

Be a Big Brother



it's kids stuff.

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WHAT'S IN A NAME? MARKHAM BAND TAKES INSPIRATION WHERE THEY CAN GET IT

Ariel's Worm gets excellent exposure on teen TV show

BY ROBYN JOFFE
Special to The Liberal

Ariel's Worm got its name from a dog. The pet, belonging to Markham band members and founders Mike and Jennifer Strype, was named Ariel after *The Little Mermaid's* heroine. When the poor thing got worms, the brother and sister suddenly had a name for their band.

"People say it's disgusting," Mike says. The band was formed a year and a half ago and started out as a brother/sister act. Mike wrote all the songs, played the music and sang backup, while Jennifer was the lead singer.

Now, while Mike still writes all the songs and Jennifer is still the lead singer,

there are three other members in Ariel's Worm: Jordan Cooledge, Mike Stocco and Vince Villa round out the group.

"People who come to see us live love it, we do a great show, Jennifer's just all over the place," Mike says. "We put on a good show."

The band has played clubs like Lee's Palace, The Horseshoe Tavern and The El Mocambo in Toronto.

Six months ago, Mike sent a demo tape of Ariel's Worm in to John McCullough, music supervisor for television shows such as Dawson's Creek, Party Of Five and Time Of Your Life.

I haven't been in this long enough, but while your heart's in it, put in all you can. Do it while you're young.

McCullough selected the song Beginner's Luck from the 12 tracks listed, and it was heard on this year's American Thanksgiving episode of Dawson's Creek during the opening scene where Jen Lindley and Pacey Witter are talking in a supermarket. Dawson's Creek airs on Mondays at 9 p.m. on Global and Wednesdays at 8 p.m. on The WB.

Not bad for a band that doesn't even have a label yet.

But they aren't worried about the small details. They're always adding new songs to their repertoire.

Mike says he gets two or three new ideas for songs each week and, out of those, usually comes up with 10 polished songs per month.

He says that, although he sometimes writes songs for people or situations he's seen, Beginner's Luck was actually writ-



Band members of Ariel's Worm, from left, Jordan Cooledge, Mike Stocco, Jennifer Strype, Vince Villa and Mike Strype. One of the band's songs was recently featured on the television show Dawson's Creek, and the band has appeared at venues like Lee's Palace, The Horseshoe Tavern and The El Mocambo.

ten for the first season of Dawson's Creek. But he says he prefers writing the personal songs.

"The personal ones are the ones that stick with you."

He can still write from personal experience without writing a personal song.

"Bumpy Ride is about drunken idiots at parties and how annoying they can get."

He's happy with the way Ariel's Worm is progressing. "Hopefully, (we'll) just play a lot of gigs, have people just come

to shows, build a fan base."

Ariel's Worm can be reached by e-mail at arielsworm@villagemaze.ca and it has just started its own website, which will be up soon.

When asked to give advice to other struggling musicians, Mike laughs.

"I haven't been in this long enough, but while your heart's in it, put in all you can."

"Do it while you're young. Don't give up either, everyone's going to have critics, that's who you learn the most from."

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Markham youth group active in community

BY JENNIFER KEE
Correspondent

Grade 11 and 12 students from Middlefield Collegiate Institute are hosting a charity food drive for the Markham Food Bank.

The drive, which began Dec. 1, is due to the dedication of the members of the

Markham Youth Leadership Program, a new credit course in the school initiated by vice-principal Steve Shantz.

It's the first in a series of community events initiated by the students.

"We've dropped off gift-wrapped boxes at No Frills, Fortino's and the Milliken Mills Community Centre," says

16-year-old Farnida Halani.

"The idea was to not limit the drive to the school and to raise awareness and spirit in the community as well."

The drive is expected to last until today in the school and to Dec. 23 in the community.

And the enthusiastic group has big plans for the upcoming year.

They aim to visit shelters and help serve food to the less fortunate, and they're cleaning up town parks and collecting the tabs from pop cans that will eventually give someone a wheelchair.

BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Since they have discovered that so many kids are not eating breakfast before they go to school, MYLP has also started a breakfast club that involves the surrounding feeder schools.

In association with the feeder school idea, the students are talking with younger kids about issues they'll face as they grow older.

Topics like bullying, high school, racism and assertiveness will be covered in seminar format.

At the end of all this community involvement, MYLP will host Synergy 2000 in May, a conference where students integrate everything they've been doing over the last few months.

"So far, teenagers have a bad image in the community and we want to change that perspective by showing that we are good citizens that display leadership," says Halani.

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