



Friday, August 6, 2010

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# Currents

RELIGION, PAGE C2

Some advice for interfaith couples

MARKETPLACE INSIDE

Jobs, Rentals & Wheels

## THE SIDEBAR

### Remembering Front Street



The Blue Earth County Historical Society wants your stories about Front Street for a book and exhibit next spring.

Every Friday in Currents we're publishing a new topic for you to reminisce about and submit your stories for the Front Street Project.

This week, the historical society wants your stories about transportation. Do you have stories about the cars that drove down the streets?

Maybe your parents or grandparents told you about the trolleys?

Call 345-5566; or e-mail your story to [bechs@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechs@hickorytech.net); or mail it to Blue Earth County Historical Society, c/o Front Street Project, 415 E. Cherry St., Mankato, MN 56001.

### Top Tens



These are the Top 10 renting video game titles nationwide for the week that ended Aug. 1:

1. Red Dead Redemption — X360
2. NCAA Football 11 — X360
3. Red Dead Redemption — PS3
4. Super Mario Galaxy 2 — Wii
5. Crackdown 2 — X360
6. NCAA Football 11 — PS3
7. Battlefield: Bad Company 2 — X360
8. UFC: Undisputed 2010 — X360
9. New Super Mario Brothers — Wii
10. Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Conviction — X360

### Verbatim

"I certainly felt comfortable when it came to anything cop-ish or action. But with all the other comedy stuff, I just wanted to follow their lead. I basically did what they told me. I'd learn the lines and show up. I was willing to try anything."

— Mark Wahlberg, on acting beside Will Ferrell, Michael Keaton and Steve Coogan in "The Other Guys."

— Free Press Staff and news services

The two faces of

# RED SKY

The bar caters to the martini crowd, as well as the night-lifers

## Night Life Series

By Jake Bohrod  
Special to The Free Press

At midnight on a Thursday, the southern Minnesotan band Parallax returns to the Red Sky Lounge stage with renewed energy after mounting technical issues forced an unscheduled intermission.

Now playing to a larger, looser, seemingly nocturnal crowd, who is feeding as much off the deepening night as the band, Parallax sways and bounces to its own concoction of two parts funk, two parts hip-hop and a healthy dose of bob-inducing slap-rock.

Red Sky live music is go.

Just a few hours before, Red Sky Lounge, located on South Front Street, was hardly the same place. Apart from three young patrons enjoying drinks at a table against the wall and a smattering of early bar-goers, the dim-lit music venue, restaurant and hang-out sits still. No yelling. No television noise. Not even a giddy greeter waiting at the door, yelping "hello" whenever someone walks in. Only the galloping of reggae over the house speakers and the soft murmur of polite conversation.

These are the two lives of Red Sky night life.

"We try to get the best of both worlds," said Red Sky co-owner and general manager Ryan Stroup.

Stroup speaks of welcoming



Red Sky has a crowd that comes in after work on weekdays and during the early hours of the evening. A much larger crowd forms at midnight for live music.

and catering to both the after-work crowd and happy hour customers, as well as those interested in the frequent weekday and weekend live music the venue offers.

"We're the only place downtown that can really offer live music as far as on a consistent basis," he said. "It's what sets us apart."

It's true that Red Sky — with its seemingly endless expanse of hallway, sectioned off with tables, booths, angled walls and darkly hued drapes — can entertain any crowd a

live performance may draw. The modern and understated layout tinged with tiny stalactite light fixtures and sleek, silver chairs makes for an experience set aside from the norm of surrounding establishments.

"It's a relaxing atmosphere," said Kevin Weise, as the night's music hit its stride forcing him to speak up. He sat soaking in the growing energy with his daughter, April Weise.

Nights such as this are typical of Red Sky, April said. One moment it's empty and the next it's swarming. For the most part, however, she said it maintains a less hectic key than other downtown hotspots.

