

The Funsters Spice Things Up ... With Curry

Members of local rock band The Funsters have been entertaining audiences in coastal Sussex — and throughout the Delmarva Peninsula — for more than three decades. And for the first time, a woman has joined them.

Nancy Curry was invited to become part of the group in January and had her first gig with the group the next month at a private party in Dover.

“She fits,” says frontman Sherman Ward. “She is a pro in voice, on stage, in audience rapport and in her character, appearance and sense of style. Even more impressive, she’s not a diva! She’s for real, and that’s why and how she wins over an audience.”

Having her in the band allows it to expand its playlist, Ward adds. Her vocal range “enables us to select songs that we otherwise couldn’t touch.” And there are just some songs that an audience “wouldn’t really buy” if sung by a man.

Adds Funsters drummer and vocalist Ed Shockley: “It’s been a fun adventure finding songs for Nancy to add to our repertoire, opening a whole new window of musical possibilities.”

Curry describes The Funsters, as its name suggests, as a fun group: “We’re always laughing.” But beyond that, she’s impressed by their professionalism. “I’ve only been doing this with them for a few months, and I’ve already learned a lot about performing, how to front a band, how to work with other musicians. They’ve been playing together so long,

they can read each other’s cues just looking at each other. There’s something to be said about getting to work with a group like that.”

Curry and her husband, Mike, live in Long Neck. As the acoustic duo Ginger, they perform locally during the summer. (Mike is also a member of local rock band Love Seed Mama Jump.)

Taking after his parents, their 8-year-old son, Charlie, is “a really good singer,” his mom says. “Even when he was a toddler, we could tell that he could hear and match notes.”

Curry grew up in Philadelphia and was in her first band, all girls, while still in elementary school. “We didn’t play any instruments, and we literally just sang in front of our classmates. But that was my first experience performing and figuring out, ‘Hey, I can sing!’ I don’t think that I had thought about my voice as an instrument before that.”

At Indiana University of Pennsylvania, she studied theater and, after she started playing the guitar and writing her own songs, had her first paying gig. Also at IUP, she entered a battle-of-the-bands competition. “I remember getting up there and performing the very first song I’d ever written. My knees were shaking.” (That knee-shaking business doesn’t happen anymore. “I’m lucky that my nerves left me a long time ago,” she says.)

After moving to coastal Sussex in 2001, Curry taught music in summer camps, after-school programs and family classes. She started teaching at



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Information about where The Funsters, with new singer Nancy Curry, are scheduled to perform is on the group’s website, thefunsters.net, and on its Facebook page. Recordings of some of Curry’s original songs are available on YouTube. (Search for them under her maiden name, Nancy Micciulla.) “I still get a measly royalty check every year, so somebody out there is listening,” she says.

The Jefferson School, a private institution near Georgetown, in 2018; when that school was absorbed by the Sussex Academy near Georgetown, she went there as a music teacher. This year, she is teaching social studies to fourth- and fifth-graders at the school.

Curry is a part of the Clear Space Theatre Company in Rehoboth Beach, helping with its summer camps and teaching the “Babies on Broadway” class there for 3-to-5-year-olds. She also helps to lead the singalong at the annual Rehoboth Beach Christmas tree lighting.

Curry stumbles a bit when asked what it is about singing that she enjoys. “I don’t know,” she says. “I don’t think that I can pinpoint what makes me so happy about it.”

But she soon finds her footing:

“My grade school best friend still teases me that we would go shopping at the mall and a song would come on that I knew and I would start singing. It didn’t matter where we were or who heard me, I would just burst into song.

“I love being in front of an audience. But I get as much joy when I’m by myself, singing in the car or on the way to work. Singing is just an all-round, absolute joy.” ■

— Lynn R. Parks



Nancy Curry, the newest singer with area rock band The Funsters, rehearses with frontman Sherman Ward and band members, from left, Greg Mack, Ed Shockley, Keith Mack and Cody Leavel. Curry is the first woman to be a member of the group; with her voice, the band has been able to expand its classic rock repertoire.