

Elk Rapids News

ELK RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

Switchback to rock Peterman for Grass River Natural Area

(July 08, 2010)



Grass River Natural Area is staging a special benefit concert featuring the award winning band Switchback in Peterman Auditorium at Elk Rapids High School this coming Thursday, July 15th, at 8 p.m. Switchback is on their annual tour through northern Michigan and northern Ontario and they are making a stop in Elk Rapids to play at this very important benefit event. If you have never heard this amazing band, here is your chance to enjoy a truly unique musical experience.

Switchback is the duo of Marty McCormack on bass and vocals, and Brian Fitzgerald on guitar, mandolin and vocals. The show will feature a combination of Folk Rock, Country, Blues, Cajun and Celtic songs from Switchback's 12 albums, plus a good mix of tunes from the Beatles, Van Morrison, Johnny Cash, Stevie Ray Vaughan and The Band (one their biggest influences). Switchback tours the world every year playing festivals, performing arts centers, opera houses, theaters and pubs from Iowa to Canada and from Ireland to Italy. In 2009 Switchback traveled to almost half of the states in the U.S. and played to international audiences in The Netherlands, Ireland, England and Canada. Last February, they toured Ireland and Italy for three weeks, including a special performance at the Shrine of Pompeii and other concerts on the Amalfi coast.

"We are very excited about our return to Michigan and Canada," said Marty McCormack. "Both Brian and myself have deep roots in Canada, especially with the province of Ontario. So it is a bit of a homecoming. The folks on St. Joseph Island have adopted us as their own, so we feel very welcome and happy to play."

"As to the Michigan side, we have been lucky to have the friendship of Jim and Karen Sundberg, who first saw us play at the now-defunct Traverse Brewing Company," he said. "They immediately understood our approach to music, which is to not allow the run of the mill "niche marketing" of the big labels define how we write and perform our songs. So we struck up a partnership of sorts, where they have helped us reach further into Michigan as well as Canada. We in turn have helped inspire their own kids to follow a path into music, as well. It's been a great, fun, friendship."

The Sundbergs also appreciated the band's mission of helping out others through our music. "We had grown up playing benefits in our traditional Irish band and carried that custom into Switchback," McCormack explained. "Our first attempt at a serious benefit was when we raised over 2K for St. Jude's Children Hospital in Memphis. We decided to travel from Austin, MN to Austin, TX, playing venues along the way and raising money. We got as far as Wichita, but the success of the venture led us to play more benefits. So the show at Grass River is one in a long line of shows that we feel helps build an extended community, what we like to call our 'WayGood World' after our label WayGood Music."

The concert is sponsored by Alden State Bank, Bayside Real Estate, Bellaire Family and Cosmetic Dentistry, Elk Rapids Esthetic Dentistry, The Village Market & Twisted Fish Gallery. Tickets can be purchased online at www.TREATickets.com, The Village Market in Elk Rapids & Rapid City, or by calling Grass River Natural Area at (231) 533-8314.