STREET BEATS

The Incurables — also known as The Icky Nasty Crazy Under-Rated Available Bleeding Liberal Exoplasmic System — are Pat Kelly, Ray Lawson, Dennis Pepperack and Darrin Lawson.

Incurables inject infectious sound

By Jill Hamilton
special writer

The myth of the Incurables begins like this: "Once upon a time there were four little sperm." The myth, found in the Incurables press materials, goes on to explain must-know facts about the Incurables like how the band came to be, a band and how they got the name.

So how did they get their name? Read the rest of the myth.

"As with all great bands, a name was needed," the bio sheet explains. "A name unlike any other name. A name to fully describe the group and its members. Again much thought and consideration was given until they finally agreed upon . . . The Icky Nasty Crazy Under-Rated Available Bleeding Liberal Exoplasmic System. Since no one could ever fully remember their name, they came up with the following abbreviation: 'The Incurables.' "

Oh.

The Incurables are Pat Kelly on lead guitar and vocals, Ray Lawson on bass and backgrund vocals, Dennis Pepperack on rhythm guitar and vocals and Darrin Lawson on drums and vocals. The two Lawsons are cousins. All four of the guys knew each other from Wayne Memorial High School.

The band's lineup is the result of several years of shifting membership and various combinations. Darrin Lawson was once their drummer in an earlier version of the band. He went into the military for awhile and came back as a drummer.

WHILE DARRIN Lawson was gone, the band had solidified into a three-piece. That line-up suited the band just fine but some club owners had a problem with it.

"Some bar owners didn't think we could produce a full enough sound with only three people," said Ray Lawson. "They said it didn't look good on stage."

But, pressure from bar owners was not the reason the band added an extra player.

"Having a three-piece held us back musically," Lawson said. "It helped us creatively and with song writing to add Darrin. Our live show has improved, we have a fuller sound and Pat is freed up to play more intricate guitar parts."

Bringing Darrin Lawson aboard had another advantage — he got the band a radio interview on WQHR-AM, a student-operated station at Eastern Michigan University.

"We invaded their station," Ray Lawson said. "It's a small AM station without a tower. The lines run through the dormitories. In the future, we want to help them raise money for a tower."

Being on the radio and helping charitable causes are two things that are old hat for the Incurables. They have been frequent guests on Henry Ford's college radio station, WHFR-FM, and their first tape "Look in Your Mind" has been a frequent visitor to several small stations around the state.

As far as benefits go, they've just done one (for WHFR-FM) and they plan to do another one in April.

LAWSON SAYS that the WHFR gig went very well.

"We got a good response from people who had no idea who we were," he said. "It feeds good when someone comes up to you, who you've never seen before, and says 'That was good.' It's different from when a friend tells you that you were good."

"Hopefully, in April we'll be able to do a benefit for the Red Cross," Lawson added. "We want to get five or six other bands to play. It will be an all-ages show, so people who can't usually go to clubs can see a show for a low price, and it will give some exposure to the bands."

While the Incurables have given a lot of support to their community, they sometimes wonder if the community is giving back support to them.

"The music scene could be a lot better, especially with the major radio stations," Lawson said. "Major stations are not supportive of you unless you're someone like Iggy Pop. They don't support anyone until they're already big."

"THE CLUB scene is not too bad," he added. "It depends on where you play. It was getting real bad for playing original music, but it seems to be getting better now."

Lawson said that although the band will play covers-only clubs

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Babes in Toyland vent some anger

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

Members of Babes in Toyland proved they can hate, but can they love?

Sure they can. Why else would these three women be so upset?

Relationships gone sour is apparently one of the main areas from which the Minneapolis three-piece draws its bile. The band's last LP on Twin Tone, "Spanking Machine" was rape with bellicose wails and screeches as Babes in Toyland vented their spleens about lost loves among other things.

In one song off the LP, "Pain in My Heart," guitarist and vocalist Kat Bjelland repeatedly screamed for her "blue boyfriend" to expletively "fry."

