

# A fresh look at the area's BEST BANDS

BY ELLEN S. WILKOWE

DAILY RECORD

come to the Daily Record's annual best bands edition. In a slate approach designed to highlight new talent, we asked readers to recommend Morris area bands that have never been featured but should be.

result? A well-rounded lineup of cover bands and two originals. Now check them out.

## House Call

### HOUSE CALL

John Abato: Lead and backing

John Stark: Keyboards, lead and backing vocals

Tom Johnson: Guitar, lead and backing vocals

John Stark: Bass, lead and backing vocals

Steve Steup: Drums

www.housecallband.com

myspace.com/housecallband

Now playing: Feb. 20, Pioneer Bar Grill, 350 Warwick Turnpike, West Morris, (973) 853-0140

**Behind their scene:** Twenty milligrams of Blondie. 50 milligrams of Duran. 10 milligrams of Smith. Refill often.

Adult children of the decade of elegance, House Call prescribes its audience a serious dose of '80s pop rock.

The combined talents from previous bands — including the equally '80s Crazy Frankie Goes to Englewood, Chucklehead and Bitter Blue — House Call is symptomatic of a "big musical love triangle," keyboardist and vocalist Karen Stark wrote in an e-mail.

"We were all teens in the '80s, so all of the songs that we play are a big part of who we grew up to be," she said.

The Sussex County Emergency Workers' Day inspired their doctor/nurse get ups, while hours of brain surgery resulted in the name House Call.

"Easy to spell, hard to forget. And good for what ails ya," Stark said.

**What they play:** Consider this a shout-out to the original MTV generation. Rewind to Blondie, Devo, Pat Benatar, Duran Duran, Pretenders, not to mention "quintessential crowd pleasers" like The B-52s' "Love Shack," Tommy Tutone's "867-5309" and The Knack's "My Sharona."

"Our objective is to throw an amazing '80s party," Stark said.

**What you say:** "The whole band is great and they really have a captivating show ... they don't just play and get off," said fan Brett Roberts of Stockholm. "Back in the late '80s, early '90s, I used to go see the Nerds and Hyperactive in Morristown and this is the closest thing I have seen to them to date."

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## GROUP THERAPY

John Smith: Lead guitars, vocals

Chris Boiko: Keyboards

Joe Corcoran: Bass guitar, vocals

James Garde: Sax, flute, vocals

Mark Fabyanski: Drums, cowbell

www.grouptherapyband.net

Now playing: Feb. 13, Allendale Bar and Grille, 67 W Allendale Ave., Allendale, (201) 327-3197

**Behind their scene:** Three members of Group Therapy began playing together at a church they all attended in Bergen County. Mark Fabyanski, Joe Corcoran and John Smith later recruited two female singers, responsible for the band's name.

"One of the girls had a really bad day and during rehearsal she said, 'This is like group therapy,'" Fabyanski said.

With roots in Bergen County, the band recently acquired a large Morris County following, particularly in Long Valley, home to Fabyanski and front man James Garde, who adds flute and sax to the mix.

"My wife and I are active in the community and we just spread the word," Fabyanski said. "She's my best PR person."

**What they play:** A bizarre mix ranging from one-hit wonders to anything from the '60s, '70s and today. Think Steppenwolf, Beatles,

Eagles, Springsteen to "American Pie."

"The nostalgia genre, songs that people remember, something like prom night or their first beer," Fabyanski said.

**What you say:** "A 'cancel all your other plans and let's get a sitter' night out when these guys are playing," wrote Leah and Bobby Grause of Long Valley. "A cover of Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band's 'Sherry Darling' that will blow you away."

## BIG BAD IRISH

Dave Murphy: Vocals

Scott McMahon: Lead guitar/vocals

Shawn Murphy: Rhythm

guitar/vocals

Gary Henning: Drums/vocals

Glen Hampson: Bass/vocals

www.bigbadirish.com

www.youtube.com/bigbadirishnj

Now playing: Feb. 7, Tavern off the Green, 127 Morris St., Morristown, (973) 644-0006

Feb. 21: Hennessey's Washington Tavern, 140 Morris St., Morristown, (973) 292-0400

**Behind their scene:** Despite the name, "we don't play Irish music," but they have enough Irish blood — cousins Shawn and Dave Murphy, plus Scott McMahon, to own the namesake.

"The drummer (Gary Henning) and bass player (Glen Hampson) are



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