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Library-sponsored Competition Yields Rewards for Local Teen Bands

In Celebration of Teen Tech Week 2009—“Press Play @ Your Library”

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Luck of the draw placed their performance near the end of Saturday’s live concert, but when the judges’ verdict came in *Sleepwell* found itself on top with the promise of 15 hours of studio recording time at a local recording studio and an on-air interview on Ground Zero Radio, 90.5 FM KSJS.

Originating in a two-piece acoustic band—*Make Believe* from Morgan Hill—the band now boasts five members: Craig Groves (17), drums; Jonathan Borgia (16), guitar/vocals; Robin Smith (17), guitar/vocals; Jon Pollard (17), vocals/keyboard and Dalton Campbell (16), bass. Attending various schools from San Jose to Morgan Hill, the group manages to perform with an overall unity of sound and appearance.

Competing bands were evaluated by a panel of community representatives on the basis of musical ability, originality, professionalism and stage presence.

“It was another great line-up,” said Paul Kauppila, a returning judge from the inaugural competition held in 2008. Kauppila is a Reference and Instruction Librarian at San José State University, a record collector and popular music writer/researcher, with 30 years of radio experience. Speaking on behalf of the judges’ panel Kauppila continued, “The choice of first place winner was excruciating, but in the end *Sleepwell*’s stage presence and the quality of their original material won out.”

The “Battle of the Bands” culminates San José Public Library’s observance of Teen Tech Week, a national initiative sponsored by the Young Adult Library Services

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Association that is aimed at teens, their parents, educators and other concerned adults. The purpose of the initiative is to ensure that teens are competent and ethical users of technologies, especially those that are offered through libraries such as DVDs, databases, audio books, and videogames. Teen Tech Week encourages teens to use libraries' non-print resources for education and recreation, and to recognize that librarians are qualified, trusted professionals in the field of information technology. Teen Tech Week began in 2007 and has a general theme of Get Connected @ your library.

While the submission and voting processes required use of new media, the competition also underscored the role of the public library as a place where creativity is encouraged; where young adults are [Free2Dream](#) and find resources that help them reach toward their goals.

Fifteen bands took on this year's challenge. Contestants entered the competition by recording a performance, posting it online and then submitting a link to access their performance. All entries were posted on the official Teen Tech Week "Battle of the Bands" web page and viewers were invited to cast their vote for up to three bands. Over 1900 votes were cast.

The five bands receiving the most popular votes were invited to continue in the competition by giving a public performance before a live audience and a panel of community judges, which also included: Leticia Domingo, Radio DJ (89.7 FM, KFJC); Andrew Kutsenda, Lead Coordinator for PinUp Productions; along with Brandon Kwock and Bryce Freeman, Co-Founders of "The Study" Music Venue.

Second place, carrying a \$100 gift certificate, was awarded to *Jackie Rocks Band*, a hard rock/power pop trio from Santa Cruz County. Their members include: Jackie Partida (14), lead guitar/lead vocals; De'Andre Warren (14), bass/backup vocals and Joanna Lindblad (15), drums.

Third place, carrying a \$50 gift certificate, was awarded to *Aural Assault*, a classic rock, metal and cover band from Morgan Hill. Band members include: Jon Jon

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Blunden (15), guitar/vocals; Jackson Short (14), drums/vocals and Michael Cloutier (15), bass/vocals.

One of the winning bands will open the March 27 show at “The Study,” a new all-ages music venue at the Almaden Community Center (6445 Camden Ave., San Jose).

The other bands performing in Saturday's live concert were *Legacy* and *Reincarnated Revival*, both from San Jose. The competition had no geographical restrictions. The fact that participants came from as far as Morgan Hill and Santa Cruz County illustrates how the Internet unites communities. Links to the original contest entries will remain posted on the “Battle of the Bands” web page (www.sjlibrary.org/battleofthebands.htm) through the end of March.

For more information about library programs and services for young adults, visit the Library's [Teens](#) page, contact your [neighborhood library](#) or call King Library Youth Services at (408) 808-2183.

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