

The Current just wants to have fun

SATURDAY SPOTLIGHT with Tom Lounges

For the last three years, The Current has been crackling loudly and brightly throughout Northwest Indiana. The veteran Chicago rockers find that playing a collective of Hoosier clubs is a satisfying lot in life.

"We all did the Chicago scene and we all did the original music thing. It was great at the time, but honestly, what we're doing now is the most enjoyable thing yet," said bassist Jeff White. "We've all got families and jobs now, but we still love music and we still love playing. This band is just about having fun. We're best friends ... "

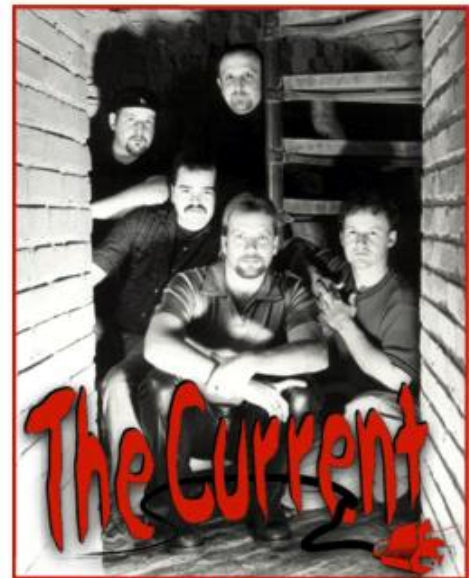
Except for drummer Darrell Westmoreland, who joined two years ago, the other four members are founders of The Current. For two of them -- lead guitarist Shane Coursel and keyboardist Jeff Gajewski -- the musical road began years earlier when they were part of a popular Chicagoland country band called Border Town, which won major talent contests and opened for such top-name artists as Clint Black, Neal McCoy and others.

After spending the late '80s and early '90s touring with the Chicago hair metal band Ragz To Riches, White likewise settled into playing country music as "a hired gun" with local country icon, John Kuiper.

Weary of "cry in your beer" music, Coursel and Gajewski put together a rag tag combo and started playing pop/rock covers in the keyboardist's basement. By the time they were ready to take a name and play out, White and rhythm guitarist Cary Thomas (a transplanted Texas cousin of Coursel's) had officially joined the fray.

The band has discussed writing and recording original music, but for the time being it remains talk. It'd be misleading to say we are doing original songs, because though we've talked of it, we only have two originals," said White.

"We're a cover band and we're happy playing songs that people like, that the club owners like and we like," he continued. "Shane and Jeff G. are the two primary singers in the band, but Cary and I each sing lead on a couple songs here and there. We all sing harmony, so we can pretty much do any song out there having so many different voices in the group."



www.partywiththecurrent.com

The Current repertoire draws from hundreds of songs culled from four decades of popular music. "We can do a show where 80 percent is stuff from the last few years like Santana's 'Smooth' or 'Cowboy' by Kid Rock, or something by Collective Soul," he said. "Or if the audience is older, we can do a whole show of classic rock." The material in the classic set runs from the '60s to the '80s.

Gajewski maintains a Web site for the band at www.partywiththecurrent.com for those wanting more information.

"That (Web address really kinda sums it all up," said White. "If someone asks, I just tell them we're a great party band. I think anyone who has seen us would agree with that. We're all about one thing -- having fun and making sure that those who come see us have fun."



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