

Currents

William R. Toler, Currents Editor
(252) 633-2757
william@indieregister.com

New Bern on Parade



Santa Claus, surrounded by children, waves to the crowd of spectators Dec. 3.

PHOTOS BY
WILLIAM R. TOLER
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER



Eight-month-old Destinee Strickland looks on at her first Christmas parade.



New Bern's Rocky the River Rat offers holiday greetings.



Ethan Gaskins, 10, climbs a tree to get the best seat on the street to view the parade.



Dinger the dog looks on as Jerry from Pals for Paws throws candy.



From the Halls of Montezuma to the streets of downtown New Bern, the Marine Corps band marches on.



Cyclists, on one wheel or three, roll down the street.



Firemen from Township Six sit atop one of the department's trucks and wave to the crowd.



Retired Gen. Tom Braaten serves as Grand Marshal of the parade.



Jamie Turner, with daughter, Skip Waters, and Wes Goforth from WCTI-12 wave on.



No parade would be complete without the Sudan Shriners.



Members of CCC's Encore! show choir sing holiday classics.

Divided he stands

Creed singer Stapp forges his own musical identity

REVIEW BY COREY FRIEDMAN
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

Scott Stapp's thunderous bellow is proving that lightning can strike twice.

The former Creed frontman returns to the mottled arena rock landscape with his solo debut, "The Great Divide" (Wind-Up), a pleading, peeling album whose sound is as innovative as it is familiar.

Joined by guitarists Aristides Rincon and John Curry, bassist Mitch Burman and drummer Mark Archer, Stapp builds on Creed's energetic sound without duplicating it, letting austere lyrics and jackhammer beats lead him back up the Billboard charts.

"The Great Divide" chronicles deception, betrayal, forgiveness and faith, with a few barbs possibly directed at Stapp's former bandmates. Snapshots of solitude and seclusion pepper Stapp's songbook, with a literary allusion opening the power ballad, "Surround Me."

"They say no man's an island/But I tend to disagree," Stapp intones. "I guess they've never seen my island/And where it lies at sea."

The 10-song release features a soaring, anthemic single, "The Great Divide," after which the album was named. Brooding melodies erupt in the first several tracks as Stapp leads baleful chants in "Reach Out," "Hard Way," and the aptly titled "Fight Song."

"Divide" is a triumphant release, but dubbing it a solo debut doesn't adequately credit Rincon and Curry, whose searing guitar riffs and blazing rhythms corral an otherwise meandering album.

Archer's thumping beats pair well with Stapp's sonorous roars, producing an aggressive sound that, while a bit formulaic, makes for listenable and memorable music.

As a songwriter, Stapp never strays far from the ambiguous spiritual lyrics that spawned unending debate among Creed listeners regarding the band's religious beliefs. More cardiac than cerebral, Stapp's songs weave together the two basest human emotions

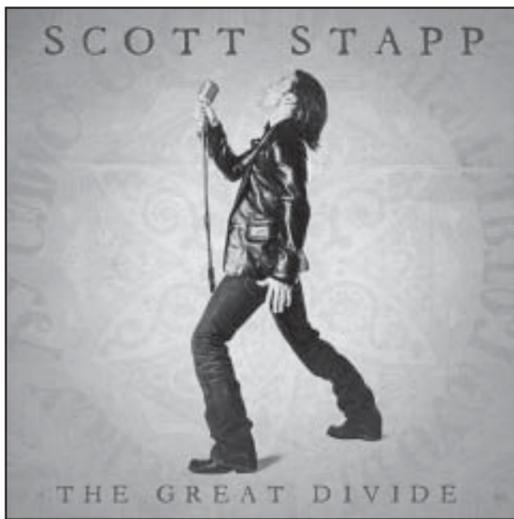


IMAGE COURTESY OF WIND-UP RECORDS

— love and hate — and seem to touch on nearly every feeling in between.

"Will you follow me?/A shoulder's sometimes nice," begs "Sublime." "I will be there for you/When a safety net feels right/So give your hand to me/When you need anything."

The album is marred by spelling errors and inconsistent capitalization in the liner notes that appears to result more from carelessness than artistic expression. But ultimately, Stapp will be graded on a generous curve, and spelling doesn't count.

"The Great Divide" establishes Scott Stapp as a marquee singer-songwriter and introduces four talented and as-yet underrated musicians. At most, it's worth a Grammy. At least, it's worth a listen.

Contact Corey Friedman at 633-2757 or at corey@indieregister.com



Dec. 9
Narallis
Mickey Milligan's, New Bern
9 p.m.

Hands of Rue
w/*Grotesque Butchery*
Salty Dawg, New Bern
9 p.m.

Dec. 10
Narallis
Salty Dawg, New Bern
9 p.m.
\$5

Dec. 15
Parmalee w/Socialburn,
Natasha Beddingfield
Bob Martin Ag. Center,
Williamston

Dec. 16
Two Weeks Notice
Mickey Milligan's, New Bern
9 p.m.

Dec. 17
Two Weeks Notice
Bootleggers, Havelock
9 p.m.

Tuesday Nights
Eddie Kwasnick
Open-mic Night
Harvey Mansion,
New Bern
Free

Wednesday Nights
Stretch
Island Grille,
Bridgpointe Inn
New Bern
Free

Bands: Send your gig announcements to william@indieregister.com

Christmas Concerts

STAFF REPORTS
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

V-103 to bring in Edwin McCain

GREENVILLE — The Craven Community Chorus will open for headliner Edwin McCain at the WMGV-103.3 Christmas Concert Dec. 10 at the Greenville Convention Center.

Tickets are currently available for \$15 general admission and \$20 for VIP seating at local ABC Phones locations and at www.v1033.com.

Church to hold dinner theater

RIVER BEND — River Bend Baptist Church will present "King of Glory, King of Love" Dec. 15-17. Doors will open at 6:15 p.m. Thursday for the 7 p.m. performance. Friday and Saturday nights' presentations will include a

dinner at 5:30 p.m. with seating at 6:30 p.m. for the 7 p.m. show. Tickets are available at Kingdom Bookstore and Manny's Christian Books and Music. For more information call 633-6544.



INDEPENDENT REGISTER PHOTO ILLUSTRATION/WILLIAM R. TOLER

Helm for the holidays

Festively decorated boats sailed down the Neuse and Trent rivers Saturday, Dec. 3 at the annual Coastal Christmas Flotilla. The boats began the journey at the East Carolina Yacht Club before floating down to the convergence of the twin rivers and around Union Point Park, where local weatherman Skip Waters announced each one and gave the audience background information. The vessels then docked at the Sheraton marina where winners were announced. First-timers joined flotilla veterans in the yearly event.

32' and Under Winners	33' and Up Winners
Mr. Jim - Dr. Wright Shields 1	Destiny - Ron and Emily Helling
Trustworthy - Stuart & Josephine Dorsett* 2	Over Indulged Again - Art & Donna Davis
Ban-Gull - Larry Baldwin for Neuse River Foundation 3	Bifrost - Newton Collyar

* See picture above

ONLINE EXCLUSIVE

Game review of "Battlefield 2: Modern Combat"
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