

Area concerts

Rock, rap and reggae make a month of music madness

By **JAMES BENTON**
Omnibus Editor
and **ELLEN THORNTON**
Assistant Omnibus Editor

Regardless of what your music tastes may be, there seems to be something going on in the area to accommodate your tastes in music. During the next few weeks, concerts in the Triangle and nearby areas will feature blues, reggae, soul, rock and rap acts.

The Triangle area will get a taste of blues March 12 when Robert Cray performs at 8 p.m. at the Raleigh Memorial Auditorium with John Hiatt and the Coners.

Cray, who has been performing professionally since 1981, hit it big

in 1987 with his album *Strong Persuader*. That album, featuring the songs "Because of Me" and "Smoking Gun," sold more than one million copies. His present album is titled *Don't Be Afraid of the Dark*.

With *Strong Persuader*, Cray became successful with pop radio stations and Music Television (MTV), gaining heavy rotation on the cable station. But he was only slightly successful with black radio stations.

Cray's success as a blues artist in the '80s is uncommon in a market dominated by rock and roll, which was founded on a strong base of blues in the mid-'50s. And Cray's music has been

criticized by blues purists for being more than little more than '60s soul with a touch of blues guitar thrown in.

But if you are a fan of Cray's or like blues music, this concert should be for you. Tickets for the concert are \$18.50 and are still available.

Renowned reggae singer Yellowman will appear in concert at the Cat's Cradle Friday March 17.

Yellowman is a legend in the world of reggae and is widely noted for his spicy, erotic style of reggae which includes spinning tales of his sexual proficiency. His career started in 1979 when he

won a talent contest. Yellowman has recorded more than two dozen albums, some with titles like *Yellowman Rides Again, Don't Burn It Down* and *Yellow Like Cheese*.

Tickets for the concert are \$9 in advance or \$11 at the door on the night of the show and can be purchased from Schoolkids Records in Chapel Hill or Poindexter Records in Durham.

If your favorite radio station just hasn't played Poison's "Every Rose Has Its Thorn" enough times for you, you'll get the chance to see it performed in person at 8 p.m. on March 20 in the Smith Center. Poison is on tour promoting their platinum album *Look What The Cat Dragged In*, featuring hit singles "Cry Tough" and "Talk Dirty To Me." The album reached platinum status in April 1987, partly because of Poison's extensive touring with Ratt. The band has also enjoyed success on MTV, with the "Talk Dirty To Me" video reaching number one on MTV's viewers choice poll. "I envision everything I hear. I can feel the music when we're playing and see us getting across the energy that we possess. We want to go down in the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's most spec-

tacular, entertaining live band. That's what Poison is all about," says lead vocalist Bret Michaels.

The Smith Center still has a good number of tickets left for the concert. The \$17.50 tickets can be purchased at the Smith Center or by calling 1-800-543-3041.

It's not just another rap concert. The Greensboro Coliseum will be the site of the Easter Jam at 8 p.m. March 25 featuring Guy and Tone-LoC, whose single "Wild Thing" recently reached number two on Billboard's Hot 100 chart. The single did not reach number one because of a lack of airplay on some pop radio stations.

"Wild Thing" sold more than two million copies in eight weeks, making it the best-selling single since U.S.A. For Africa's 1985 single "We Are The World" and the most successful rap single since Run-DMC's "Walk This Way," which peaked at No. 4 in 1986.

Guy is a three-member New York band which debut album *Guy* made them one of the best new groups of 1988. Songs like "Groove Me," "Teddy's Jam" and "A Piece of My Love" kept the airwaves hot last year and are continuing to do so in 1989.



Rapper Tone-LoC will perform in concert with Guy in the Greensboro Coliseum March 25.



Poison, who once opened concerts for Ratt, will perform as a band in their own right March 20 in the Smith Center.

Group member Teddy Riley has been extremely busy. Besides performing with Guy, Riley writes and produces other acts. His work showed up often in 1988 with acts such as Keith Sweat, Heavy D. & The Boyz and Al B. Sure!

Also scheduled to appear are the group Today, which broke through last year with the single "Him or Me" and rap acts MC Hammer and Sir Mix-a-Lot, who became successful partly because of their presence on the Black Entertainment Television show "Video Soul." MC Hammer's dance moves in the video to his uptempo "Pump It Up" have been copied in clubs all winter long. Sir Mix-a-Lot has recorded several records in the past but gained success with the single "Posse on Broadway," an epic rap tale of a night spent cruising Seattle's streets in a Mercedes limo with his "posse" (group of friends).

Tickets for the show are \$15.50 and can be purchased from the Greensboro Coliseum box office or by calling 1-800-543-3041.

An evening of Jack Daniels' shots at an after-hours club in Dallas, Texas, inspired Edie Brickell to be a singer. After several shots, she

jumped on stage to sing with the band. Soon after, in 1985, Brickell put together her band, Edie Brickell and the New Bohemians.

Brickell, rhythm guitarist Wes Martin, lead guitarist Kenny Withrow, bassist Brad Hauser, drummer Matt Chamberlain and percussionist John Bush will perform their contemporary electric folk rock grooves at Raleigh's Memorial Auditorium at 8 p.m. on March 27.

