

# Pat McGee Band to bring new sound to Columbia

BY CARRIE GIVENS  
THE GAMECOCK

The members of the Virginia-based Pat McGee Band are dedicated to making good music, and their hard work and dedication, has paid off in big ways.

The band plays an average of 250 shows a year on stages from San Francisco to Toronto to Hoboken, N.J. The band's busy tour schedule has taken them more than a half-million miles through 44 states.

Band members claim their success is a direct consequence of their work ethic.

Whatever the reason, aspiring musicians could learn a thing or two from the Pat McGee Band.

This Friday, the band will perform at Headliners. Playing Tiger Burn back in the fall, lead vocalist Pat McGee said that the band has been "trying to get back to Columbia for some time now to do

a real club show ... I can't wait."

However, the band members are not only dedicated to their music, but also to their many fans. McGee claimed that is "Band Rule 101."

"To me, if you have fans, treat them like gold. Without them you're back in your basement," he said.

McGee admitted that the band's varied influences show in live performances.

"You get all flavors in one night of tunes," he said.

Their upcoming CD, "Save Me," a follow-up to "Shine," marks a monumental moment for the group. Not only is it their first album under the Warner Bros. record label, but it signifies the band's transition back to their original rock roots.

McGee said "this is a real guitar driven record with a major emphasis on songwriting."

But the band hasn't really

changed, it just has more of an edge, he said. The album is "about authenticity ... we reached deep."

The record features songs such as "Beautiful Ways," about a romance based on lies, and "You and I," which details a man's realization that he has lost the best thing in his life.

Other songs on the album include "Annabel," "Shady" and "Must Have Been Love." One song, "Don't Give Up" was conceived during the middle of a show.

The band has been a growing force on the music scene since its introduction in the late '90s. But the members' musical careers started long ago—all of them have been playing and performing since childhood.

According to McGee, the "band started out of me turning a solo acoustic bar guy gig into a full-band original-music college-touring group."

He added that it "took about a

year to get the first lineup that lasted about four years, then we added Brian Fehino and Todd Wright.

"Both (Fehino and Wright) have brought the band sound to a new level that is (what) we had hoped to sound like after this record was completed."

He admitted that the band never expected the success they have now. We "just wanted to play frats and have fun," he said.

These days, McGee said he is "still in awe that we can still do this ... I hope we can keep on doing this for as long as the fans keep listening."

The band will play at 9 p.m. Friday and, according to McGee, promises to deliver an awesome show that will "bridge the gap between legitimate jam band and pop rock band with songs that make you go 'hmm.'"

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecockfeatures@gwm.sc.edu



PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK

The Pat McGee Band will perform Friday at Headliners'. It is touring in anticipation of its upcoming album, "Save Me."

# Mary Magdalene rides new wave of interest into pop culture

BY MARK I. PINKSY  
KRT CAMPUS

At least once a day, Frances Garcia checks a Mary Magdalene Web site, and most nights she spends at least an hour reading histories and commentaries about Jesus' devoted supporter.

Mary Magdalene "is part of my life," said the University of Central Florida student. "She is what inspired me to know more about Christianity."

Jesus' devoted follower has been inspiring a lot of enthusiasm in recent years. Experts say a confluence of feminism, biblical research and pop culture has placed Mary Magdalene in the front rank of Jesus' first followers, at least for the moment.

"She's one hot commodity right now," said Marvin Meyer, professor of religion at Chapman University in Orange, Calif. "Mary Magdalene is everywhere."

Mary Magdalene is the subject of a boom in scholarly literature,

with at least six new books suggesting roles for her that range from the 13th apostle to a goddess. In 2003, the American Bible Society in New York staged an exhibit of Mary Magdalene portraits.

This wave of academic interest has been propelled into the mainstream by popular fiction. "Mary, Called Magdalene," a historical novel by Margaret George, became a best seller in 2002. The following year, "The Da Vinci Code" burst onto the scene. The fast-paced thriller claims that Mary Magdalene's role as Jesus' wife has been systematically suppressed.

