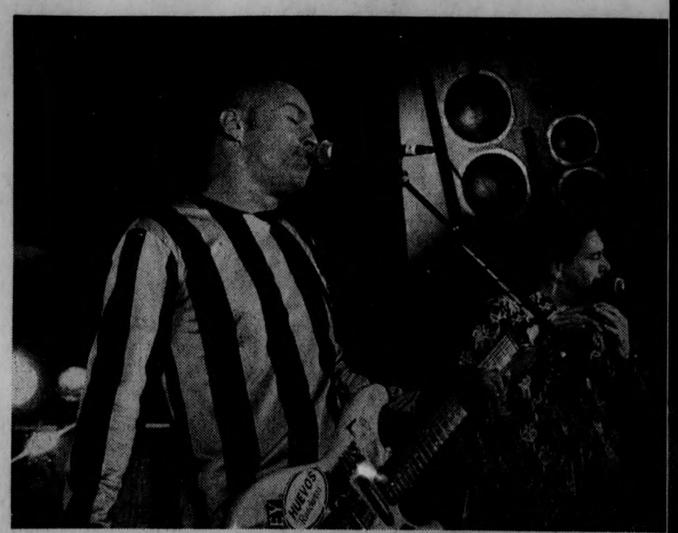
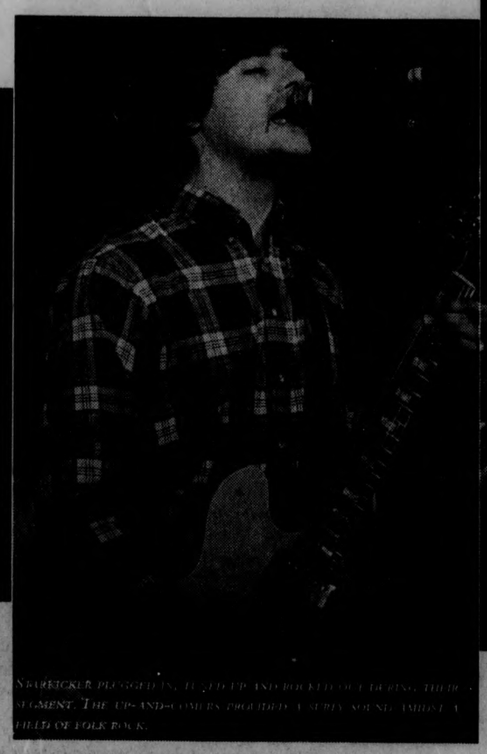
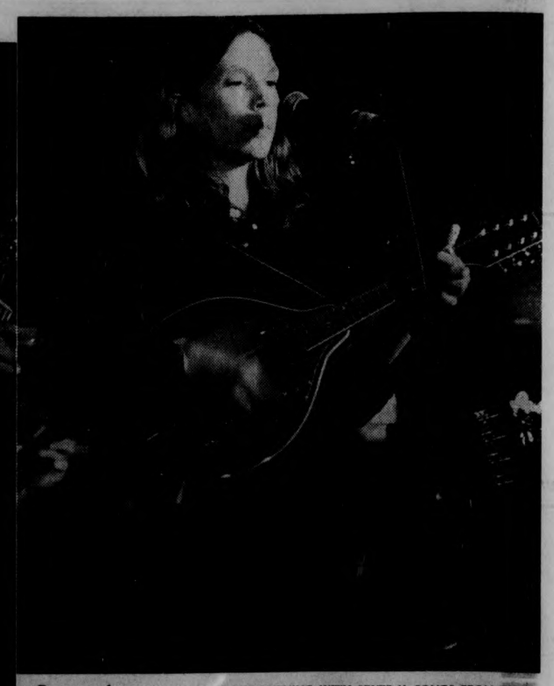
Bands on the run...







DIANNE NORMAN PHOTOS

SPIRIT OF THE WEST EXHILERATED THEIR FANS WITH A TREMENDOUS RUSH OF ENERGY AND THE CLASSIC TUNES THAT HAVE GAINED THEM THEIR FANS IN THE FIRST PLACE.

STARKICKER PLUGGED IN, FIRED UP AND ROCKED OUT DURING THEIR SEGMENT. THE UP-AND-COMERS PROVIDED A SURELY SOUND TWIST TO A FIELD OF FOLK ROCK.

BOOMING AIRPLANES STARTED THE EVENING WITH SEVERAL SONGS FROM THEIR YARN ALBUM. DESPITE A VERY CASUAL ONSTAGE DEMEANOUR, THE BAND STILL ENTERTAINED ON THE STRENGTH OF THEIR MUSIC ALONE.