Drummer and founding member Lori Barbero said expect even more rancor-laced, virulent punk spike on the band's forthcoming EP, "For Mother."

"You write best when you're angry," said Barbero, who's penned two numbers for the new EP. "I have books of words that I write down when I'm angry. I just have to get it off my chest."

Let's play armchair therapist for a moment. What can this pent-up anger be attributed to. Childhood trauma, adolescent posturing or yuppie angst?

"It's not yuppie angst," Barbero said. "I don't hang around yuppies."

HMMM. THIS leaves the demons of childhood and teenage years to be exorcised. Barbero said she was detached from her family ko'ked out of life.

All those factors contribute to the spewing noise of the Babes in Toyland sound. Barbero believes it goes deeper than mere teenage frustration.

Rather, the band's music is all about being crapped upon, something apparently all three members can relate to as children and adults.

Bassist Michelle Leon, Bjelland and Barbero have been performing as a trio since February 1988. The band was a four-piece with two other since departed members, debuting in March 1987 in Minneapolis, Minn.

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IN CONCERT

● LARRY SMITH & THE PARADISE VALLEY JAZZ BAND
Larry Smith & the Paradise Valley Jazz Band will perform Monday, March 11, at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit. For information, call 823-2355.

● SKYLES BAND
Skyles Band will perform Monday, March 11, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

● TRACEY SCIENCE
Tracey Science will perform Tuesday, March 12, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

● WILD KINGDOM
Wild Kingdom will perform Tuesday, March 12, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

● SHOOTS AND LADDERS
Shoots and Ladders will perform Wednesday, March 13, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Caniff, off I-75. For information call 365-3829.

● NEDRA
Nedra will perform Wednesday, March 13, at Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti. For information, call 485-5050.

● BIG DAVE & THE ULTRA SONICS
Big Dave & The Ultra Sonics will perform Wednesday, March 13, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information call 996-8555.

● SURGERY
Surgery will perform with guests Mondo Cane Wednesday, March 13, at Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For information call 961-MELT.

● RYTH MCFEUD
Ryth McFeud will perform Wednesday, March 13, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

● SAMARITANS
The Samaritans will perform Thursday, March 14, at Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti. For information, call 485-5050.

● HELIOS CREED/COP SHOOT COP
Helios Creed will perform along with Cop Shoot Cop and Blue Thursday, March 14, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 994-5662.

● BLUE NIMBUS
Blue Nimbus will perform with Wrath of Christian Thursday, March 14, at The Vault, Eight Mile Road, near I-75. For information, call 345-7669.

● FULLY LOADED/TRINIDAD TRIPOLI STEEL BAND
Fully Loaded will perform (no cover) 6-9 p.m. followed by Trinidad Tripoli Steel Band 9 p.m. to close (cover) on Thursday, March 14, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

● GENERATORS
Generators will perform Thursday, March 14, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

● GENERALS
The Generals will perform on Thursday, March 14, at WOLV-AM, a student-operated radio station, located in the basement of Markley Hall, at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. For information, call 970-4272.

● ASSEMBLY REQUIRED
Assembly Required will perform with guests Don't Look Now Big Band Thursday, March 14, at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit. For information, call 823-2355.

● COVE KINGS
Cove Kings will perform, with guests Spankers Corner, Friday, March 15, at Farmer's Pub, 5005 Woodward, near Alexandrine, Detroit. For information, call 832-0750.

● ELVIS HITLER
Elvis Hitler will perform Friday, March 15, at the Majestic Lanes, 4140 Woodward, near Forest, Detroit. For information, call 832-5264.

● BOOK OF LOVE
Book of Love will perform Friday, March 15, at Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. Tickets are $12. For information, call 961-MELT.

● SOUL STATION
Soul Station will perform Friday, March 15, at Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti. For information, call 485-5050.

● CULTURE SHOCK/TRENCHMOUTH
Culture Shock will perform with guests Trenchmouth, Friday, March 15, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 994-5662.

● CYNTHIA DEWBERRY AND FRIENDS
Cynthia Dewberry and Friends will perform Friday and Saturday, March 15-16, at the Bird of Paradise, 207 S. Ashley, Ann Arbor. For information, call 662-8310.

