

# Local bands square off in rock showcase

by Ashley Hess  
Staff Writer

Students can celebrate St. Patrick's Day by listening to some of the best bands from around the area as they compete tonight for spots in Soundfest later this semester.

Virginia Tech Union's Alternative Sounds Committee is hosting the Virginia Rock Showcase at 6.00 p.m. in Squires Old Dominion Ballroom.

The Virginia Rock Showcase "gives people the opportunity to see great talent in the state of Virginia," said Frank Bedoe, director of VTU's Alternative Sounds Committee and a sophomore business information technology major. "They get to see people who are going to be big in the future."

The five bands will play indie-rock music that is influenced by several different styles such as

jazz, classical and old-school classic rock.

"Students get to see people our age who are in college and it's interesting to see what they've made of themselves at this age," said Gina Xenakis, member of the Alternative Sounds Committee and a freshman marketing management major.

About 100 people came out to last year's Battle of the Bands, which featured 10 bands. One local and one regional band were chosen to perform at Soundfest, a big forum that features nationally known bands. The winners were Jet Noise and Races to April, who are playing again tonight.

This year's competition features

five local bands that will perform in 20-minute sets.

Stars Fell On, one of the bands performing, formed in Blacksburg in the spring of 2003. They describe their music as a combination of emo, pop-punk and rock.

Shapiro is a two-year-old band from Harrisonburg, Va. They describe themselves as having experimental roots and mixing indie-rock with pop and say they gather influences from jazz, classical and electronica.

The Rebel Yell of Hampton, Va., whose influences are artists such as Coldplay, Radiohead and Sunny Day Real Estate, will perform an acoustic set.

Jet Noise of Blacksburg will

also perform. "Our style of music, I would say, is melodic indie-rock. We draw influence from bands like Thursday, Jimmy Eat World and Taking Back Sunday," said Ross Costanza, vocals and guitar.

Races to April is a four-piece melodic rock group from Harrisonburg, Va., that formed in the spring of 2002.

"They're all really talented bands," Xenakis said. "This is an amazing line-up."

Members of the Alternative Sounds Committee will choose the top two bands at the end of the night.

These bands will have the opportunity to play at VTU's Soundfest on April 16. They will be playing with popular artists such as The Juliana Theory, Hot Rod Circuit, Bayside, Murder by Death and Michelle Citrin. The cost of the Virginia Rock Showcase is \$3 for students and \$5 for non-students.

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