

## In tune

## Dinosaurs still rockin'

By Daniel M. Shapiro  
Gazette staff writer

It takes a special kind of person to don cat makeup, wear a Gothic S&M outfit and soar on a 3-ton contraption above adoring breast-baring women. Naturally, Peter Criss wouldn't trade his job for anything.

A few years ago, though, Criss wasn't playing drums with Kiss. He was on board when the band formed in 1972, but left in 1980. Long-standing differences among members had prevented the original group from getting back together. When a 1996-97 reunion tour came about, a lot of people were surprised, including Criss.

"I thought I'd never get back in the band again," Criss says in a phone interview from Chicago. "We had a lot of unfinished words, and we had to get brutally honest with each other. Now I'm happy to be back. Now this will end with dignity and pride."

The Kiss phenomenon appears far from over, though. A movie is on the way, and the group plans to tour until at least 2000. Fans, young and not so young, continue to flock to concerts.

Although the group might not seem as threatening as it



Kiss' original members, Gene Simmons, Paul Stanley, Ace Frehley and Peter Criss (clockwise from top left), have reunited.

did 20 years ago, its appeal to concert-goers hasn't changed, Criss says.

"People still want to escape," he says. "Kiss can still take you wherever you want to go. There's the same stress in this world."

The group uses myriad special effects to create its escapist environment. Ace Frehley's guitar shoots rockets, bassist Gene Simmons flies across the arena and audience members put on 3-D glasses and watch things

## FAST TAKE

**WHO:** Kiss, with Econoline Crush

**WHEN:** 8 p.m. Saturday

**WHERE:** Five Seasons Center  
**ADMISSION:** \$39.50, through Ticketmaster, 363-1888, and the Five Seasons Center box office, 362-1729

zoom at them.

Such an odd comic-book world might seem inappropriate for a 51-year-old dad, but Criss' daughter never had a problem with it.

"She did a report in school," he says. "All the kids said what their dads did. When they got to her, she said, 'My dad wears 7-inch heels and lipstick and makes a lot more money than your dads.' That pretty much sums it up."

Criss says his band mates and he have gotten much closer than they were before, laughing at things they didn't used to laugh at.

"Now, it's like we're brothers," he says. "We've prevailed as a band and in our own personal lives. We may be the John Glenns of rock 'n' roll, but we'll still kick your ass."

## The holidays bring musical reunions

Sara Epstein writes about the Eastern Iowa club scene for *Weekend! biweekly*. Send music news to *Gazette Music Beat* or online at [gazette@fyiowa.com](mailto:gazette@fyiowa.com). *Music Beat* is online at *The Gazette's arts and entertainment site*, [www.IowaAlive.com/calendar/index.htm](http://www.IowaAlive.com/calendar/index.htm)

By Sara Epstein  
Free-lance writer

Try to imagine a funk band covering one of John Lennon's more far-out tunes, "I Am the Walrus."

Curious? Next week you'll have two chances to catch a band that can make

## MUSIC BEAT

such a thing fly when  
Funk Farm reunites for a pair of shows in Iowa City. Funk Farm, a live music scene staple in Eastern Iowa in the early part of the decade, will lay down the groove once again over the holidays with performances at the Green Room, 509 S. Gilbert St., on Tuesday, and at Gabe's, 330 E. Washington St., on Wednesday.

The former Iowa City-based band consisted of a half-dozen area natives and blended the rock elements of guitar, bass and drums with a small horn section. After forming in 1991, they played consistently — frequently packing Gabe's and the now-defunct Iowa City

Yacht Club — for several years, until band members began graduating and moving away. Those who no longer call Iowa City home have family members here, and the guys pretty much have made it an annual tradition when visiting at the holidays to reunite on stage.

In its hey-day, Funk Farm played mostly covers, including favorites from Jimi Hendrix, Sly and the Family Stone and James Brown, and tapped into what members considered a gold mine — 1970s funk/disco.

At the time, says bassist Marty

Christensen, many people were still in the mindset that nothing good came out of the '70s. Band members, who grew up listening to such music on the radio, took classics from the era and "funkified" them on stage.

Since then, aided by the release of the 1994 movie box-office smash "Pulp Fiction," America has seen a revival of 1970s music and fashion. "Jungle Boogie," a song from the film's soundtrack, long has been in the band's repertoire.

Expect high-energy music that will keep you on the dance floor all night long.

Speaking of reunions, another early 1990s band, Mean Street and the Hell Horns, will play the night after Christ-

mas at the Longbranch Supper Club, 90 Twixt Town Rd. NE, in the front lounge area. The nine original members of the band were from Cedar Rapids or Iowa City and featured four horn players and a rhythm section. Founding member and trumpeter Curt Enget, now a chiropractor in Florida, wanted to create a "kick-butt" horn band to perform the Motown sound. The Dec. 26 show will be the band's second reunion since its split in 1995 and will feature local music luminaries Dennis "Daddy-O" McMurrin sitting in on guitar and Bobby Thompson on tenor saxophone. Music starts at 9:30 p.m. and cost is \$5.

