



Chris Shay sings like a girl

By Lianne Meinzing

...Not just any girl, mind you. He sings like Gloria Gaynor, Diana Ross, Olivia Newton-John, Cindy Wilson, and Barry Gibb. That's not all – he also plays guitar, yodels with the best of the goatherds, and screams like a monkey chasing a banana truck. Oh, and he sings like a guy, too, but that's not nearly as much fun to tease him about.

If you haven't witnessed these things, you haven't seen a performance of *Men in the Making*. It also means you missed seeing Chris's brother, Kevin (formerly of PAML Toxicology), dress up and sing like Little Richard or Sir Elton John. In fact, all four band members take turns dressing up like our favorite musical characters from the '50s, '60s, '70s, and '80s, and belting out impressive covers of the songs that most of us grew up on and loved. From the Everly Brothers to the Rolling Stones, from Roy Orbison to the B-52s, Buddy Holly to Johnny Cash, there is something here for everyone.

The crowd was evidence of that one February night at a Spokane venue called Bluz at the Bend. From the very young (did they check her ID before they let her in here?) to the elderly, I watched the faces smiling and feet dancing for four hours with only two breaks in between. Beside us at the bar, 88-year-old Leroy Lester Smith, a noted Spokane poet, was an inspiration as he and his wife sang along to all the songs and danced to nearly every number, right up until the 1:00 a.m. encore.

Some of my musician friends scorn anything that isn't original music. But this isn't just another cover band. This is a show band, with every one of them proving themselves to be consummate performers. I would challenge any act, anywhere, to top the crowd appeal that had the audience doing jumping jacks on the dance floor, or exercising along with "Richard Simmons." If you can watch these guys and not have a great time, check your pulse – seriously – you may not have one!

Returning after a three year hiatus, *Men in the Making* aren't booking a lot of gigs right now. Not because they can't, mind you, but because they are intentionally taking things slow. Drummer and sound man Kevin Dodson explains that they used to play every weekend, but they all have families now. "We're getting back on the horse, but very...tentatively," he explains, noting the importance of actually seeing your own children on occasion. They will, however, be playing at Chewelah's Chataqua music festival in July and Spokane's Pig Out in the Park on Labor Day weekend. The band will have their website up and running soon so fans can track their other bookings.

So, if you want to see Chris Shay dressed up in a blond wig, a pink jacket, or sporting a pith helmet and singing *The Lion Sleeps Tonight*, mark these events on your calendar, and watch for www.meninthemaking.com to surface on a browser near you. I promise, you'll be glad you did! 🍌