PETER J. CULLEN
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Sweetwaters opened its doors to the sounds of Spirit of the West on Tuesday night. With opening acts Starkicker and Booming Airplanes, the $12.50 door charge actually didn't seem to steep a price.

The Booming Airplanes, hailing from Nova Scotia, opened the set to a crowd of about fifty. Playing radio-friendly tunes such as "Obviously" and "Silver Lining" from their *Yarn* album, the young group didn't bother speaking much to those present–they simply played their tunes and hoped for the best. Each song was met with applause and good-natured cat calls, but overall the group laid out a good set. However, their lack of stage movement set a dull tone, lessening the amount of variety of each song after a while. But with the talented writing of lead vocalist Mark Savoury, the band should be more captivating by the time their second album comes around.

Starkicker were the oddity of the night. Their brand of music, although not very heavy, certainly didn't fit the blend of folk/rock heard from the Airplanes or headliners Spirit of the West. But Starkicker certainly made a good showing. The band could have benefited by supplying more back-up vocals and emphasizing the harmonies present on *beach album* record, but their enthusiasm and incredibly catchy tunes–especially "Get Up," "Neil Armstrong" and "Merry-Go-Round"–provide a great incentive to pick up a copy of their debut.

By the time Spirit of the West took the stage, the crowd had reached its capacity. But John Mann, Geoff Kelly and company didn't seem to mind a crowd of less than 200. Whereas the Aitken Centre was packed for their Frosh Week concert last year, the band put out probably more energy and enthusiasm than before. Mann is just plain eerie; his eyes seem to be an entity of their own, haunted and independent of each other. He and Kelly refused to disappoint their fans, exerting passion with great fervour. Although their *Two-Headed* album hasn't garnered great sales (primarily due to lack of a true radio/video single), each song from the piece actually sounded much better as SOTW performed it Tuesday night. The upbeat "The Old Sod" and apparent crowd favourite "Home for a Rest," peppered with Mann's quips to the crowd, succeeded in holding interest throughout the show, despite having little place to move about.

The highlight of the evening was probably percussionist Vince Dietrich's falsetto solo. The other band members left Dietrich to entertain the audience with his surprisingly wonderful voice. He also capped off the show with his infamous beer-chugging ability, drawing more applause than anyone else on the night.

While it seemed out of place to witness a SOTW show in such small confines, the $12.50 was probably worth the ticket price. Booming Airplanes and Starkicker are both gaining their footing in the Canadian market, but both have produced great debut albums. Spirit of the West remains a stalwart force among national acts, perhaps as widely recognized as the Tragically Hip. Without an arena to enjoy the groups in question, Sweetwaters was the next best thing. Too bad if you missed it.

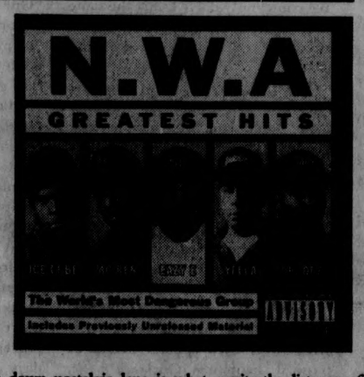
—CD Reviews—

Catherine Wheel are a completist's wet dream. Over the course of their five year existance they have released a huge number of B-sides. This came mostly from their habit of releasing seven different B-sides over four formats for each new single.
At last, those without the means to pursue these obscure British releases now have a chance to catch up on a different side of Catherine Wheel with their new *Like Cats and Dogs* album.

The mood is slower, more refelective. The guitars are less obvious, focusing your attention on the words rather than the glorious noise their guitars have made. It will be quite a shock for those used to *Waydown* and the rockier sound of *Happy Days*. However if you love the "Eat my dust..." track on the latter CD, you'll find this collection right up your street.

An impressive CD. Mostly because it almost sounds like these songs were always supposed to be together.

• NEIL DUXBURY





A hard hitting trip down nostalgia lane is what awaits the listener of N.W.A.'s *Greatest Hits* CD on the Ruthless Records label.

N.W.A. was founded in 1986 by Eazy-E, a former drug dealer and gang member, and others such as Dr. Dre, DJ Yella, MC Ren and Ice Cube.

In 1988, N.W.A. released the album *Straight Outta Compton* . This album was their breakthrough, propelling them to rap stardom. It is often considered to be the most influential rap album of all time. An extended mix of the title track is featured on *Greatest Hits*.

