

# Band drivin' n' cryin' its way to hard-rockin' fame

By KELLY RHODES  
Senior Writer

"I was in a car, drivin' and cryin'," singer Kevin Kinney said in a recent interview. "It was about 1977; my girlfriend had just left me. You know, tears on my radio, tears on my steering wheel."

In 1985, when Kinney was trying to come up with a name for his newly-formed band, that incident came back to haunt him, and the name Drivin' n' cryin' took root and stuck. Drivin' n' cryin' then consisted only of Kinney and bassist Tim Nielson. Its first album was *Scarred but Smarter*, released on Atlanta's independent 688 label.

"Those originals are hard to find," Kinney admitted. "I have five." *Scarred but Smarter* was rereleased on Island Records in 1988 just after Drivin' n' cryin's poetic and dynamic *Whisper Tames the Lion* was released.

The group added Jeff Sullivan as a drummer just in time to record *Whisper*, and guitarist Buren Fowler jumped aboard to tour for the album. Both have stayed for the rest of the ride.

*Mystery Road* was released earlier this year to strong reviews. Rolling Stone called it "a diverse collection of country-influenced songs juxtaposed with thunderous rockers." But everything about the album is unique, even down to the picture on the cover, done by Kinney's grandmother.

Drivin' n' cryin' will open for R.E.M. at the Smith Center Saturday night. Kinney said the group would be on the road with R.E.M. for the last two weeks of April. "We're there to complement the R.E.M. show," he said. "We're getting really good response."

Eight songs in 30 minutes isn't exactly what every band dreams of, but Kinney doesn't mind. "I'm not trying to get across my metaphysical views of the world," he said. The exposure will definitely reinforce the band's popularity on the East Coast and may help gather some new fans along the way.

The tie with R.E.M. is certainly no coincidence. Both bands started in Georgia, and Kinney said Peter Buck

has been coming to Drivin' n' cryin' shows ever since they played in Athens. "I'm a big fan of his band," Kinney said. "And this is the best R.E.M. has ever been. Every night has been a hit."

After the R.E.M. dates, Drivin' n' cryin' will be on its own for the summer. The itinerary now consists of a West Coast tour via Texas, and then back east, where Kinney promises to come back to Chapel Hill to play the new Cat's Cradle.

He feels that Drivin' n' cryin' has done everything right so far ("I wouldn't change anything"), which is reflected in the band's national recognition. In March, Rolling Stone named them one of nine college bands ready to move on (in an article titled "They're young, talented and too cool to stay in school. Nine big bands on campus contemplate life after college radio.")

Kinney's own background has strongly contributed to what Drivin' n' cryin' does today. He grew up in Milwaukee, and the blues were one of the only live shows to hear. "I liked the '50s stuff. I really liked the Platters, Lou Anthony and the Imperials, Sam Cooke and Elvis," he said.

But when the '70s hit, Kinney took to the underground sounds that emerged. "The Ramones run through my blood like a hurricane. They're the first thing that really made me want to be a musician."

Kinney is the lead singer, occasional guitarist and principal songwriter for the band. "I do everything but arranging. I bring in a song, and it's usually 11 minutes long." The rest of the band takes it apart, works on it for a while, then puts it back together, he said.

Drivin' n' cryin' still has a long way to go in the world. "We've gone from local to regional," he said. "I'd like to go as big as we go."

But Kinney remains optimistic: "There's 7-11s everywhere, Dunkin' Donuts everywhere, working-class kinda people everywhere. I'm just a working, breathing, working-class kinda guy."



Drivin' n' cryin' will open for R.E.M. in the Smith Center Saturday night

## Student performers dancing in the gym

By RANDY BASINGER  
Staff Writer

UNC-CH Dance has been fighting an uphill battle for the last year.

"Dance is now considered a part of the P.E. (physical education) department," said Robin Craig, president of the 15-member dance troupe, which formed last year. "We are trying to get dance recognized as a fine art on campus."

UNC-CH Dance, which will present "Dances at the Gym" this weekend, gives its members the opportunity to choreograph and perform original works, and seeks to give UNC students more exposure to modern dance.

However, the troupe faces several

difficulties. "Last year was hard, and it is still difficult," Craig said. "Dance has made progress on campus, but we still have a ways to go."

As part of the physical education department, the troupe has to compete for space with sports events. Lack of funding is also a problem. "We are asking Student Congress for money to help fund the group," she said.

UNC-CH Dance first performed last spring with a presentation called "Dances at the Gym." The group had little money for the performance, but struggled to put on a show to bring greater awareness of dance to UNC.

Under the guidance of advisers Marian Turner and Lisa Yount,

dance instructors in the UNC Physical Education Department, the troupe then held a "Day of Dance" fund-raiser in February, in which they brought in area dance instructors to teach one-hour classes to interested students.

This weekend's "Dances at the Gym" is another step in the struggle for campus recognition, Craig said.

"In the performance, 13 students will perform different pieces," Turner said. "A student is free to create what they want — choose their own dancers, music, and choreograph the music."

Modern dance is very unstructured, and the limits are those imposed by the imagination, Craig said. "Modern dance is music put to movement rather than movement put

to music. You take a piece of music and interpret it into dance."

This weekend's performance will feature five pieces: one choreographed by Turner, one by Yount, and three by students Robin Craig, Tara Penick and Jovan Jones.

The show will showcase diverse styles of performance, including interpretations of jazzy music, Grateful Dead songs and German new-wave rock music. The varied selections will include music by Phillip Glass, James Newton Howard and Friends, and Rubaja and Hernandez.

UNC-CH Dance will present *Dances at the Gym* Sunday, April 23 at 8 p.m. The program will be held at the Women's Gym and is free to the public, with donations accepted.

## N.C. Writers' Network to hold benefit show

From staff reports

Marianne Gingher, a creative writing instructor in the UNC English department, will give a reading from her latest novel at a benefit show on Saturday for the North Carolina Writers' Network.

The benefit, called "GenOp & Spring Tonic," will begin at 4 p.m. at White Cross School, seven miles west of Carrboro on N.C. 54.

In addition to the reading by Gingher, the evening will also feature bluegrass and poetry by Shelby Stephenson, Stephen Smith and Richard Hood; and jazz/swing music with Rebecca and the Hi-Tones. Food and refreshments will be available.

"Everyone bring your dancing shoes," Gingher said of the event.

Gingher, author of "Bobby Rex's Greatest Hits," will read from the novel on which she is now working, which explores "Vietnam, the '60s, the Shirelles, Matthew Arnold, The Black Panthers, murder and rock 'n' roll," she said.

The cost of the event is \$8, with all the money raised going to benefit the N.C. Writers' Network, the nation's largest statewide organization of writers.

Tickets can be purchased at the Hardback Cafe and Bookstore in Chapel Hill; the Regulator Bookshop and Southern Sisters Bookstore in Durham; Ladd's Book Shop and The Paper Plant in Raleigh; and Willington Books in Cary. For more information, call 967-9540.

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