

THE BRUNS



ENTERTAINMENT

MUSIC BOOKS CONCERTS THEATRE MOVIES INTERVIEWS EXHIBITS

the listings

Music

Fri 4th
Fat Jebus - Cellar
Fortune's Hand - Dolan's
Mackinaw - Capital
Rock Bottom - Chestnut

Sat 5th
Burt Neilson, Fat Jebus - Cellar
Fortune's Hand - Dolan's
Mackinaw - Capital
Smcer - Chestnut

Mon 7th
Time Beings - Capital

Tues 8th
Chris Nettleton & Co. - Capital

Wed 9th
Grand Theft Bus - Cellar

Thurs 10th
Pub Soda - Dolan's

Special Events

• The UNB Latin American and Spanish Society present LASS Night 2003 Saturday, April 5th at 6:00 pm in the SUB Cafeteria.

• Theatre UNB presents Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, April 1-5 at Memorial Hall. 8:00 pm.

• Stuart McLean: *Live from the Vinyl Cafe*. Sunday, April 6th at The Playhouse. 2:30 and 7:30 pm.

• The Playhouse MOVE! Series presents *Kahuangi Maori Dance: Myths and Legends of New Zealand*. Friday April 4th at 8:00 pm.

• The Queer and Other Folks Dance Committee and AIDS New Brunswick present the *Spring Fling Dance*. Saturday, April 26th. 9:00 pm.

Films

• *Chaos and Desire* screens Monday, April 7th at the Capital Film Society. Tilley Hall 102, 8:00 pm. See preview inside.

Art

• Photographer Noel Chenier's *Three of Thirty Thousand: Children Living in Poverty in New Brunswick* opens at Memorial Hall on Thursday April 10th at 8:00 pm. Rene Cyr's *Pop Acadie* also remains on display in the West Gallery.

• *Nos Voisins* and *Dear John*. Two exhibits on display at Gallery 78 until April 6th.

• *Journeystone* (Sarah Crawley) and *Works in Progress* (Dan Gleason). On display at Gallery ConneXion until April 11th.

• *Natalia Husar: Blond with Dark Roots, Lucille Pillow Collection, and Deichmann Pottery*. On display at the Beaverbrook Art Gallery.

Locations

Bugaboo Pub, 422 Queen
Capital, 362 Queen
Cellar, SUB, UNB Campus
Chestnut, 440 York
Dolan's, 349 King
Gallery 78, 796 Queen
Gallery ConneXion, 453 Queen (back)
Memorial Hall, UNB Campus
NB Fine Craft Centre, 87 Regent
Playhouse, 686 Queen
Tap Room, S-5-366 Queen
Upperdeck, 375 King

** Featured Listing **

Burt Neilson Band w/Fat Jebus

Campus jam band favourites *The Burt Neilson Band* will be returning to The Cellar this coming Saturday, April 5th to rock the house with locals *Fat Jebus*. Although supposedly retired from the touring scene, seeing *The Burt Neilson Band* in concert will help anyone finish off their term perfectly. They are indeed awesome!

Compiled by Amy Batt for The Brunswickan.

To have your event appear in the listings, e-mail bruns@unb.ca or fax 453-5073.

Brothers create hilarious website, and the catch phrases of the future

by Patrick Reinartz

Mike and Matt Chapman are the brothers responsible for what may well be one of the funniest cartoons since Matt Groening brought the Simpson family to television.

Homestar Runner is an on-line Flash cartoon, a medium that has become incredibly popular over the last several years. However, something about Homestar Runner truly sets it apart from the crowd. Not only are the writing and voice acting top notch, but the site is also entirely ad-free, and the characters themselves are just irresistible.

Homestar himself is an armless, marshmallow-loving simpleton whose group of friends includes Strongbad, a giant-headed loud-mouth who always wears a wrestling mask and boxing gloves, and Marzipan who is Homestar's tofu-loving hippy girlfriend.

And where did it all begin?

Mike Chapman told *The Brunswickan* by phone about how he and his brother Matt were taking a break from design work for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta when they made a simple picture book with some funny characters they had created.

"We didn't really do anything with it for three or four years," Mike recalled, "and then when we discovered Flash and the internet, we realized that our current career paths in photography and film probably weren't going to be as lucrative as a computer career."

Homestarrunner.com was born when the pair needed a project to practice their new skills. However, the site soon became much more popular than expected and the brothers found themselves with new jobs: cartoonists.

"Once we had a few cartoons finished, we started to get a good response. For

the first two and a half years or so it was kind of a spare-time deal, but for the past three or four months it's been pretty much full-time."

The site now pays for itself, receiving approximately 150,000 hits daily. It's peak day, however, is Monday when the site is updated with a weekly Strongbad e-mail, where the obnoxious, but nevertheless loveable, character answers fan mail. Mike revealed that Strongbad currently receives an incredible 3,000 e-mails daily.

