

The Bakers to spice up Homecoming

by Sheryl Hanson - Thursday, June 12, 2008

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/962/the-bakers-to-spice-up-homecoming/>

Brandon Heise, a 2002 University of Wisconsin Oshkosh graduate, already is planning to attend Homecoming on Oct. 18.

One reason is because his alternative/indie rock band, The Bakers, will be the featured entertainment at the annual Tent City pregame celebration, which transforms a grassy field near the Oshkosh Sports Complex into a festival of music, food and school spirit.

Alumni, the campus community and the public are invited to come along for the ride as this year's Homecoming takes on a Harley-Davidson theme. In addition to Tent City and the football game, a parade and an open house are planned. For the complete Homecoming schedule, visit www.homecoming.uwosh.edu/alumni.php.

Heise earned a degree in radio/TV/film with emphases in music business and recording technology. He gives high marks to his education at the UW Oshkosh — especially to voice professor Frank Hoffmeister and recording technology professor Wally Messner.

“I can't say enough about him, to be honest,” Heise said of Hoffmeister. “I run into so many professors that the University is so lucky to have, and he is one of them.”

Regarding Messner, Heise said, “Of all my teachers — even from high school — he is by far the best at teaching. He really understands what people need to hear in order to learn.”

After graduation, Heise worked at Appleton's Rock Garden Studio, where he was a recording engineer. In 2005, he joined the staff of his alma mater as Reeve Memorial Union's coordinator of technical and audiovisual services.

“One of the reasons I decided to work here is to give back and get some things going in the Union. It's been rewarding to see that happen,” he said.

Twice a week, he heads to the country where, in a storage unit off the beaten path, he stays true to his calling: music.

“We were looking for a place to rehearse, and one of our members had this storage space rented,” said Heise, a singer and guitarist in the band. “It's great because we can play as loud as we want.”

Heise's fellow band members are bass player Andrew “Jimmy” Zimmerman — who met Heise while attending UW Oshkosh — and drummer Erik Gunderson. The three make a winning combination.

“Sometimes, younger bands are thinking they are going to be famous and get girls, and those are valid

reasons to do it, I suppose,” said Heise, laughing. “But I have a different perspective. I am thankful I have found two other guys who just enjoy playing music.”

Along with their work for The Bakers, Zimmerman and Gunderson also have full-time jobs. And it’s not unusual for them to take on an additional part-time job when they want to enhance their purchasing power for, say, a new guitar, which can run \$500 to \$2,500.

The rehearsal and show commitments get hectic, but The Bakers keep serving up their own recipes for rock ‘n’ roll.

“If we go a week without rehearsals, we are really ready to get back into it,” Heise said. “I do it because I have to, or I wouldn’t be happy with myself.”

Influenced by The Beatles, Led Zeppelin and The Doors, the band prides itself on playing all original music, penned by Heise and Zimmerman.

“We come into rehearsal with an idea and work on it together. The parts just gel after playing it a few times,” Heise said. “Not every band is like that. All three of us communicate really well.”

The band’s name also has a story behind it. Originally, they called themselves Boulanger, which is close to the French word for bakery.

“Agents were complaining that club owners couldn’t spell it, and we would walk into places with welcome banners that misspelled it all the time,” Heise said. “So that’s when we decided to change it to The Bakers.”

With a regular following of 50 to 100 fans, the Bakers have played gigs in Appleton, Green Bay, Madison, Milwaukee and Oshkosh. Their next show is Saturday, June 21, at Route 15, 6278 Greenville Drive, Greenville, Wis.

Sample The Bakers

- [Click here to listen to “Hollywood”](#)
- [Click here to listen to “Get a Reaction”](#)

Related story

- [Harley-Davidson dealership owners rev up for Homecoming 2008](#)