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THE MIX

THEY SAID IT

MARC CHAGALL: In my youth, poverty enriched me, but now I can afford wealth.

HOMECOMING 2001

COMING home

Hootie and the Blowfish return to USC to play for alma mater

BY ADAM BEAM
THE GAMECOCK

If you ask drummer Jim Sonfeld what he thinks about his band's upcoming concert at USC, he'll say it isn't the bicentennial Homecoming that excites him or that thousands of college girls sent him letters begging him to come.

"I'm really just looking forward to playing a damn show," he said.

After the terrorist attacks that shocked the nation, along the rest of the world, on Sept. 11, Hootie and the Blowfish canceled several shows. But now it's time to get this rock show back on the road.

"It's been a while," Soni said. "We had one charity show recently, but, besides that, it's been nothing but cancellations."

Hootie and the Blowfish, which also includes lead vocalist Darius Rucker, guitarist Mark Bryan and bassist Dean Felber, will perform its first concert in Columbia in more than a year and a half on Saturday as it plays host to a

"big tailgating party."
"We just figure that we're going to do our first appearance in a year and a half, we're just going to blow it out," Soni said. "No sense teasing ourselves and everybody else."

Fan mail frenzy

The Homecoming Commission has had plans in the works for about a year to bring Hootie and the Blowfish back for the bicentennial Homecoming.

"We thought it would be a really good tie into the whole theme with Homecoming and bringing alumni back, and, it being bicentennial, we just thought that Hootie and the Blowfish would spark up the crowd and get everyone a little hyped up for Homecoming," Homecoming Commissioner Katherine Veldran said.

After the band rejected an offer to play a 30-minute set at Cockfest, executive

Homecoming director Shelly Crawford came up with an idea to start a letter-writing campaign to entice the band to play.

Crawford thought poetic verse might also convince the band, so she put together a series of poems that were sent to Soni's house, including such lines as, "I would rather hear YES! And tell everyone the news, / 'Cause if you say no, I'll be singing the blues! / The

Carolina Community wants to hear your band / We want all the good songs like 'Hold My Hand!'"

Veldran said: "She started writing them poems just convincing them to come. They were cute little poems, and that started the whole process."

Mostly women were recruited for the letter-writing frenzy. Student activities director Mike Duncan said: "We just thought it made more sense. We thought it would be more attractive to four men to get a bunch of letters from women saying how much they loved them and how much they wanted to see them on campus."

Needless to say, the plan worked.

After receiving more than 2,000 letters from more than 17 campus organizations, Soni said the band was "a little more eager to revisit the idea of playing a gig."

About her success, Veldran said: "It feels pretty good. I'm proud of the commission and how the student body came together and all the different organizations wrote letters, and [Hootie] thought it was flattering."



Hootie and the Blowfish will play tonight at the State Fairgrounds at 7 p.m. PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK

Carolina Connections

One of the first times Soni played with Hootie and the Blowfish was at a 1989 Carolina/Clemson game.

"To have our gig on a game day is pretty powerful for us," he said. "It'll be a nice reunion."

The concert will be on the South Carolina State Fairgrounds. The gates will open at 2 p.m., and the concert will start at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$10 at the gate.

While the band is waiving artist fees, ticket prices will cover the stage crew, sound and lighting costs. Fifteen percent of the ticket sales will go to the Student Life General Scholarship fund.

Bryan, Felber and Rucker met in the honeysuckle of Moore during their freshman year at USC. Sonfeld came in through a connection with Bryan after the two had classes at the Coliseum.

Soni said that, after being influenced by WUSC and local rock clubs such as Rockafellas (now Jake's), Hootie and the Blowfish went mainstream with its 1994 album, *Cracked Rear View*, which sold 16 million copies.

Since then, the band has fallen from the top of the charts, but plans to head into the studio in January to record a new CD - some of which might be previewed on Saturday.

"Yeah, we'll probably play a few new tunes on Saturday," Soni said, "test out the new material in front of a live audience."

The university's 200th anniversary wasn't a deciding factor in the band's decision to play, according to Soni.

"It's a huge deal, but we'd probably do it any year," he said. "It's our alma mater. Any year on the calendar, and we'd still do it."

USC LIFE

Our fear is a win for evil



DENISE LEVEREAUX
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If you're anything like me, you're getting scared. With each case of anthrax the CDC discovers, another layer falls on the veil of unreality. Every time I turn on the television, some stubborn part of me rebels and yells, "This isn't happening — not here, not to us!"

More than a month later, it's still here, and it's still happening. We say we're trying to work around terrorism, to overcome it as if it were a mountain to climb over or a rock to walk around. We tend to think of terrorist activity as something finite and tangible. We tend to think we can put it in a box when we're tired of thinking about it.

Unfortunately, that's not the case. Terrorism is more like a fog, a cloud, odorless and colorless. It can get in underneath the door, through the keyhole. It comes in through the faucet when we run a bath. It comes in with the blaring alarm clock at 7 a.m. It comes out in our dreams; it hangs around in those moments right before we fall asleep. It's getting into everything, and we might as well start calling American culture terrorism culture.

We can't help but be scared. When we see people dying and there's nothing we can do, we get scared. When something happens we don't expect and can't control, we get scared.

We have every right to be afraid. What we don't have the right to do is let our fear immobilize us. That's what the terrorists seek with any terrorist action. They seek to inspire terror, to undermine our hope, courage and peace of mind. They want us to curl up in our homes and say, "The world's too dangerous; I'm just going to stay here." And, "It's too hard; we can't stop them. If I stay right where I am, I'll survive."

We can't do that. We can't sit glued to CNN, waiting for more bad news. We can't stop living just because our safety is threatened. That's giving in without a fight.