But what is it exactly that finds entire families huddling around the computer on Monday mornings. Aside from Strongbad, there is of course, the site's namesake, Homestar Runner.

"There's something to be said for just being clueless and innocent in a world that spins around you and you don't really have any idea what's going on. Homestar's in his own little world."

Both characters, as well as almost every other one, are brought to life by the voice of Matt Chapman.

"I think Matt did a really good job with the voices, which I think people like to begin with," Mike suggested.

Mike's girlfriend Melissa also adds her talents to the mix for Marzipan's voice.

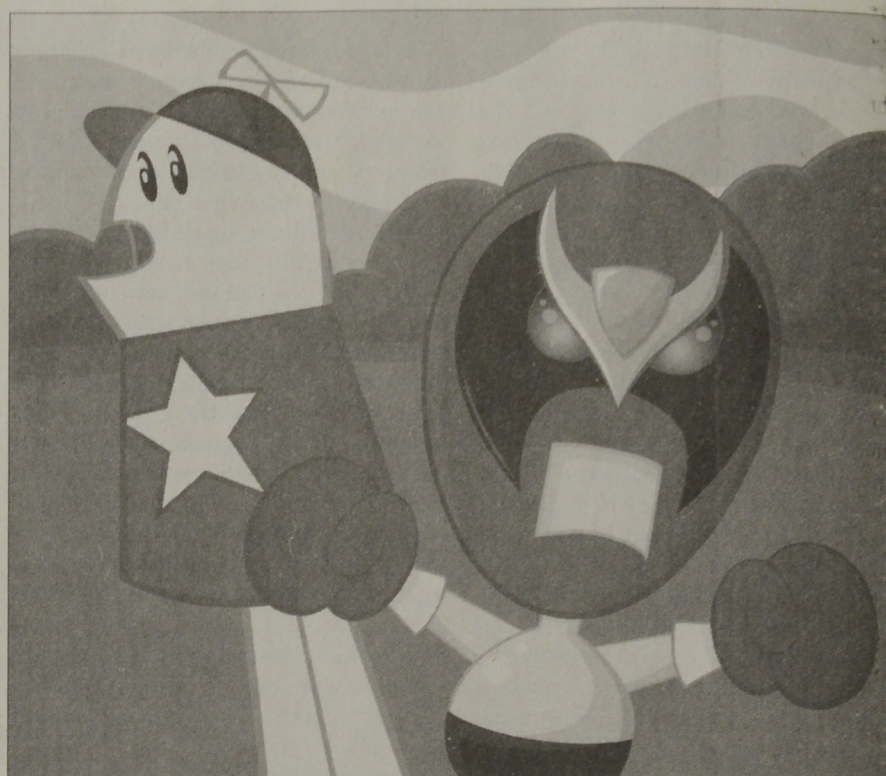
On top of the great voices, anyone checking out Strongbad's e-mails (or any other cartoons on the site, for that matter) will also notice that the writing is as sharp and original as the characters.

"We try to remember that what got the fans there in the first place was that we were just writing this pretty much for the benefit of ourselves and our friends, just doing stuff that we thought would be funny."

The cartoons also come together surprisingly fast, resulting in humour that is far more spontaneous than anything on television.

Mike pointed out that the average Strongbad e-mail comes together in less than 20 hours.

"A lot of the real gold, or what we think is gold, comes from when I sit



www.homestarrunner.com

Homestar Runner (left) and Strongbad hang out in a field.

down to record the stuff and I'm just messing around, talking like Strongbad," Matt added.

Of course, this quick turn-over time and the added pressure of an ever-increasing fanbase also has the potential of backfiring. "We definitely hear about it if a Strongbad e-mail is sub-par," Mike jokingly noted.

Nevertheless, the brothers were determined from the beginning to never rely on cheap laughs. Not only did they want to avoid the distracting advertising of other sites, but also the shock humour that so many of them are known for.

"When we first started doing Flash three years ago, the only thing you could find on the web were South Park rip-offs," Matt explained. "I like shock humour as much as the next guy, but it's just so easy."

That is not to say, however, that Homestar Runner is completely without

edge. Matt cites Ren and Stimpy and The Simpsons as examples of writing that inspired them.

"It forces you to be funnier and make the characters cooler. If Strongbad just told everybody to 'fuck off' all the time, it would be way less funny than the stuff we've had to come up with for him to say to people. It's just kind of a cool by-product that it was family-friendly."

Now that the Chapman brothers have the format down, what's next for homestarrunner.com?

"I think the goal over the next year is to do some more features, maybe featuring some of the other characters, and more of the longer four or five minute cartoons, to give a little glimpse into some of the other characters in the world in a not so Strongbad-centric kind of way," Mike said.