● FRANK ALLISON & THE ODD SOX
Frank Allison & the Odd Sox will perform Friday, March 15, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

● TROPICAL CONNECTION
Tropical Connection will perform Friday, March 15, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

● BUTLER TWINS
Butler Twins will perform Friday and Saturday, March 15-16, at Elwood Bar & Grill, 2196 Woodward, Detroit. For information, call 961-7489.

● SCOTT MORGAN
Scott Morgan will have a CD release party Friday, March 15, at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit. For information, call 823-2355.

● STEVE GORNALL & THE BLUE COLLAR BLUES BAND
Steve Gornall & the Blue Collar Blues Band will perform Friday, March 15, at Moby Dicks, 5452 Schaefer, Dearborn. For information, call 581-3650.

● OCTOBER/CULTURE BANDITS
October will perform with Culture Bandits and Naked Truth Friday, March 15, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Caniff, off I-75. For information, call 365-3829.

● RHYTHM KINGS
Rhythm Kings will perform Saturday, March 16, at Auburn Lanes Village Pub, 27 S. Squirrel, Auburn Heights. For information, call 852-1710.

● FRANK ALLISON & THE ODD SOX
Frank Allison & the Odd Sox will perform Saturday, March 16, at Lili's 21, 2000 Jacob, off of the Campus, Hamtramck. For information, call 875-6555.

● BLUES FESTIVAL
Detroit Blues Band, Johnny Yard Dog Jones, Mr. Bo, Bobby East and Big Lucky & The Ultrasonics will perform in a Blues Festival Saturday, March 16, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

● THIRSTY FOREST ANIMALS
Thirsty Forest Animals will perform with guests, Voodoo Chili, Saturday, March 16, at Finney's Pub, 3965 Woodward, Detroit. For information, call 831-8070.

● ST. PATRICK'S JUBILEE
Progressive Blues Band, Kenny Miller, the Alligators and the Barrel House Blues Band will perform Saturday, March 16, at St. Patrick's Blues Jubilee at Moby Dicks, 5452 Schaefer, Dearborn. For information, call 581-3650.

● DIFFERENCE
The Difference will perform Saturday, March 16, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

● TAD/BABES IN TOYLAND
Tad will perform along with Babes in Toyland and Zu Zu Petals Saturday, March 16, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 994-5662.

● SOUTHGOING ZAK
Southgoing Zak will perform Saturday, March 16, at Cross Street Station, 517 W. Cross, Ypsilanti. For information, call 485-5050.

● HAPPY ACCIDENTS
Happy Accidents will perform Saturday, March 16, at Pavchecks Lounge, 2000 Caniff, near Jacob, Campus, Hamtramck. For information, call 872-8934.

● INNOCENT PERSUASION
Innocent Persuasion will perform Saturday, March 16, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Caniff, off I-75. For information, call 365-3829.

● TRASH BRATS
Trash Brats will perform Saturday, March 16, at Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For information, call 961-MELT.

● JUANITA MCCRAY
Juanita McCray will perform Saturday, March 16, at Wings in Airport Hilton, 8000 Wick, near I-94, Romulus. For information, call 292-3400, Ext. 173.

REVIEWS

THE SAMPLES — The Samples

What catches the attention initially on this debut LP from the band from Boulder, Colo., is how remarkably unspectacular the cover is.

No, let me rephrase that. It's a straight, dowdy and boring. It's received on Arista records and perhaps each was not being spent, on this band, but a small flavor of imagination would not have gone astray.

But then again, it does reflect the band accurately.

Another accurate reflection of the band is the God-awful press release description of the Samples. "You wouldn't listen to the Samples debut album (unless you're prepared to change your entire musical vocabulary . . . it's an alternative to the soulless cookie cutter pop . . . This is music as mortar . . . the stuff between the cracks that holds everything together . . . They weave surprisingly complex, instantly memorable melodies."

Give us all a break! But let's not be hasty and judge the band by the quality of what representation they receive, even though they should have some say in the matter.