The Dallas band is on its second trip through the area promoting its one and only album, *Shooting Rubber Bands at the Stars*, which features the hit single "I Am What I Am." On its first trip to Raleigh, the band performed two sold-out shows at the Rialto Theater.

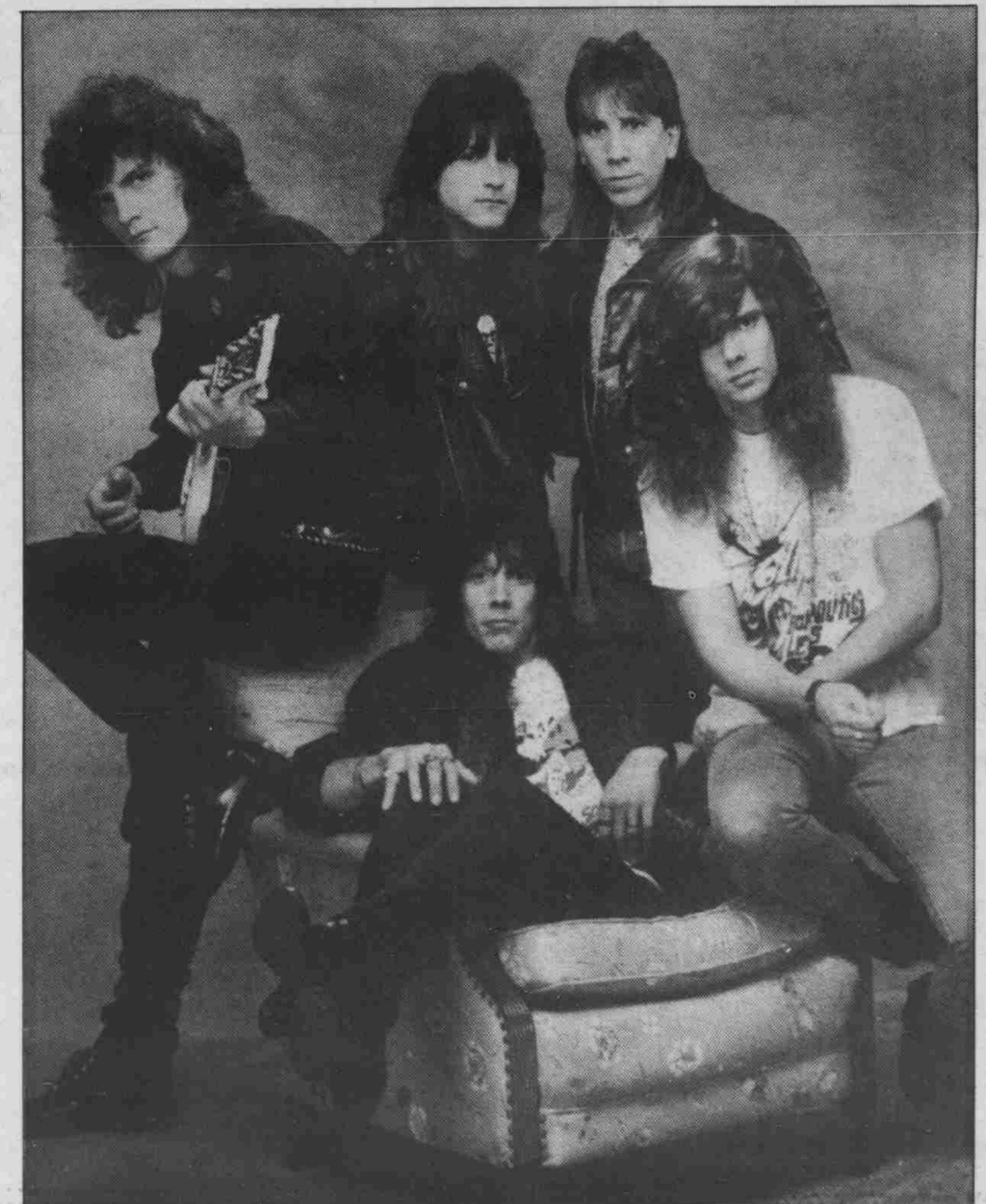
"The band has really taken off since then," said Rob Ragsdale, operations manager for Pro Motions Concerts. Locally, Brickell has received a lot of attention. Radio stations like WXYC have placed Brickell's album on medium to heavy rotation. The album has also sold well at record stores. Schoolkids Records' clerk Matt Steigerwald said that sales of the album are booming, although they have lessened since the early days after its release.

Brickell explains the title this way: "The title? It's about when you feel alone and things are hard. You were too scared to act on your feelings, but then one day you got lucky as hell. You had the tiny desires all your life, and finally they light these great big fires."

Brickell wrote nearly all the lyrics and also did the illustrations for the cover. Her concerts are characterized by her shyness and insecurity on stage, Ragsdale said. "She's real shy. She crosses her legs and just stands there the whole time. It's an extremely good show," Ragsdale added. There are still tickets left for the concert. Tickets are \$14.50 and can be purchased at the auditorium and all Ticketron outlets. Call 755-6060 for ticket information.



Edie Brickell & New Bohemians will perform at the Raleigh Memorial Auditorium March 27.



Geffen recording artists Tesla will open for Poison in the Smith Center.