

# Entertainment

Ethel Simmons editor/644-1100



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## Cranbrook kids to sing with star

By Ethel Simmons  
staff writer

Twelve children from Brookside School Cranbrook will become the Rainbow Kids, joining children's entertainer Bob Schneider onstage, when he performs at 2 p.m. Sunday, June 15, at the Birmingham Theatre.

Schneider, who is from New York, gained fame in Canada, writing and singing children's songs, which he recorded. In live stage shows, he is accompanied by youngsters who sing and move along with him.

The upcoming show is the second children's concert at the Birmingham Theatre sponsored by Jabberwocky, a toy and book store in Birmingham. The first, starring Raffi, who is another children's star from Canada, sold out with little publicity. 'Store owner Becky Golden said.

Tickets for Schneider's concert are \$5, and \$6 for reserved seating. Tickets are available at Jabberwocky, 356 E. Maple.

WENDY GEOGHEGAN, drama teacher at Brookside, was asked to select the 12 children who will appear with Schneider locally. She chose six boys and six girls, including Julie Krieger and Vimal Salgal, first grade; Eric Carlson and Kyra Selman, second grade; Alyssa Cooper and Smitha Reddy, third grade; Isaac Johnson, Alexis Radogaj-Givens and Carolyn Schneyer, fourth grade, and Dylan Cooper, Will Surber and Sika Dagbovie, fifth grade.

Geoghegan is a big fan of Schneider's. She said by telephone from Brookside School: "I saw one of his concerts in Toronto. It's wonderful. It's innovative. It's new. It's



Bob Schneider sings and plays the guitar for children.

unlike any children's concert you have seen before."

For each concert, a group of children is selected to be a part of the show, as the Rainbow Kids, she said. "The children are not trained professionals traveling around with him."

In Toronto, a friend's daughter was one of the youngsters chosen. "All here friends were there. They had such a thrill seeing their classmate onstage."

The Brookside children will spend 60-90 minutes rehearsing with Schneider the day before the concert, and Geoghegan will be right there.

"The day of the concert, we all have lunch at the theater, a little rehearsal, and then they're on. They're the performers," she said.

Geoghegan has all Schneider's records. She uses his music in classes with the children at Brookside and once did a whole performance with his music, featuring fourth graders.

## Rock band striving for bigtime success

By Kevin Brown  
staff writer

MAKING IT in rock 'n' roll can seem easy to those outside the music scene looking in — just a matter of cashing in that "Money for nothing," to quote Dire Straits' popular send-up of the misconception.

But for every Bob Seger, there's a umpteenth-million bar bands bashing out the radio hits at local clubs. Most hope to leave the club stage for the concert stage, but never do. That's partly because figuring out how to succeed in the business is tougher than playing a flatted 11th-chord on a warped 12-string guitar.

Jeff Hill, a rock singer from Garden City, has been working on that problem. Hill's only 22, but you can almost call him a veteran — he's been playing in public since age 17. While Hill has played major Detroit-area clubs like Harpo's and Jagger's with various groups, he views that experience as a warm-up to launching his own band, Thrust.

"Previous groups I was in were learning experiences. This is my project group," says Hill. Just gearing up in recent months, Thrust performs 7 p.m. Saturday at the Garden City Festival.

THE BAND'S STORY begins about a year ago. "I was playing at the Sidestreet WLLZ Rock Party with another band — That's when I met the keyboard player, Pete Slykerman. He came and said he liked my singing, and if I ever needed a keyboard player to call him. A few months after that, the band split up and I called him," Hill recalls.

He learned from experience to seek musicians with enthusiasm. "Some guys who were older were giving 50 percent, they were past their prime," he says. "Everyone in this group gives their 100 percent, everyone's got that hunger," Hill says. But Hill also stresses that he's learned much from older musicians. "I learned how to handle myself as a performer. You can't have a superior attitude and be successful."

After adding bassist John Starr and guitarist Recco Calappari, both from Southgate, and drummer Pete Tavormina from Garden City, rehearsals opened at a Canton recording studio in January, two or three nights each week. Hill describes the band's material as commercial rock, cover versions of songs by Night Ranger, Aldo Nova and others.

Hill says that while the band has written enough original songs to fill an album, they'll stick to covers in the beginning. "Lots of people in groups I was in were concerned about playing their kind of music. But you're not on stage to satisfy yourself," says Hill.



BILL DRESLER/staff photographer

Rock band Thrust is just one of the groups hoping it has that special something to project it into the top ranks. Jeff Hill, lead singer, center, figures not playing the bar

scene but instead getting known at outdoor and teen shows, as well as major clubs, is the way to go.

"I'm trying to groom these guys into having good stage presence," Hill says. Live performing, he adds, "is basically a contact sport with the crowd — eye contact is important, even shaking hands."

HILL SAYS YOU can learn a lot from watching major groups' performance habits: "Things not to do on stage; things to do on stage. We don't like to see bands that scream their lungs out. . . . We're a straight-ahead rock group. We're the type of group parents don't have to worry about their kids going to see."

While the band hopes to sign with a booking agency and play clubs for a year or so, Hill says, "We're really staying away from the bar scene." Hill says he's seen friends make it in the bars, only to remain there. He plans outdoor shows and teen shows along with major club jobs, and hopes contacts he's made with agents, record company talent representatives and others will help them toward their goal — national recognition. "I'll work hard with it for a couple years."



Hill and bass player John Starr try out one of the band's numbers during rehearsal at Talent Live studios in Canton.

## upcoming things to do

### ● SUMMER NIGHTS

Hugh Borden's Trinidad Tripoli Steel Band will kick off the Summer Nights concert season at 5:30 p.m. Friday, June 6, at the Troy Hilton's Outdoor Courtyard. The 10-member band is the traditional opener for the series, which is now in its fifth year. The group will feature tunes from its recently released album "Momentum." Summer Nights is open to partygoers age 21 or over. A \$5 cover charge goes into effect at 7:30 p.m.

### ● AUDITION DATES

Change of date and location has been announced for the third audition in a series of four tryouts for entertainers to appear at the 1988 Michigan Renaissance Festival. The third audition will be 7-10 p.m. Monday, June 9, at the University of Detroit Architecture Building. A fourth

and final audition is set for 1-4 p.m. Sunday, June 15, at the festival site in Holly. For more information, call the festival office at 700 E. Maple, Birmingham, phone 645-9640.

### ● SAFARI STYLE

A progressive party through the Detroit Zoo, safari-style, will be presented for "Sunset at the Zoo," the Detroit Zoological Society's annual June party for its membership, 6-9 p.m. Tuesday, June 24, in Royal Oak. The event, a salute to the film "Out of Africa," will be co-chaired by Academy Award-winning screenwriter Kurt Luedtke of Birmingham and Academy Award-winning director Sydney Pollack. Tickets are \$40 each, \$75 for two. For reservations, call 541-3717.

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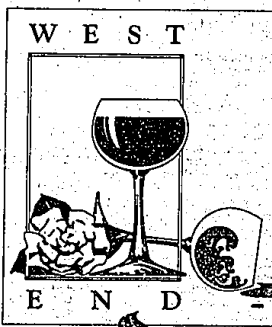
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