

The JOURNEYMEN Still Pack the House

By Jan Murray

"The Journeymen' is a well-known name to many in the area. A local band whose roots go back to 2001, when Jeff Countryman and Greg Molson first got things rolling. Their style of music familiar to most in the area can range from old & new country to old and new rock and roll with a few surprises thrown in the midst as well.

What matters to them, and to their faithful following, is that they play what their audience wants to hear, and they play it well. To sit back, close your eyes and revel in the music, one would be hard pressed to separate their vocals from those of the original artists, which is quite a talent especially considering the vast array of music that they play.

They've seen a couple different bass players, and are on their second drummer, but their music has remained constant over the years. Countryman and Molson have been with the group since the beginning. Drummer, Brian Collins has been with them almost three years now and the newest member to the group is bass player Mike Francis who came on board just about a year ago.

"Even though we don't hang out together outside of work, you get attached to one another." Molson explained, "It is definitely a relationship. So when one person says they have to move on, it's difficult."

Guitar player, Molson noted, "We are definitely a lot tighter than we were." He continued, "The focus on work is different as there are not quite as many places to play anymore, as there was even ten years ago."

In the slower months, the band plays once, maybe twice a month, giving the boys some time to rest and recoup preparing for the busy summer months ahead. Although it is their choice, Molson admits, "Summer can be very busy; sometimes every weekend, but usually three times a month."

They are quite comfortable in places such as Woody's Place in North Augusta; small but not too small, local and yet not restrictive. The boys were able to kick back, relax and perform for their crowd just like they were sitting in a living room full of close friends having a good ol' jam session, and the crowd ate it up.



"We have fun when we're playing," explained Molson.

Drummer, Brian Collins confirmed, "I am right where I want to be."

Countryman who plays guitar and does vocals, summed it up nicely. "This really is as far as it goes for us. We're not song writers and all that stuff." We're not doing our own original material. We're a bar band, and we're having fun. This is as far as it goes for us."

Each in agreement that as long as they can make people have fun and dance; have them come up to them at the end of the night and say, "Hey, we had a good time," maybe ask for some business cards, then they are quite content that they have done their part.

Countryman added, "This is my main hobby. I don't want it to turn into work, 'cause once it does that, it's not fun anymore."

"We don't take ourselves too seriously up there. We just like to have fun. We don't try to pretend that we're something that we're not." Said Molson. "We play the songs that we want to play and that people want to dance to. It could be an old George Jones song and then go right into a Tragically Hip tune. It's whatever keeps them dancing."

Collins chuckled, "as far as doing originals songs, we don't do them, "or people wouldn't be here tonight! We play what the people want to hear." LH