That's letting them win. Every time you say, "I won't get on an airplane because of the terrorist attacks," it's a victory for terrorism. Every time you think, "I might not want to open this letter; it might have anthrax in it," it's a victory for terrorism.

Fear, a psychologist once wrote, is the most motivating emotion a person has. If people are afraid, they are hundreds of times more likely to act to alleviate their fear. In short, we don't like being scared, and we'll do anything to feel safe again.

We can use fear to our advantage. Imagine what we could do with all the energy we spend worrying about terrorism, anthrax and Osama bin Laden. We have to use the fear these people are trying to instill in us — turn it around, refine it and use it to bring them down. We have to keep moving, keep reaching and keep doing. Only that will push back the terrorist lines.

The enemy lines are advancing, and its next target is us. Our confidence. Our peace of mind.

So get up. Get moving. Whatever you do, don't sit still.

A moving target is always hardest to hit.

Levereaux is a third-year student in the Moore School of Business.



DJ Jason Wilson and Interstellar Groove 4 will play the Elbow Room Saturday. PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK

DJ, band to depart from conventional

BY AUBREY FOGLE
THE GAMECOCK

Interstellar Groove 4, local jazz and cover band, and DJ Jason Wilson will have their most important and experimental show Saturday at The Elbow Room.

The style of music is acid jazz. As the band described it, it's a combination "of jazz, funk, electronic rhythms and house music. The four-hour performance will be a departure from the conventional set of both DJ and band. That is, there will be no vocal arrangements and the DJ will follow guidelines to make sure the transition from different keys is well delivered."

Dave Britt, vocalist, guitarist and former member of Dharma Dogs, said: "We brought in a really great house rave DJ. The show's special in that, instead of the DJ following the band, the band follows the DJ. It's a really different sound, and I think a lot of people will like it."

"It's all about exposure," Britt said. The show is the band going absolutely all out, and he is confident people who go to the show will experience something they have never before experienced in South Carolina, he said.

Drew Parker, bassist, said, "There are a lot of people in Columbia that listen to electronic and jam rock, and this gives people an opportunity to see both on the same stage."

"Our basic influences are in-

Interstellar Groove 4

with DJ Jason Wilson

WHEN: Saturday, 10 p.m.

WHERE: The Elbow Room

COST: \$4

dustrial jazz, rock and roll or course, big band and swing jazz. We do a lot of improvisational work, three cord jams, and the DJ influence allows us to do even more improv. It allows him to do his thing and let us follow along, which you don't see much over here," Parker said.

The band is hopeful that exposure from this and other shows will help them.

"We're definitely keeping our eyes open, and we expect a lot more opportunities because of this show. It's such an original act, especially to the Southeast," Parker said. "In addition to the music of this project, there will be enhanced visualizations with intelligent lighting and lasers."

Members of Interstellar Groove 4 are Dave Britt, Dave Amos (former Mountain Express vocalist and guitarist), new member Hartman Meehan (former Irene's Kitchen bassist) and Drew Parker (former Evergreen drummer).

Copies of Interstellar Groove Four's first CD will be available at the show, and a new album by the band with DJ Jason Wilson is expected in the next three to four months.

THE ART OF TRADITION

BY KAMILLE BOSTICK
THE GAMECOCK

Homecoming floats not built in just a day

Two hundred years hasn't dampened the Homecoming experience, and USC's bicentennial celebration is making it even more intense.

Building floats for Homecoming has become an art. Tradition keeps it going, but fun keeps it alive. With preparation, teamwork and Carolina pride, even the wildest displays and most intricate designs become realities.

While tradition remains the theme of Homecoming, the focus this bicentennial year is on making Homecoming events such as the parade more representative of USC as a whole, which means more involvement from non-Greeks.

MONDAY: Framework

While most of USC was enjoying fall break, organizations designing floats were hard at work. Beginning a week's worth of long, fun nights, members started building the skeleton for the float they'd planned weeks before. Shaping chicken wire and assembling supports for their tissue-paper creations was just the beginning, but building a strong foundation is one of the most important steps in float creation.

The theme of tradition is the backbone of the Homecoming celebration. Every participant realizes the history being made, the tradition being followed. Homecoming has always been a chance for students to show their pride and display their school spirit. This task takes on new meaning during the bicentennial, which focuses simultaneously on acknowledging the past and anticipating the future.

Laura Bauld, a member of Chi Omega sorority, understands the connection.

"Building floats and participating in Homecoming is definitely a tradition. But it is extra special this year because of the bicentennial. With so much history, we have all taken it to the next level."

TUESDAY: Teamwork

Making the final adjustments to the framework and sorting through piles of accessories, float builders start to see their vision take shape. It's tedious, but it's a team effort.

Between 50 and 60 people help build floats for their organizations at Homecoming. In fact, a major draw is the chance to bond while representing your organization with a creative and possibly award-winning design.

"There's lots of teamwork involved. It is a good opportunity for team members to network, get to know each other better. Working with your friends makes it fun and much easier," said Bauld, who said Chi Omega partnered with Pi Kappa Phi this year.

"The competition hardly results in any spiteful actions. Everybody has respect for each other's float."

LAURA BAULD
MEMBER CHI OMEGA

The cooperation is evident in every organization. Travis Thompson, student government director of special projects, noticed the way people come together to create a float.

"Working on floats is good for team building. You can see everybody is pulling their own weight," he said.

WEDNESDAY: Crunch time

The atmosphere at 1001 Senate St., where the floats were built, was full of anticipation. The eagerness and energy was as contagious as the floats.

◆ FLOATS, SEE PAGE 6



Brian Maiden adds tissue paper to the Sigma Chi/Kappa Delta Homecoming float. PHOTO BY ANNIE LEE