

St. Lawrence
EMC 10th Anniversary 2007
SECOND SECTION

Local youth reaches for her dreams, releases first CD

By DOREEN BARNES

Rebekka Paige started singing Barney songs at the tender age of two. Now 15 years later, at the beginning of May, she's releasing her first CD (compact disc) of ten original country songs, self-titled Rebekka Paige.

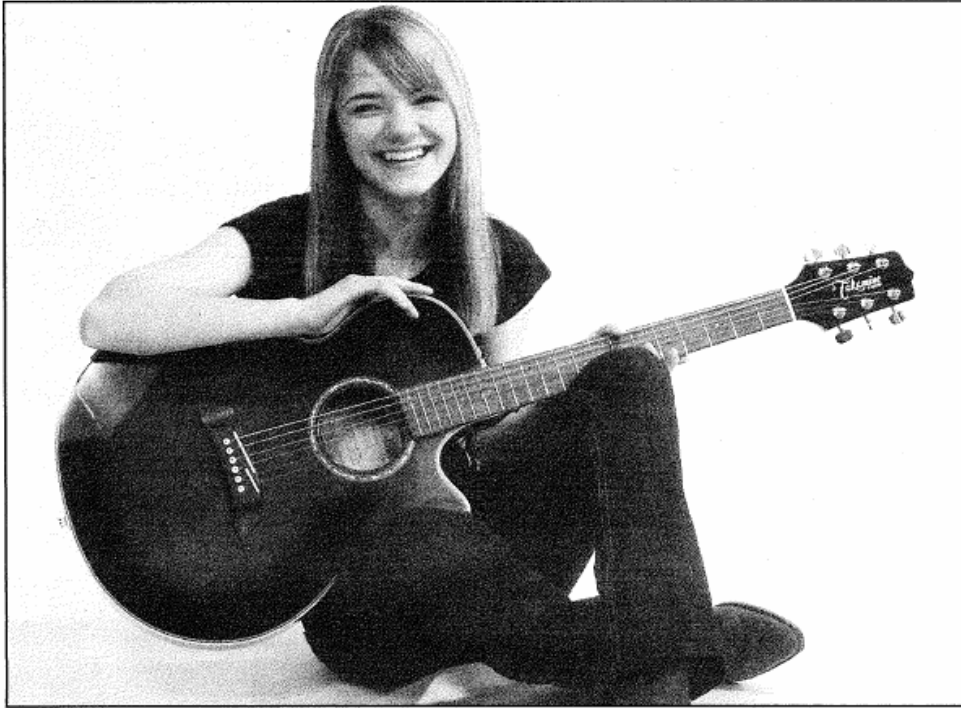
"I co-wrote two of them *Out of Luck* and *Watch Your Back* with Keith Glass, lead guitar player of Prairie Oyster," says Rebekka. "I like to write and perform; perhaps perform now, but as I progress with my writing, I'd like to balance it out and do both."

It's been a struggle for Paige to find appropriate songs for her to be singing at her age. Mike Latocha, Rebekka's manager, father and number one fan, indicated that it was necessary to search for young artist songs. Eventually material was received from New Zealand, California and all over the world. Sifting through the variety of songs Rebekka found a selection that was suitable for her crisp unique voice, one being *Modern Day Cowboy*.

Rebekka's public debut came in Grade 7 when she decided to sing at the school talent show. This was quite an undertaking for her because she's a very modest and private person. Still, she went on and handled the stage technical problems like a pro.

"When I first went out onto the stage they were having difficulties with the microphone," says Rebekka. "They reset the song and I continued on. I sang Leanne Rimes' song, *Life Goes On* as I like her singing and her songs."

At the end of the performance, teachers, parents and students were in awe of the amazing voice that emerged from this slender 12 year-old girl. The experience of a standing ovation that day would be only one of many as Rebekka's musical future began to unfold.



Submitted photo

Rebekka Paige is all smiles as she prepares for what is hoped to be a bright and promising career in the music industry. The local 17-year-old singer-songwriter will release her first CD this May.

Since then, Rebekka along with her band, has been performing at talent shows, sidewalk sales, fundraisers, fairs, festivals, jamborees, telethons, music shows, and concerts, including the Ottawa Super Ex.

Her band is comprised of her brother, Colby Latocha on lead guitar, John Senneker on drums, and Evan Veenstra on bass. Rebekka does the vocals and plays the acoustic guitar.

One of Rebekka's performances that stands out in her mind was the Big V Music Festival, Kutter Farms, Delta in 2007 where she opened for Shania Twain (Donna Huber), with whom she had sung previously.

She's received accolades

and praise from recognized musical artists like Michelle Wright, members of the Road Hammers, and Prairie Oyster which is very encouraging for Rebekka.

Show must go on

When an artist becomes ill, the show must go on and that's exactly what this young artist did at the 2004 Annual Palliative Care Telethon. She had a fever, sore throat and was flushed, but insisted on performing to show her support for this amazing cause. She was scheduled to sing five songs, which meant performing for 30 minutes, but due to sickness, couldn't.

As she left the stage, Telethon Host Bruce Wylie made a remark concerning Rebekka's commitment. He was noted as saying, "There's dedication, as this

little girl should be home in bed and she's up here singing."

Event bookings are being received weekly and her fans can view her upcoming schedule and journal online at her web-site www.rebekka.ca.

One very exciting event is taking place on Saturday, July 12, at Petawawa Civic Centre, Petawawa, Ont. Rebekka Paige and band will be opening for one of North America's hottest country acts, Emerson Drive. This initiative was

undertaken by the Pembroke Kinsmen Club with part of the proceeds being donated to support the families of our troops.

Other future engagements include Edgewood Farms Pancake House, 32nd Annual Festival of the Maples, Confederation Park Concert in Kingston, Brockville Ribfest, Outdoor Music Festival in Westport, and Quinte's Ribfest in Belleville.

Rebekka's CD will be available the first week of May at Elysium Day Spa, 5 Sheridan Mews, Brockville, in Maynard at the General Store and at ShadowFax, 4 Gore Street East, Perth, as well as online.

As this article goes to print, Rebekka's first single will be released to radio stations, specifically Q-county 102.9, Today's Best Country Y-101, Kicks 94.3 in Kingston, so fans can call and request her music.

Everyone has dreams and this St. Mary's Catholic High School Grade 11 student says hers, "is to sing the rest of my life and maybe I'll win a couple of awards, that would be nice. I'd like to sing my own material and develop my writing skills. I've been told to just keep writing and writing, plus collaborate with other writers."

Doreen Barnes is a Brockville freelance writer on assignment for the EMC.

Harlem Ambassadors spread drug-free message

At the final buzzer a basketball in motion can send the message of victory, but on April 30 it will bring a positive message of a drug-free lifestyle to the Brockville community.

Thousand Islands Secondary School invites the community to take part in the first Brockville presentation of the Harlem Ambassadors.

"They are a drug-free team who promote staying in school and staying off drugs," explains Antje Baumann, TISS teacher.

The event begins at 7 p.m. at the school and will feature a basketball game pitting the Harlem Ambassadors versus prominent members of the community. This includes mayor David Henderson, members

of the Brockville Police Service and the Brockville Fire Department.

Tickets are available at the TISS office at a cost of \$8 general admission and \$4 for those 11 - 4 years old.

Tickets will also be available at the door at a cost of \$10 general admission and \$5 for those 11 - 4 years old. Children under three are admitted free.



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