This is what we find. The Samples music is lightweight, bubbly keyboard, acoustic guitar, white-man reggae. The worst kind of reggae. Cabaret. Top 10 band type reggae. They sound like a wimpy version of

the Australian band Men at Work, without the sense of humor. And Men At Work were nothing to protect your sister from.

Singer, songwriter and general head-honcho Sample, Sean Kelly, sounds like his favorite band in the entire universe was the Police and figures that the world should not have to do without them. So he's done his best to recreate their Sound from all their early albums.

Kelly's lyrics are filled with cliches in his attempt to be political in his message of "Save the World." Perhaps Kelly should have taken a lesson on how to structure lyrics with a political message with some intelligence by studying his mentor and listen to "Invisible Sun" a couple of hundred times.

For a band who are attempting to "use their music as powerful medium for this urgent message," they have absolutely no credibility and only cliched sincerity.

Cormac Wright

KILL UNCLE — Morrissey

Some continue to see Morrissey, the former frontman of the English pop group The Smiths, as nothing but a self-absorbed twit or a mega-ego maniac.

What those misguided souls have always refused to understand is Morrissey's obvious wit.

Lines such as "I just wrote a frightening verse for a buck toothed girl in Luxembourg" from The Smiths number "Ask" have become legendary through the years. Yet as brilliant as those Smith collaborations were, the band split after the release of Same Was Parlod in 1987.

Doomsayers said Morrissey couldn't cut it without the stirring guitar riffs of Johnny Marr. But the Manchester melancholic singer has proved them wrong. His first solo effort, Viva Hate, was something of a vindication. The LP, which was produced by longtime Smiths collaborator Stephen Street, was very Smiths-like in tone — self-obsessed, biting lyrics singured well with some brazen guitar melodies.

That verve is noticeably absent on Morrissey's follow up effort, Kill Uncle. And what we're left with, quite frankly Mr. Shankilly, is a rather boring album.

Oh, the sardonic humor is all there to see. Songs like "Our Frank" are ripe with the cutting spite that's

made Morrissey one of a kind. So too is Morrissey's lyrical bite on "King Lear."

Of course, no Morrissey project would be complete without some mention of his woeful love life. Lines like "The End of the Family Line" spells out the obvious results.

Yet a good portion of these songs are interwoven with some doleful synthesizer dirge. As a result, the subtleties of Morrissey's witticisms are lost. Certainly, what Morrissey's mournful lyrics don't need is a violin as provided in the wretched excess of "Asian Rut."

Things don't progress from there. Instead, Morrissey degenerates into something of a lounge lizard in his monotonous tone of woe and despair. The joke isn't funny any more.

The sadness in all of this is somewhere out there in Johnny Marr's guitar swirls in oblivion. Morrissey and Marr need one another more than each one cares to admit.

Larry O'Connor

TOP HITS

Best selling records of the week

1. All the Man That I Need, Whitney Houston
2. Gonna Make You Sweat, C & C Music Factory
3. One More Try, Timmy T
4. Someday, Mariah Carey
5. Where Does My Heart Beat Now, Celine Dion
6. The First Time, Surface
7. Disappear, INXS
8. Show Me the Way, STYX
9. Sensitivity, Ralph Tresvant
10. All This Time, Sting

(Source: Cashbox Magazine)

LOCAL

Here are the top 10 songs receiving airplay on "Detroit Music Scene," which is heard 4-6 p.m. Sundays (repeated 8:30-9:30 p.m. Tuesdays) on WDTR-FM 90.9.

1. Social Napoleons, **Park the Karma**
2. Time Will Tell," **Jimmy Bones and the Gravercobbers**
3. Sad Song," **Ie Autumn**
4. Be Me a Goose," **Grady Hazy**
5. Revolution," **Mega City Four**
6. Mister Green," **Instant Zoo**
7. Know It Won't," **The Grins**
8. Look in Your Mind," **Incurables**
9. Stay Here," **Missionary Stew**
10. Welcome to the Next Generation," **Dave Rave**