Another rock band native to Eastern Iowa will highlight the music scene this weekend at 3rd Street Live!, 1204 Third St. SE. In conjunction with KRNA-FM (94.1) and Miller Lite, the music hall will host Mary's Little Secret on Saturday night for a mere 94-cent cover. Mary's Little Secret, a 3-year-old high-energy alternative-rock band, has been compared to Faith No More and Rage Against the Machine. The band is hoping the performance, along with a live remote broadcast by the rock station, will acquaint area residents with local musical talent and help create a music scene here.

For a complete rundown of the area's live music on New Year's Eve, be sure to check out a special column in the Weekend! section on Christmas Day.



Sara Epstein  
Columnist

## Billboards

## Associated Press

Following are weekly charts for the nation's best-selling recorded music from next week's issue of *Billboard* magazine. Reprinted with permission.

## TOP SINGLES

- 1 "I'm Your Angel," Kelly & Dion
- 2 "Nobody's Supposed to be Here," Deborah Cox
- 3 "Lately," Divine
- 4 "From This Moment On," Shania Twain
- 5 "... Baby One More Time," Britney Spears
- 6 "Because of You," 98 Degrees
- 7 "Doo Wop," Lauryn Hill
- 8 "Love Like This," Faith Evans
- 9 "Have You Ever?", Brandy
- 10 "Lullaby," Shawn Mullins

## TOP ALBUMS

- 1 "Double Live," Garth Brooks
- 2 "These are Special Times," Celine Dion
- 3 "N Sync," N Sync
- 4 "Spirit," Jewel
- 5 "Backstreet Boys," Backstreet Boys
- 6 "(NU) 1's," Mariah Carey
- 7 "Home for Christmas," N Sync
- 8 "Come on Over," Shania Twain
- 9 "Americana," The Offspring
- 10 "Garage Inc.," Metallica

## ADULT CONTEMPORARY

- 1 "I'm Your Angel," Kelly & Dion
- 2 "True Colors," Phil Collins
- 3 "From This Moment On," Shania Twain
- 4 "I'll Never Break Your Heart," Backstreet Boys
- 5 "When You Believe," Whitney Houston
- 6 "I'll Be," Edwin McCain
- 7 "This Kiss," Faith Hill
- 8 "Truly Madly Deeply," Savage Garden
- 9 "You're Still the One," Shania Twain
- 10 "To Love You More," Celine Dion

## MAINSTREAM ROCK TRACKS

- 1 "Turn the Page," Metallica
- 2 "Fly Away," Lenny Kravitz
- 3 "Kickin' My Heart Around," The Black Crowes
- 4 "Slide," Goo Goo Dolls
- 5 "Psycho Man," Black Sabbath
- 6 "Dragula," Rob Zombie
- 7 "Pretty Fly," The Offspring
- 8 "Still Rainin'," Jonny Lang
- 9 "Celebrity Skin," Hole
- 10 "What It's Like," Everlast

## MODERN ROCK TRACKS

- 1 "What It's Like," Everlast
- 2 "Fly Away," Lenny Kravitz
- 3 "Never There," Cake
- 4 "Pretty Fly," The Offspring
- 5 "Got You," The Flys
- 6 "Slide," Goo Goo Dolls
- 7 "Every Morning," Sugar Ray
- 8 "Celebrity Skin," Hole
- 9 "Circles," Soul Coughing
- 10 "Sweetest Thing," U2

## COUNTRY SINGLES

- 1 "You're Easy on the Eyes," Terri Clark
- 2 "Husbands and Wives," Brooks & Dunn
- 3 "Someone You Used to Know," Collin Raye
- 4 "Let Me Let Go," Faith Hill
- 5 "You're Beginning to Get to Me," Clay Walker
- 6 "Right on the Money," Alan Jackson
- 7 "Wrong Again," Martina McBride
- 8 "For You I Will," Aaron Tippin
- 9 "There You Have It," Blackhawk
- 10 "We Really Shouldn't Be Doing This," G. Strait

## RAP SINGLES

- 1 "Ghetto Cowboy," Mo Thugs Family
- 2 "Doo Wop," Lauryn Hill
- 3 "Pushin' Weight," Ice Cube
- 4 "Whatcha Wanna Do?," Mia X
- 5 "Money's Just a Touch Away," Mack 10
- 6 "Watch for the Hook," Cool Breeze
- 7 "Don't Let It Go to Your Head," Brand Nubian
- 8 "SuperThug," Noreaga
- 9 "The Real One," 2 Live Crew
- 10 "Just Don't Give . . .," Eminem