford-Mendon High School and a Transfiguration parishioner. The four-member band derives its style from such folk/rock groups as The Grateful Dead and 10,000

Maniacs.

The Maniacs, a Jamestown-based group that rose to national prominence in 1988 with its version of Cat Stevens' "Peace Train," provide a role model for Green's lead vocalist, Stephanie Sayers, a Pittsford-Mendon junior. Like the Maniacs' vocalist Natalie Merchant, Sayers helps write the band's material, and the band as a whole "picks up a lot from the 10,000 Maniacs," Burrows said.

Playing original music can be a difficult route for an up-and-coming band to take, Burrows explained. "We've played a couple of Grateful Dead songs, and all of the

people say, 'Why don't we play more?' but we like to write our own songs," he added.

Despite their risk-taking, the band has only played to appreciative audiences, Burrows said, noting that Green has appeared at such Rochester nightclubs as Idols and the Renaissance Theater. Their performance at Idols was the band's favorite, he said.

"There were a lot of people there, and we played really well," Burrows said. "(Idols) offered us to come back and play again, but they're closed down, so that'll never happen."

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Members of the band Green relax after performing at Pittsford-Mendon High School last Wednesday, May 24. From left to right are Chris Burrows, John Stone, Stephanie Sayers and Erik Angerhofer.

Notre Dame, Elmira What is your view of protests by students in Beijing, China?

JOHN EPPERS, junior:

I believe that the student protests in China will be a giant step toward national policy and political changes. The students are conducting a historical event: worthwhile protests for democracy. They are engaged in a non-violent group effort, and this will play a major role against harsh counterattacks. I hope that the students achieve their goals.



AS TEENS SEE

JENNIFER SAXE, senior:

I feel that the actions of the Chinese students and demonstrators are very admirable. I am not sure how much they will actually accomplish, but I find their desire to express themselves very courageous.



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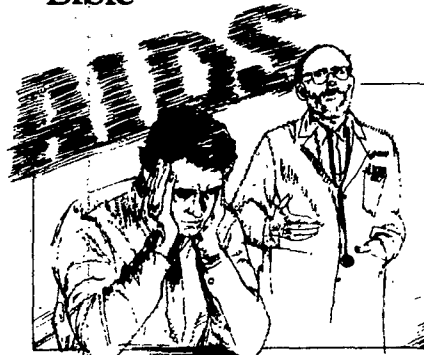
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