"(We've achieved) a more comfortable environment," Stroup agreed, "(especially compared to) places in the surrounding area that are crazy shoulder-to-shoulder packed."

Close to 10 p.m., a group of shaggy-haired 20-somethings begin to gather around a pool table, lending to the increasingly lively scene. A lone singer/guitarist has been belting soft rock on stage as a few listeners followed his songs with inconsistent claps. At this point, the vibe speaks more

"coffee shop" than burgeoning musical oasis.

The night takes a sharp turn, however, when one of the pool players steps on stage. To a handful of onlookers now gathered around, he transforms Red Sky into an underground hip-hop club. His quick and fluid rhymes contrast strikingly and refreshingly to the previous solo guitar ballads.

Stroup admits this radical change in musical type is no accident, and not rarely seen: "I try to diversify the kinds of music that comes in. I want to be known as providing good quality music and not just one genre."

"They have a good variety," April Weise seconded.

As the night flows forward, the hip-hopper continues to beam on stage while more and more people fill the hall. It's past 11, and some sit, some stand, some talk, some drink, but at the center of it all is the music: a local live music scene that Stroup is determined to resuscitate.

"I've been in town for 14 years, and it seems like the

Please see RED SKY, Page C4



A long corridor broken up by sections of seating can hold many people during big shows.

# National country band coming to Busters

I'm not big into country, but even I have heard the song "God Blessed Texas" — well, the chorus, anyway — about a hundred times in my life.

I was talking to a pal about upcoming Mankato shows, and he mentioned Little Texas was coming (that's the band behind "God Blessed Texas," by the way). I thought he meant at Riverfront Park, brought in by the Verizon Wireless Center.

But, no, he said: Little Texas would be performing Aug. 13 at Busters. This seemed odd to me. I like Busters. Really good food, and if you ask me, the live music sounds better there than most venues in



AMANDA DYSLIN  
Free Press Features Editor

town. But I had always pigeon-holed Busters as being a rock bar.

I went to their website to confirm. Sure enough, other entertainment scheduled includes the band SevenDust, Hairball and MINI KISS tribute band. Those certainly fall under the rockish entertainment category.

And then all of a sudden, out of nowhere, not only do they bring in a country act, but a national one at that. Very interesting.

I plan to get to the bottom of all of this for a story on Busters to run Friday, Aug. 13, the day of the Little Texas concert. But I thought I'd give an early



mention that they're coming this week in case people are as surprised as I was to hear they are coming.

If you like country, but aren't too familiar with Little Texas, here's a bit more about the band so you can decide if you want to check out the show:

Little Texas was formed in Nashville in 1988 by Tim Rushlow (lead vocals, rhythm guitar), Brady Seals (lead vocals, background vocals, keyboards), Del Gray (drums), Porter Howell (lead guitar), Dwayne O'Brien (rhythm

**If You Go**  
**What** Little Texas  
**When** 5 p.m. Friday, Aug. 13, at Busters in Mankato  
**Tickets** \$15 in advance; \$20 the day of the show; or \$25 for a two-day pass for Little Texas Friday and Hairball Saturday  
 For more information, visit [www.bustersbar.com](http://www.bustersbar.com).

guitar, background vocals), and Duane Propes (bass guitar/vocals, background vocals).  
 The band's debut album came out in 1991 on Warner Bros. Records and was called "First Time for Everything." The single "Some Guys Have All the



Submitted photo

Little Texas' best known singles are "God Blessed Texas" and "My Love."

Love" reached No. 8 on the Billboard Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart.

"Big Time" — an album that came out in 1993 and included the single "God Blessed Texas" and the No. 1 song "My Love" — went double platinum, and 1994's "Kick a Little" went platinum.

The group broke up in

1997, but reformed in 2004 with a new lead vocalist. The current lineup is all original members: Gray, Howell (lead vocals), O'Brien and Propes.

Little Texas has since released two albums for Montage Music Group: "The Very Best of Little Texas: Live and Loud" and "Missing Years."