

# Arts & Entertainment

## Music

# Keep an eye on Liquid Sky

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Getting your own band together is one thing, winning out over eight rival outfits at Toronto's legendary El Mocambo Club is quite another.

Earlier this year Liquid Sky, a local group whose founding members met at Stouffville District Secondary School, walked away from the club's Battle of the Bands with top honors and 20 hours of recording time under their belts.

And that was a heady experience for Chris Gagnon, Mike Van Ryn, Mike Logvinoff, Shane Stapley and Megan Butcher. "You had to have at least 15 tickets sold for the show to get a spot," explained lead guitarist Van Ryn.

"We showed up with 49 tickets sold and found out that we had brought in the biggest audience." The band was given a 35-minute spot "to do whatever we wanted and play anything we liked."

Contestants were judged on originality, crowd participation and entertainment, which gave the band a golden opportunity to perform its own repertoire. "We chose to do all originals except for one cover," Van Ryn noted.

Taking the top spot was no mean feat for a band which had been formed just two years earlier. "It started off in 1992 with me and (drummer) Mike Logvinoff, when we decided we wanted to put together our own band," explained keyboardist Chris Gagnon.

"I thought we could ask Mike (Van Ryn) because he's a guitarist, and he ended up bringing Shane in to play bass." Initially, Stapley had set his sites on rhythm guitar and was reluctant to switch to bass, said Gagnon, but he has since adapted beautifully to his role.

Megan Butcher turned out to be a natural choice for lead singer. "I heard she had a good voice and asked if she would like to try out," Gagnon recalled.

The lineup completed, the band's next task was to select a name. Many options were considered and rejected, and the final choice was culled from a cult movie that none of the band had actually seen, said Van Ryn.

Once the name was agreed upon, the band was eager to get out and perform. "Our first show was the concert in the park with Dirtweed."

Organized by local teens and their parents, the immensely successful concert took place at Memorial Park in Stouffville and gained Liquid Sky an enthusiastic local following.



Photo/BRUCE STAPLEY

Liquid Sky members Chris Gagnon, Megan Butcher, Mike Logvinoff, Shane Stapley and Mike Van Ryn.

"After that our shows were pretty sparse, it was more just practising and working on songs, trying to get our stuff together," Gagnon observed.

"We had a show in the Goodwood Lions Club and a lunch-hour show at the high school and we played a couple of songs at one assembly." Liquid Sky recently performed at The Shamrock in Toronto and its next performance is scheduled for May 13.

"We'd headliners for the Strawberry Festival and we still have to pick other bands to support us," said Gagnon, adding that the band's style encompasses an

eclectic mix which doesn't fit into one specific genre.

"We mix a lot of different things: alternative, pop, goth, industrial funk, acid jazz, soul and some harder stuff, with our own little thing added to it."

Liquid Sky has released a compact disc which has received airplay on a number of radio stations, including CFNY and Q107. "It's available at Stouffville Sound, and also at HMV and Sam's downtown," Gagnon said.

With another recording session this month, the band looks set for an exciting and challenging future.

## Get your dancin' boots on for line dance fest

Two local dance instructors have joined forces to present an exciting dance event in Markham.

Angela Tucker, Director of the York Region School of Dance and Bunny Burton, are presenting the first ever Line Dance Country Festival at the Markham Fairgrounds on Saturday, May 28.

Participants will attend dance workshops during the day on square dancing, folk dancing, clogging, line dancing and country line dancing featuring some of the finest teacher/dancer/choreographers in country and line dancing today including Diane Horner, most well-known from her popular line dance instructional video tape series.

Horner will be flying in from Minnesota for the event.

There are also numerous vendors waiting to show you the latest,

greatest new fashions and accessories for country and line dancing today.

In the evening, our experts will entertain you with demonstrations of their own unique dance discipline while you enjoy a down-home barbecue feast prepared by Occasions Catering.

Then you will have your chance to get onto the dance floor and dance the night away to music provided by Footloose Niteclub.

Tickets for the full day per \$45 per person or if you wish to attend the fundraiser dance only tickets are \$25 per person. Proceeds from the dance will be donated to the Whitchurch-Stouffville Mobility Transit Service.

For more information about this event or to obtain tickets, please call 640-6567 and ask for either Angela Tucker or Bunny Burton.



Photo/SJOERD WITTEVEN

## Close encounter

Asha Hendrickson accepts a blender as a gift from the 'martians' who landed at Orchard Park Public School for Maze Days this week.