

Tom Petty — A Tough Guy Who's Not So Tough



Tom Petty

By GREG BEEBE
Sentinel Staff Writer

With Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, who invade a sold out Civic Auditorium Monday night, everything that's roll 'n' roll is fine. Real fine.

Forget all the ambiguous titles and classifications — Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers are a hard working rock band which plays its third Santa Cruz date Monday in a long-awaited show sponsored by Wild West Productions.

When the group played its first Santa Cruz gig in August, 1977 at the Catalyst, it was attended by a loyal smattering of hardcore music fans who were just beginning to come on to the fresh new sound of the Heartbreakers.

Now, one super album and an AM radio hit later, the band is on the verge of releasing its second lp, due in local vinyl shops around May 20.

"I think it's actually better than the first album," Petty said. "We had more time, the band is better. We were all really pleased with it."

Shelter Records, an offshoot of ABC Records, took a chance when it signed the Heartbreakers in '76. The group responded with an effort which even they hadn't expected. "We were all really surprised," said Petty about the success of the first release and the subsequent influx of attention thrust upon himself and fellow members Mike Campbell (guitars), Ron Blair (bass), Benmont Tench (keyboards) and Stan Lynch (drums).

"I sort of dug a hole and got down in it. We're still pretty much the same bunch of people," Petty said.

The Heartbreakers play rock

that vibrates the entrails. Petty has a stern sensitivity for vocal nuances and a daring penchant for downbeat. He writes hard songs with fire and sass, drawing from his own personal ex-

periences. In that crusher of a tune, "Fooled Again...I Don't Like It," Petty screams of sweet revenge. "We pointed at someone," he said.

What gets this tough guy (who's not really a tough guy) really upset — tee'd off to the max? "Animated chewing gum

commercials." The smog around his Los Angeles digs doesn't bother Petty, though, because "I don't really go out in the daytime that much. It's a good town for us."

Petty is originally from Florida, but inevitably he and the Heartbreakers are taken as another British punk band, possibly because of the boyish bad looks and delinquent charm of the soft-spoken Petty.

"People make that mistake a lot. Hey, we're proud to be Americans," Petty said with a laugh.

Petty believes the punk-new wave has about run its course. The good bands which came out of the new wave, he said, will

make it, and the stragglers and exploiters will not.

"The obituaries are written on what we would call punk rock. It's a shame the public had to have bullbleep shoved down their throats," Petty said.

Petty likes the musical merits of California. "I'm starting to think California in general is really good because it digs music."

The Santa Cruz performance will be one of six stops on a T.P. & H. mini-tour. The band will then return home for a short while before embarking on a longer mission.

"We've just started to headline our own tour and we're

Will Geer Will Filed

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Actor Will Geer's \$350,000 estate will be split among six persons, according to the terms of his will.

The document was filed in Los Angeles County Superior Court Monday naming his daughter Ellen, 37, as executrix. The other heirs include his daughter Kate, 39, son Thad, 27, adopted son Roland Meyers, 38, former wife Herta Ware, 62, and her daughter Mellorah Marshall, 21.

Geer died in a Los Angeles hospital last month at the age of 76 from respiratory arrest.

Geer's career as a stage, movie and television actor spanned more than half a century. He spent the last six years of his life portraying the crusty, white-haired Grandpa Walton on the popular, prime time series, "The Waltons."

Crane Benefit Account Set Up

SAN FRANCISCO — A blood donation account has been established in the name of Joe Crane, co-founder of the Hoodoo Rhythm Devils, who is currently convalescing in the U.C. Medical Center's Moffitt Hospital after a bout with leukemia.

The account is intended to help repay the many pints of whole blood required for Crane's recent treatment. The account is being carried at the Irwin Memorial Blood Bank, 270 Masonic in San Francisco. Blood banks in other areas also have reciprocal agreements with the Irwin Memorial Blood Bank, so that persons can contribute through their local Red Cross chapters by specifying that they want their donations to go to the Joe Crane account.

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