

Student band tackles the surf rock genre

By Katherine Lancaster

STAFF WRITER
KELANCAS@UNCA.EDU

It isn't unusual that there's a student rock band on UNC Asheville's campus, but the Dick Dale Earnhardts have something different to offer: they play surf rock.

The Dick Dale Earnhardts are a four-piece group with junior Andrew Barger on drums, junior Jake Francis on guitar, senior Gabe Karabell on guitar and junior Peter Mencher on bass. They formed last October around Halloween.

"Peter, Andrew and I got together to play a cover show last Halloween disguised as Dick Dale & the Del-Tones. After the Halloween show, Jake joined the band," Karabell said.

Some members experimented with the surf rock genre before forming the band last year, and the style eventually came to define their sound.

"There have been a couple of incarnations of some of us playing surf music in the last couple of years. During our freshman year, Gabe, Peter, Adam Edwards and I got together and played some surf songs, just sort of piddling around," Francis said. "Then last year, Gabe asked me if I wanted to play in a Dick Dale cover band for Halloween. Andrew, Peter and Gabe made for an awesome Halloween party. At the next show, I jumped in on rhythm guitar and Peter started playing the bass."

When discussing what type of music to play, Karabell said it was a quick decision to do surf rock.

"We were all sitting around listening to the Ventures one day and just decided to



Photo courtesy of The Dick Dale Earnhardts

The UNCA surf rock band, The Dick Dale Earnhardts, formed last October and have played at a handful of local gigs and parties.

do it. There really wasn't a whole lot to it," he said.

The band finds their inspiration through many instrumental surf bands, from groups such as Dick Dale & the Del-Tones, the Tornadoes, the Lively Ones, the Trashmen and the Phantom Surfers.

Dale is considered the father of American surf rock and instrumental rock 'n' roll. Dale, along with bands such as the Ventures and the Lively Ones, made the genre popular in the 1960s.

The genre is a mix of rock 'n' roll, pop and surf music styles. The genre was re-

vived in the 21st century when *Pulp Fiction* was released, and it had both Dale's and the Lively Ones' songs on its soundtrack.

The band covers 1960s surf songs and writes their own music. Some titles include "Hot Dog King," "Empty Quarter," "Ash Tray" and "Taco Wagon."

"We pick covers that are good to dance to and try to write songs with interesting melodies and changes that aren't too complicated. We want to stay simple, fun and exciting. Surf music is fun music," Karabell said.

While balancing schoolwork and music, Francis, a biology student, said school always comes first for him.

"The most important thing to me is school because that's what I'm here for, and the great part about this band is that we're really low-key. We practice whenever we play for an upcoming show, and if you can't make a practice you don't play," Francis said. "We have really good communication, and everyone's really good at improving and performing on the fly that we don't have to practice as much."

The Dick Dale Earnhardts played a show Friday night to a full house of nearly 100 people. The band planned the event and played along with other local Asheville bands in the area.

They closed the event with a mix of cover songs and some of their new material.

Gillie Logan, a junior, attended the concert and said she likes their music because of its "danceability." She said she's also a fan of the band because she likes the Dick Dale concept.

"They were on Friday night because it was electric and energetic, and they really captured the Dick Dale vibe," she said.

Sophomore Sabine Moses was also at the concert and said she thought the band was good, but she had not heard of the band until they played that night.

"They were really interesting and the songs were fun and exciting," she said. "I wasn't familiar with the Dick Dale Earnhardts until Friday night, but they all had a pretty cool sound and made for great party music," she said.

Besides the concert last Friday, Francis says they're going day by day. They have no upcoming shows.

HOLA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

last year. Many families still have court dates in Charlotte, and Nuestro Centro offers rides. This is important because we don't want people going to court dates driving without licenses to Charlotte," Garcia-Robles said.

HOLA said they sell paintings, pottery and prints that UNCA students donate on the night to help raise funds. They also hope to collaborate with the Tango club soon to help promote another student group on campus.

"Nuestro Centro also monitors road blocks and license checkpoints to make sure officers are working within legal bounds. This cuts down on racial profiling during the stops. Nuestro Centro makes sure undocumented people are treated humanely, especially when going through the deportation process and make sure that under-documented people are being

paid at work. They are almost always the first line of defense for people of the under-documented community," Garcia-Robles said.

HOLA said they e-mail more than 500 people, but have about 20 to 30 active members during the semester. Members say anybody can join HOLA, since there is no Spanish language prerequisite.

"All are welcome to join. It is not a language club, although we do have a weekly Spanglish hour. Anybody who is interested in tutoring, human rights, the Spanish language, college access for all, dancing and so many other things is encouraged to check us out. The people I have met through HOLA and the experiences I have had with those people make some of the best times I have had since I began attending UNCA," Villegas said.

HOLA hosts a range of events, includ-

ing Spanglish conversation hours on Thursdays and ESL tutoring and childcare every week. HOLA will host a conference and scholarship festival and are collaborating with Defensa Comunitaria to start a "Know Your Rights" forum.

"I joined HOLA because I like to help out in the community, especially the Hispanic community. I really enjoy the salsa parties because I love to dance. The night was a success because everybody was having fun," said Patricia Tomas, fundraising vice president of HOLA.

"The new goal for HOLA is to be an active group with issues that extend past our campus. I saw how many concerned (undocumented) people there were and knew we could make some kind of a difference in these local people's lives," Garcia-Robles said.

The next salsa night is on Nov. 20.



Ian Hayes - Staff Photographer
Nick Renehart and Marcela Garza dance at salsa night.