

Rock the Hills: Georgetown will be rocking on Saturday

By Neil McKenzie-Sutter
Special to The IFP

This year's Rock the Hills concert festival is the largest event of its kind in Halton Hills, and organizers are expecting more than 800 attendees—an increase from 650 attending the inaugural event last year.

Rock the Hills takes place at the Georgetown Fairgrounds on Saturday, Aug. 22—gates open at 3 p.m. A variety of activities are planned, including bubble soccer (4-7 p.m.), colour fight (7 p.m.) and more, but the music, which kicks off at 3 p.m., is the main attraction.

This year the event features headliner bands Young Empires and Virginia to Vegas.

"We're really excited because this is the first summer we're getting to headline festivals like this. I think it's quite an honour to be asked to headline a festival like this," said Jacob Palahnuk, bassist for Young Empires. "We go wherever the music takes us. If that area's getting us radio play and we have some demand there, of course



Rock the Hills hosts James Gunn and Jessica Teske have a little fun while planning for the 2015 event.

Photo by Curtis Papetti

we're going to play live."

But a major goal for Rock the Hills is to get local youth performers exposure on a scale they're unlikely to find elsewhere in Halton Hills, and include local groups are Small Towns, Standby, The Maysides, Silvercreek Folk,



Cheap Date, Sanjay B., Erica Knox, Of Gentleman & Cowards and John Muirhead.

"It (Rock the Hills 2014) was amazing," says Ryan Keane, 18. He is part of the committee planning Rock the Hills and a member of Casual Disaster, another local band on the bill.

"To have our community there and embrace our music scene as a whole, and to have your friends all there... it was just amazing to be up on the stage and performing for people."

"You're a small band in Georgetown, and you're used to playing small little gigs," Keane said, but last year his band played alongside Hollerado,

an internationally-renowned Ottawa band which headlined for Rock the Hills last summer.

"Here these guys come to our small town and everyone knows who they are, people know their music. That's who you want to be. And getting to play with them is just crazy. And getting to meet them and realize that they're just guys."

All local musicians at Rock the Hills are under age 21, so this will be the largest show many of them have performed at, he added.

Rock the Hills also offers practical experience for young people interested in learning about the business side of the music industry. Along with a few community organization partners and adults, the Rock the Hills organizing team is mostly made up of local youth, aged 13 to 19.

"Looking at the finer details it's not like a high school project; we are signing big deals with this festival," says James Gunn, 18, in charge of Ticketing and Public Relations for Rock the Hills.

"There's not many high-school-aged students that are running an

The Lineup

3 p.m. John Muirhead
3:25 pm Sanjay Baboolal
3:50 p.m. Erica Knox
4:14 pm Of Gentlemen & Cowards
4:50 p.m. Standby
5:25 p.m. Silvercreek Folk
6 p.m. Small Towns
6:35 p.m. Cheap Date
7:10 p.m. Casual Disaster
7:55 p.m. The Maysides
8:40 p.m. Virginia to Vegas
10 p.m. Young Empires

ad campaign for festivals or really for anything within their community, so that's something that Rock the Hills lets us do. As teenagers we're taking on real world goals, but on a scale that's not too corporate or too large. We're able to work right within our home town."

Tickets are available at www.rock-thehills.ca or in Georgetown at the Silvercreek Cafe, Pat's Deli, or the Mess Hall Pouterie, as well as Roxy Cafe in Acton. Cost is \$30 per person or \$50 for two people.

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