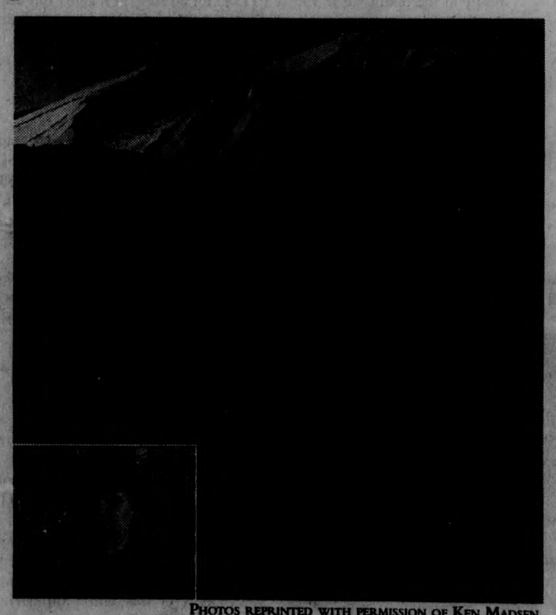
Trouble followed N.W.A. wherever they went due to the controversy about the subjects of their songs and their bold rapping style. Possibly their greatest hit, entitled "Fuck Tha Police," was a smash and had many police groups and the FBI trying to ban their music.

Regardless of public scrutiny, they forged ahead and produced many more classic rap jams. Other hits featured on *Greatest Hits* are "Gangsta Gangsta," "Real Niggaz," "Just Don't Bite It," "Express Yourself," "100 Miles and Runnin'" and "A Bitch Iz A Bitch."

The CD contains 19 tracks in all and features hits from the entire N.W.A. era. It is a great CD for the older rap fans, as well as the new fans as it shows listeners that N.W.A. not only introduced gangsta rap first–they did it best.

• FABIAN MACKENZIE

Yukon environmentalist presents slides and message



PHOTOS REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION OF KEN MADSEN

"THE UPPER ALSEK RIVER": Featured in Madsen's book, the Alsek River is one of the primary areas that Madsen and his associates want preserved. Inset: Ken Madsen.

JUD DELONG
THE BRUNSWICKAN

On Thursday past, Ken Madsen, an accomplished writer, photographer and environmentalist, along with Wendy Boothroyd, a very talented craftswoman, delivered a well choreographed lecture and slide show on their expeditions in the Yukon Territory and British Columbia. The slide show was absolutely vivid with scenes of the magnificent and breathtaking Yukon wilderness and the many creatures within. Many of these scenes and creatures can be found in his latest book *Wild Rivers, Wild Lands*, published by Lost Moose, The Yukon Publishers.

The lecture took the audience through Madsen's adventures through BC and the Yukon, as he and his companions kayaked on the whitewater of the Tatshenshini and Stikine Rivers, hiked up Goatherd Mountain, to their canoe trip on the Alsek River. These were beautiful scenes which enhanced the effect of disgraceful and disturbing elements in the Yukon, an element created by the threat of mining. In his lecture, Madsen stated that mining exploration is quite frequent and very damaging to the northern environment, as poisonous chemicals, equipment and debris are often left behind to cut the expense and trouble of cleanup. The poisonous chemicals are getting into the water and animals are being directly exposed–the effect is undeniably negative. Roads are also becoming more common, destroying area for wildlife habitat, resulting in roadkill and the increased access for hunters.

Madsen is the president of the Friends of Yukon Rivers, and he is also active in the Yukon Conservation Society and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society. He is currently working on several projects which include: the Coal River Watershed, the Tombstone Mountain and Blackstone Uplands, and the Wind, Snake and Bonnet Plume Rivers.

Madsen and longtime associate Juri Peepre (chair of Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - Yukon) have started a campaign known as "Stake the Snake," whereby people across the country are being encouraged to stake a mining exploration claim along the Snake River for a mere $25 deposit. Anyone can do this; however, you must do $100 worth of exploration on your claim of 1500 feet by 1500 feet each year. This project is an illustration of how easy it is for the mining exploration companies to invade such pristine areas and the naivety of the government for issuing permits such as these. More than 70,000 permits have been issued to date.

Madsen is attempting to preserve an area that must be protected, but supporters are needed for this to occur. To get involved you can reach the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society at 380-401 Richmond St. West, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 3A8 (e-mail CPAWS@bob.net) or through Ken Madsen at Friends of Yukon Rivers, 21 Klondike Rd, Whitehorse, YT, Y1A 3L8.

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