

Twin Cities band to provide outreach to local students

Rogue Valley will perform at Backus Sept. 28, first in five-concert series

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

In an effort to generate interest in and awareness of making music, a Twin Cities band will next week visit Koochiching County schools to show students music isn't only about virtuosos and rock stars.

Chris Koza and his band, Rogue Valley, will visit schools Sept. 23-28 in International Falls, Littlefork and Indus to connect with students and hopefully, according to Koza, help students develop musical skills and establish the connection from school to a career as a working musician.

"I am really excited to meet the students and learn about their experiences with making music and songwriting," Koza told The Journal. "I think we're going to learn a lot from them and I think opening up a dialogue with other creative minds is the best way to make the most of a limited amount of time and exposure."

The band's visit to Borderland is the first in a series of five shows made

possible through grants secured by the Backus Community Center. In addition to outreach in the schools, Rogue Valley will perform a concert at 7 p.m. Sept. 28 at the Backus Community Center.

"The artists (in the concert series) are not only performing on stage, they are connecting with area students," said Ward Merrill, executive director of Backus. More information on the concert series will appear in Saturday's edition of The Journal.

In a single year, Rogue Valley written, recorded and released four full length albums, each one revolving around the season of its creation. Together, the four albums tell a story of love, loss, regret and hope.

Koza said the band's goal in reaching out to students is to share insights on creativity and help answer questions they have about making music and making a career in music.

"When I was in high school, and younger, I played music," Koza said. "I was a piano student playing mainly classical music;

I participated in choirs and was involved in music-related projects with my friends. But I felt like I had a lot of questions about the process and realities of making music and also discovering what about making music was truly interesting for me personally."

This type of outreach is not a first for Rogue Valley. Koza explained the band has been involved with another grant-funded organization called the Minnesota Music Coalition. The group has visited with students and citizens in Grand Rapids about experiences as musicians and the process of songwriting.

"As an individual and solo artist, I have met with a handful of different classrooms and student groups to play songs and talk about music, and doing what I can to make music feel more accessible to people," he said.

Koza said the band will listen to what students have to offer and will work toward encouraging students to write songs and be creative from any mindset. He said if a student expresses interest in pursuing music,

it's important that Rogue Valley encourages them to work hard and pursue music because they love the pursuit.

"I think anytime I'm able to share what I am passionate about with others it is not only enjoyable, but thoroughly rewarding," Koza said. "It can be truly difficult and unusual to make introductions and open up with strangers and get past that awkward phase, but like jumping in the cold waters of Rainy Lake on a hot summer afternoon, what was once uncomfortable is now refreshing. I love being able to connect with people with what they are passionate about, and being able to share experiences and ideas."

Koza said he looks forward to the visit to Borderland – which inspired one of the songs Rogue Valley will perform during its Sept. 28 concert. Admission to the event is \$12 for an adult, \$6 for a student and \$25 for a family pass. Season passes for all five of the shows in the Backus concert series are also available by contacting Backus at 285-7225.



Rogue Valley

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tchotchke

(choch•key)

meaning:
trinket, doohickey, gizmo, whatchamacallit

Here are a few tips that'll help you make shorter work of those pesky falling tree-stuff.

1. Prepare yourself. No matter what tools you use, removing leaves from your yard will likely be an exhausting task, especially if you make heavy use of a rake. Wear layers of clothes that you can peel off as you feel warmer, do some stretching or warm-up exercises before starting work, and do any raking or lifting with bent knees and not a bended back.
2. Get a wide, sturdy plastic or metal rake. Don't cheap out on a flimsy wooden rake. Spend \$15-20 and get a decent plastic or metal rake made of firm material that won't bend too much. A wider rake will help you cover more area faster.
3. Split your leaf clearing into sessions. Unless you only have a couple of small trees on your property, divide your work across several days to minimize the strain on your body. Maybe do one part of the yard one weekend and another part the next, or rake into piles and then save the bagging or pulling to the curb for later. The job will go much faster if you do it without bringing yourself to the point of total exhaustion.
4. Check your local leaf-disposing regulations. It seems that every city has a different way of handling leaf disposal. As a kid, we'd see black garbage bags full of leaves piled at the ends of driveways. Now we live in a city that runs collection trucks equipped with massive vacuums; we just need to get our leaves to the curb and they're whisked away—no bagging necessary. New homeowners: be sure to ask your neighbors or local government for the proper way to prepare your leaves for their final journey.

Time for Fall Chores Outside Your Home!

- Clean and store patio furniture, umbrellas, children's summer toys.
- Touch up paint on trim, railings and decks. Use a wire brush to remove flaking paint; prime bare wood first.
- Check caulk around windows and doors. Follow manufacturer's recommendations to re-caulk if needed.
- Inspect external doors and garage doors. Do they close tightly?
- Install weather-stripping, door thresholds if needed.
- Wash exterior windows.
- Drain and store garden hoses. Install insulating covers on exterior spigots. In hard-freeze areas, have sprinkler systems blown free of water.
- Check gutters and downspouts. Clear of debris if necessary. In cold-weather areas, consider installing heating cable to prevent ice dams.
- Have chimneys and flues inspected and cleaned if necessary.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 spice cake mix
- 1 - 21 oz can apple pie filling – break up apples a bit
- 3 eggs

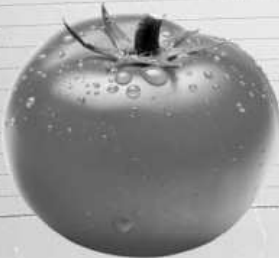
DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degree F. Spray 9 x 13 baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a medium bowl, add cake mix, three eggs, and the apple pie filling.
3. Using a spatula, mix well. Make sure all is incorporated well, batter will be thick.
4. Spread into cake pan evenly.
5. Bake for 30 minutes. When cake only has 5 minutes left; start the frosting if using.
6. Frosting: In a small pan over medium heat, melt the butter. Stir in brown sugar and salt. Cook, stirring, until the sugar melts. Add the milk, bring to a boil, and pour into a mixing bowl. Cool for 10 minutes.
7. Stir in confectioners' sugar and vanilla. Beat well; if the mixture seems too thin, add more confectioners' sugar. Use the frosting while it is still warm or it will firm up while it cools and you won't be able to spread it. I spread the frosting on the warm cake.
8. You could also add nuts to the cake or frosting!

- FROSTING
- 5 Tbsp unsalted butter
 - 1/2 c packed brown sugar
 - 1/4 tsp salt
 - 3 Tbsp milk
 - 1 1/2 c confectioners' sugar
 - 1 tsp vanilla extract



To firm up a soft tomato, run it under really cold water and you will be surprised how firm it becomes!



100-Calorie Pumpkin Pie Smoothie:

- 1/2 cup ice, 1/2 cup vanilla nonfat yogurt, 1 tsp. honey, 1/4 tsp. pumpkin pie spice and 1/4 cup pumpkin puree (add half a banana if you'd like).