With 6 million copies in print and a sale to Hollywood, "The Da Vinci Code" has sparked numerous Web sites and women's discussion groups. Jesus' devoted follower also has landed on the cover of both Time and Newsweek and on several national television specials. Mary Magdalene is featured in the Mel Gibson film, "The Passion of the Christ." All of this attention points to a dramatic

reappraisal of the biblical figure, who some charge has been marginalized and airbrushed from the story of early Christianity.

"Mary is very close to Jesus, trusted by Jesus, was one of the disciples," said Meyer, author of "The Gospels of Mary: The Secret Tradition of Mary Magdalene, the Companion of Jesus." She was "not only in the inner circle, but maybe the most beloved of all the disciples of Jesus." According to the four Gospels of the New Testament, Mary Magdalene witnessed Jesus' crucifixion and his resurrection, rallying the depressed and disbelieving male disciples.

For 1,500 years, Mary Magdalene was portrayed in art and theology as a prostitute whose life was transformed by Jesus' forgiveness. This was the result of an erroneous sermon preached in 591 by Pope Gregory the Great. The pontiff, misreading the Gospel of Luke, confused Mary Magdalene with another woman described as "sinful." His finding was reversed

by the Vatican in 1969.

"That is a monumental step for the Church to actually admit there may have been a misinterpretation," said the Rev. Charlie Mitchell, pastor of St. Mary Magdalen Catholic Church in Altamonte Springs.

Mary Magdalene "is a woman whose life has been completely distorted down through the ages—for whatever reason," Mitchell said.

Several authors of recent works about Magdalene say they know the reasons.

The second-century Gospel of Mary Magdalene was found in the late 19th century by archaeologists but remained largely ignored and untranslated for 50 years. It is the only account named for a woman and offers a different view of Christianity—one that describes an "interior spirituality," said Karen L. King, author of "The Gospel of Mary of Magdala: Jesus and the First Woman Apostle."

In the Mary Magdalene account,

"salvation is not something that comes from an external savior," said King. "One has to seek salvation within." Thus, the Magdalene Gospel depicts Jesus as a teacher rather than as a savior who dies to atone for humanity's sins.

Mary Magdalene's account is also the "strongest argument for women's leadership" in Christian writings, said King.

"It lets us hear an alternative voice," she said, in contrast with I Corinthians and I Timothy, which urge silence and submissiveness of women.

Because Mary Magdalene may have been a rival to the Apostle Peter, other Gospel accounts with favorable references to her may have been excluded by the male church leaders who compiled the New Testament, according to King and other scholars.

"Mary Magdalene was such an important person in the Jesus movement that the Gospels could not ignore her," said Meyer of Chapman University. "But the

Gospel writers were on the side of the 12 guys, the male disciples."

Lynn Picknett, a British scholar, thinks she knows why Jesus' companion "has suddenly become the flavor of the month" among scholars and lay people.

"I think people are realizing now that the Bible did not arrive by e-mail from God, and that it's very much the work of man and man with his own agenda," said Picknett, author of "Mary Magdalene: Christianity's Hidden Goddess."

There is more, of course, to Mary Magdalene's appeal.

"With Mary Magdalene there is something else going on culturally," said Berger. "It has to do with the veil over her relationship with Jesus, a suggestion of romantic love involved. Our culture is one that cannot imagine life without romance, love and sex."

Yet, she said, there is "very slim historical evidence" of Jesus and Mary Magdalene having a romantic relationship.

# Congratulations

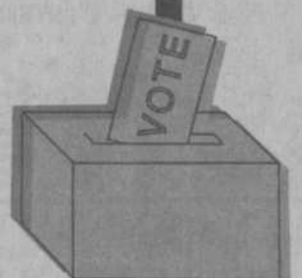
to the new Student Government officers!



**President • Zachery Scott**

**Treasurer • Cameron Burnette**

**Vice President • Run-off Between Yvonne Miller and Mark McLawhorn**



Student Government Elections Run-off  
**TODAY! Vote on VIP by 5:00 pm**

1. Log on to vip.sc.edu
2. Click on the "personal" tab
3. Select Student Body Elections

