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# RAVENNA LUMBER

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## Rock Fest features four rock bands for OFD

By Mary Weimer

On Tuesday, May 25, from 6:30 to 11 p.m. Rock Fest will take the stage at the band shell in Pomona Park. Rock music fans will enjoy the music of Riff Raff, The Red Handed, Houses of Illusion, and Snapshot. The event is free.

Riff Raff recreates the power and the presence of the mighty metal monsters AC/DC. The concept of the band originated with G.T. Mason and has evolved since the early 1980s. Riff Raff brings the music of AC/DC to life in a synergy of sound with the loud, relentless raw power of a pile driver that taps into the primal urges of people everywhere and celebrates them. Each member of the group brings over 20 years of experience playing the best in hard rock, metal and blues to the band.

The Red Handed is an alternate progressive rock band with members from Muskegon, Lansing and Big Rapids. The band formed in the summer of 2009 and began writing songs immediately. The Red Handed draws inspiration from bands such as Thrice, The Used, Taking Back Sunday, Circa Survive and Fall of Troy. With heavy, fast paced and high-energy guitar riffs, The Red Handed is loud and “in your face” with reckless abandon. •



Snapshot



The Red Handed

## Then and now

By Al Schneider

“Are you better off now than you were eight years ago?” It’s a question that we often hear from politicians’ lips during presidential campaigns.

Or, how about this one? “Are you better off now than you were back in the “good old days,” like in the ‘30s?” Of course, the answer is, “yes.”

“Old Fashioned Days” can serve as a reminder of how things were back then. So much has improved. Most of us told-timers have bigger and better homes with better plumbing, electrical gadgets, and entertainment centers. Also, we have cars without cranks, power lawn mowers, automatic sprinklers, and so much more. People who passed from the scene during that period would be amazed.

But let me pose another question. “Are we happier than we were back then?”

We have so many reasons to be happier now. As kids, for instance, most of us walked to school. At my house, Mom told me that if the thermometer outside our kitchen window registered less than below -20° Fahrenheit, I could stay home for fear that I might get too cold during my eight-block trek to school. Did I tell you that I grew up in Wisconsin?

Later, I moved to the farm where some kids walked almost two miles to get to a one-room schoolhouse. Life was tough and the rewards were few. It was, after all, the Great Depression. We learned to make the most of bad situations, and life went on. I recall how difficult it was to get my hands on a nickel to buy an ice cream cone.

Still, I don’t recall a lot of griping. As kids, we found games to play or created some. Adults found pleasure in neighborhood card games. When we could afford gas, we would sometimes take a ride through the countryside in our old Essex.

Most of us weren’t politically astute enough back then to realize that the depression was holding on much longer than it should have. We trusted the government to make good decisions for us. Looking back, we now know that it was World War II that finally lifted us out of the economic downturn. In any case, we came away determined never to let this happen to us again.

Enter 2009. Here we go again. Apparently, we have learned nothing, neither how to avoid going into a depression or how to get out of one. There are wars and threats of war all around us, none of which are sparking the economy. Our Treasury has initiated massive spending policies in an attempt to alleviate the problem. Meanwhile the ranks of the unemployed are expanding. Much of the nation has already lost faith in our leadership and is resorting to protests.

This time, unlike the last time, few, if any, are singing “Happy Days are Here Again.” The people are in no mood for singing anything.

What will happen to us? Time will tell.

In the meantime, enjoy the memories during Old Fashioned Days. There are lots of fun times packed into this short holiday period, and a few smiles will do you good. •

## Book sale in May

By Mary Weimer

The Friends of the Fruitport Library will be holding a pre-owned book sale on Saturday, May 22, 2010 at the library. All types of books and videos are available at just \$3 per bag. Bags will be provided.

A few selected books and videos will be priced individually, as well.

Your donated books are appreciated. They may be dropped off at the library (corner of Park and Third streets) during open hours, Monday – Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon. •

## Washday

By Dorothy Anna Birkholz

Years ago, washday took all day. I remember in 1923, when I was five years old, I would watch my mother do her laundry every Monday. First, she had to make a fire in the big black iron stove. There were no hot water heaters in those days, so all the water had to be heated in big pots. It was not bad in the winter, but in summer when it was 90° to 100° outside, the house sure did get hot.

My parents were renting a four-room cottage. The landlord and family lived in the basement. Mom had to do the laundry in the kitchen. Dad cut the back off of a wooden chair, and Mom put her big galvanized washtub on it.

After the water was hot, she filled the washtub and then put in the white clothes and her washboard. She then put a piece of wet clothes on the washboard and rubbed a bar of American Family Soap on it. When it was soapy, she would rub it over the ridges on the washboard. Poor Mom. Her knuckles were rubbed raw when she finished washing all the clothes, sheets, towels, blankets, etc.

While she was scrubbing, all the pots of water were heating for rinsing the clothes. She had to empty the tub with a cooking pot and dump it into the kitchen sink. Then she would fill the tub with hot water by transferring the water with a pot. Every piece had to be wrung out by hand. Imaging wringing out big sheets and blankets!

In the summer, if the weather was nice, she hung the wash on a pulley clothesline. It was stretched from the back porch to the shed in the alley.

In the winter, or if it was raining, she had to hang the wash in the kitchen. She stretched a clothesline from a hook at the bedroom door to a hook by the kitchen window. During the day, she hung up the small pieces — towels, pillow-slips, etc. At night, after my sister (who was 17 at the time) and my dad and I were in bed, Mom hung up the big pieces — sheets, blankets, etc.

Tuesday was ironing day, and it was just as much work. A fire had to be made so Mom could heat the iron because there was no electricity. She had two irons. While she used one, the other was getting hot. There was no wash and wear in those days.

It might sound like this was out in the country, but believe it or not, this was in Chicago, Illinois. Now that I am 90 years old, I certainly am thankful for my electric washer and dryer and wash and wear clothes.

Oh, and I just remembered that the washtub was also our bathtub every Saturday. Once again heating the water on the big black iron stove in the kitchen.

When I was six years old, we moved to a six room flat. Then Mom could wash down in the basement in her tub. There was a little heating stove there, so she could make a fire in it.

There was also a gas stove down there. Mom had a big wash boiler. She heated water in it and cut up a bar of Fels Naptha Soap into it. She boiled the white clothes in it to keep them white.

I had to stand on a chair by the stove and take the clothes out of the water with the wooden handle from a broom. I dropped the clothes into her big tub of water to be rinsed.

We had an attic there where Mom could hang the clothes during bad weather. There was also a yard to hang the clothes in the summertime. •