Check out the Chapman brothers' work at www.homestarrunner.com.

Random prevails at Elk's Club

by Bruns Staff

Another year means another totally rockin' CHSR Battle of the Bands. This year's 20-band extravaganza took place at the downtown Elk's Club, which hosted a solid crowd all day long.

Taking home first prize this year was Random, an underdog band from Edmundston. Second and third were scored by Saint John bands Hollow and Naked Baron respectively.

Below you will find the musings of several Brunswickan staffers who were on hand that Saturday. Mini-reviews by Nathan White (NW), Linda Pelletier (LP), Mark Cameron (MC) and Patrick Reinartz (PR). Enjoy!

5 Mile High (LP)

This was a five-piece rock group composed of Jason Lund on lead vocals/acoustic guitar, Jesse Charters on lead guitar, Derek LeBlanc on bass, Dave Innes on rhythm guitar and Jason Berube on drums. Despite having to open the show to a modest crowd, they



Brendan Doyle/The Brunswickan

First prize winners Random at the Elk's Club last weekend.

managed to score the people's choice award, which was voted on by those in attendance.

Unrated Hero (LP)

Another five piece rock band. The members are all still in high school (attending OHS). Nevertheless, their relatively young age did not hinder their ability to pump out a solid rock sound.

Bird's Eye View (NW)

This Saint John-based band is new to the club scene there, and the lack of on-stage experience shows. Vocalist Matt Creamer tried to carry the band by hopping up and down, but couldn't get much life out of his bandmates, who seemed to tire midway through the 20-minute set.

This band shows some potential. Their playing was fairly tight, but they need a few more notches on their belts.

Naked Baron (NW)

Yet another band from the port city, the bronze medal winning band features bassist Brad Higgins, formerly of Happy Medium.

Guitarist/singer Ben Morgan and

drummer John Morrison round out this innovative, funky trio. Morrison is nearly flawless, but the highlight is the Van Halen-esque finger-tapping wizardry of not just Morgan, but Higgins as well.

While they impress with their funky sound and solid musicianship, their attempts at Jimmy Swift-like time changes lack the danceability of JSB. Morgan's singing also leaves a lot to be desired.

Hubsonic (PR)

This guitar-bass-drums trio kicked out some riff-based rock in the style of The Tragically Hip with possibly a bit of grunge influence in the mix as well. For the most part, their performance was technically tight, although the guitar solos seemed unnecessarily long. If anything, this seemed to be the result of the band being almost too comfortable in front of their audience, if such a thing is possible.

L'il Bastard (PR)

The only band of the night with a drummer who also happened to be a lead

Prevail prevails at Social Club

by Troy Neilson

Last Wednesday saw the return of Swollen Members to Fredericton with their appearance at the College Hill Social Club.

The doors opened to a lengthy lineup with rumors of Vanilla Ice being the opening act floating among the crowd. However, the reborn V-Ice man was nowhere to be seen and in fact Prevail of Swollen Members couldn't stop laughing when asked about the rumour.

Starting at 9:30 pm, the growing crowd was treated to the turntable skills of DJ IV from Halifax. Having been deejaying for nearly four years, he's quickly progressed through the ranks and states: "technically, you could say I'm ranked second in Atlantic Canada." The results of the 2003 DMC Competition in Halifax reiterated this statement as the amazing skills of arch-nemesis Skratz Bastid (and his mullet) once again left DJ IV in second place.

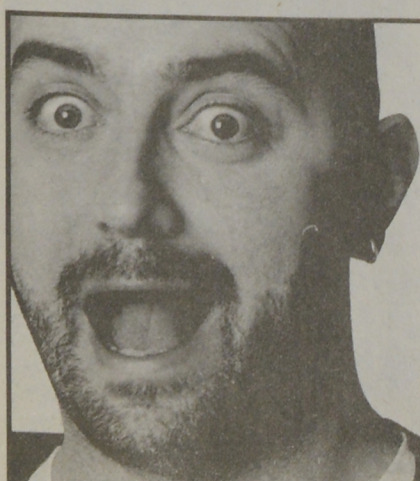
Regardless, DJ IV kept a hungry crowd at bay with a wide selection of hip-hop tunes that got the breakers into a circle.

Not surprisingly, by midnight, a massive crowd of at least 1000 had surrounded the main stage. This can be attributed to the fact that since their last stop in Fredericton, NB, Swollen Members have attained a great deal of success. In fact, their latest album, 'Monsters in the Closet' saw them receive two 2003 Juno Nominations.

As per the norm with hip-hop shows,

(SEE SWOLLEN MEMBERS, PAGE 19)

(SEE BATTLE, PAGE 20)



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