

# Dreaming big



## Thousands of 'garage' bands are hoping for that one big break...Georgetown's Thunderhawks is one of them

**Story by Michael Burton  
Photos by Chris Payne**

Small town boys with big time dreams. Thunderhawks— five talented Georgetown boys who play an addictive mix of pop, punk and rock and roll.

What sets them apart from your typical band? Well, they have a bit more on their minds than settling down and jumping into the 9-to-5 grind.

Sitting still is the last thing this hard-hitting Georgetown pop-punk band wants to do.

"I would like to push this as hard as I can," said Jeff Richards, lead singer and frontman of Thunderhawks. Richards passes an acoustic guitar to bandmate and longtime friend Mitchell Dunn, and chats about where he'd like to see Thunderhawks go.

"I personally need a backup plan because that's how I was raised. If Thunderhawks did get 'picked up,' I'd leave school no problem," he said leaning back in his chair, staring at the sun through his jet black Ray Ban sunglasses. He is 22 and attended George Brown College for hospitality, and is now applying to York University.

Richards explained that getting "picked up" would be support from a major music label. It could include a recording and distribution deal, as well as the services of a professional booking agent to help organize concert tours. The problem? Record deals don't come easy since there are so many great bands across Canada.

The band has gone through member changes but has kept the same stylized pop-rock sound they've become known for. The band first began recording and playing shows in 2008 after contacting now current lead singer Richards. Many of the members were already playing together— they were just on the hunt for the perfect singer. They found Richards through friends, and Thunderhawks became a full band.

On this warm Saturday summer evening Thunderhawks are preparing for a gig in Cambridge. They toss jokes to one another and goof off just like any group of boys should. They are cool bunch of friends— very hip, but relaxed. All the members are handsome yet scruffy, with most of them letting their five o'clock shadow grow into patchy beards. They have effortless style and a general likability, something that pairs well with being in a rock band.



**Top: The Thunderhawks are, from left, Mitchell Dunn (guitar/backing vocals), Rory Gaskill (guitar/ backing vocals), Jake Loewen (bass), Jeff Richards (lead vocals) and Dylan Warskett (drums).**

**Above: Jeff Richards lets loose.**

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