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Family ties Roust band together

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Shapiro, the headlining act at tonight's Roustabout!, may be named after bassist Carl Shapiro, but the band gets its family element from the other three members.

Jeremy Teter, who sings and plays the keyboard, is the cousin of brothers John and Nathan Granofsky, who play drums and guitar, respectively.

"Everyone in our family is musical," John Granofsky said. "All our parents and aunts and uncles, everyone plays an instrument."

Teter met Shapiro in middle school and started a band with him in high school. After it disbanded, he called upon the help of his cousins. They also had a saxophone player but have since decided they sound best as a four-piece. Teter said he liked the family dynamic because it meant everyone could be a little more honest with each other.

"You don't have to worry about someone never talking to you again," he said, "and we're very familiar with each other's faults."

Beyond that, the band carries out the familial value of compromise, making sure to balance the visual aspect of its live show with the audio and realizing the members are writing music both for themselves and for the audience.

Even further, on their current tour, the band has squeezed all its equipment and a month's worth of clothes into what John Granofsky called "a mom van," a Dodge Caravan formerly owned by a band member's mom.

"It should have a soccer ball bumper sticker on it somewhere," John Granofsky said. "Once, at a show at a club, it almost got towed away because someone thought it was some mom."

Roustabout! promoter Jesse Ruegg said the band was "terrific" in its fall visit to State College .

Granofsky didn't really have a genre with which to label his band, but said Shapiro drew from a variety of influences from across several decade -- from the Beatles to Queen to David Bowie to the Arcade Fire. Even with so many influences, though, he said the band has a unique sound.

"We just try to put as much energy into it as we can," he said.