

arts & culture

Christmas Comes Early In Lobby Shows At The Sharon

Residents can celebrate the most wonderful time of the year with a show at 7 p.m. July 25 at The Sharon.

By TAYLOR STRICKLAND
Daily Sun Senior Writer

Get ready to string the palm trees and hang the mistletoe, it's Christmas in July at The Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center.

In addition to the myriad of concerts, plays and standup acts that cross its stage, The Sharon also regularly holds shows in the lobby. The Lobby Lunch and Lobby Lounge Cabaret Series offer unique and engaging performances from in-house artists. Significant Productions, the theater production company that operates The Sharon and The Studio Theatre Tierra Del Sol, has organized a special addition to the Lobby Lounge Cabaret Series.

Hosted by Angie Rose and Ryan Loeckel, this yuletide celebration features The Sharon's music director, Gary Powell, and Sean Pollock on the theater organ and piano, as well as special appearances from local celebrities and everyone's favorite holiday tunes.

"Angie and I are both super excited to bring some fun and jolly holiday music to our audiences at Christmas In July," said Loeckel, company manager for SigPro. "It's such a pleasure performing for the welcoming and supportive residents of The Villages."

Villagers may recognize the duo from The Sharon's "A

Quiet Christmas" event, where patrons took in the serene sounds of seasonal songs and wintertime visuals right in the theater's main lobby. During the concert, Rose stroked the keys while Loeckel played the violin, with each singing on some of the songs.

Now, the performers reunite once again to pay homage to their favorite time of year — only this time, it's decidedly much more uptempo.

"It's going to be a fun and festive time with all kinds of surprises for our guests," said Rose, a former Broadway orchestra-pit keyboard player and conductor. "We'll be performing loads of upbeat holiday music to get you in the mood for Christmas, even in this hot summer heat."

Rose is known in and around The Villages for her individual performances as well as for being the long-time friend and musical cohort of maestro Bill Doherty, music director of the Central Florida Lyric Opera.

WVLG listeners may also recognized Rose from The Breakfast Club, the radio's morning show that she co-hosts with Ray Dal Lago. Rose said Dal Lago will join the cast of stars for the event to play his one-man version of "Tuba Christmas."

"And that's not all," Rose said. "We are expecting some very special appearances from some very special friends direct from the North Pole."

Those special guests will treat audiences to dynamic performances and songs, sing-a-longs, jingling bells, free holiday prizes and giveaways. Rose said she expects that patrons and performers alike will have a "jolly good time" together, and she can't wait for everyone to see what's in store.

Join Rose and Loeckel for the "Christmas in July Lobby Cabaret" at 7 p.m. July 25 at The Sharon. Tickets for the event are \$20. To purchase, go to thevillagesentertainment.com.

Fancy Reagan Reignites Electric Sounds of the '80s

The seven-piece band from Johnny Wild Productions creates a lively, party-like atmosphere during its sets.

By MICHAEL FORTUNA
Daily Sun Staff Writer

You don't need a DeLorean to initiate time travel. Let Fancy Reagan send you back in time to help you relive the bombastic soundtrack from the 1980s. The seven-piece band, based in the Orlando area, is ready to rock out and party to the decade that featured everything from New Wave to glam rock to girl pop.

You can catch Fancy Reagan from 5 to 9 p.m. today at Spanish Springs Town Square and from 5 to 9 p.m. July 21 at Lake Sumter Landing Market Square. Both shows are free and open to the public.

Each musician in Fancy Reagan takes on an '80s archetype character and dresses the part. Guitarist/vocalist Andy Matchett is Brad Pacman; lead vocalist Kari Ringer is Fancy Reagan; lead vocalist Chelsea McLean is Ginger Magic; lead guitarist Zack Van Meter is Professor of Shred; keyboardist Jonathan Meharry is Ace Hobiecat; bassist/synth player/vocalist David Traver is Guy Liner; and drummer Kevin Connolly is Tiger Beat.

Fancy Reagan throws in a lot of the hits from the decade, as well as a few songs that are special to the musicians' hearts.

"It makes for more of a passionate watching and listening experience," Matchett said.

Although it was written in

2003, the band threw in The Darkness' glam rock-tinged "I Believe in a Thing Called Love" to its set list.

"The more we added it, the more people would request it," Matchett said. "When you find someone passionate about something off the beaten path, if you strike a chord, they become lifelong fans."

Matchett is better known to local fans by his onstage alter-ego Johnny Wild. His Johnny Wild Productions consists of his original group, Johnny Wild and the Delights, which specializes in sounds from the 1950s and '60s, and the '80s-themed Fancy Reagan. Matchett is putting together a '70s-themed band called Daisy Fever.

"Our goal is to have a band for every major decade and movement of music," Matchett said.

The idea for Fancy Reagan had been floating around since 2017, but it wasn't until bands started heading back out to play live music after the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 that Matchett decided to use some of the substitute musicians from Johnny Wild and the Delights to start a new group.

The band played its first gig at a driveway party in Sept. 2021, but it wasn't until the following year that the band



Daily Sun file photo

Fancy Reagan lead singer Kari Ringer performs at Brownwood Paddock Square.

found the right combination of musicians. Matchett knew from the outset he wanted a female lead singer, so the band could play songs from Cyndi Lauper and Madonna.

Ringer fit the character of Fancy Reagan to a T.

"This was an era when women could be powerful, they could be in charge, and they didn't have to care about what others thought," Ringer said. "She's in your face. She says what she wants. My hair had fallen off on stage and I threw it into the audience. It's a different feel than the expected demureness of a female vocalist."

She also loves getting to sing songs like Ozzy Osborne's "Crazy Train" or Def Leppard's "Pour Some Sugar on Me."

"As a chick front person, you get to sing some dude rock, too," Ringer said.

When the band came together to rehearse these songs, the biggest thing was figuring out how to end a song that originally had a fade out on the album. Much of the time, the answer was to find videos

of the original bands playing live and hearing how they did it.

Sometimes, to keep things exciting, the band will introduce new songs into the set list that they didn't rehearse together.

"The most electrifying feeling is when they know their parts and it comes together like a magical musical puzzle," Matchett said. "With 'Crazy Train,' we didn't decide on the ending until we arrived at the ending. We ended it perfectly. You all start to read each other's minds."

For more information, visit fancyreagan.com.

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