

# Producing most of CD for Caroline Blue by himself

By **GEORGE AUSTIN**

Because of lineup and scheduling problems, Wayne W. Johnson did almost everything, except for the drumming and gang vocals on Caroline Blue's first full-length album called "Not for the Innocent."

Johnson said the album took about a year to make and said it was difficult work since he had to do all of the guitar, vocal and bass work on the CD. But Caroline Blue is his baby, since he started the band, and he really cares about the music that he wanted to put on the album.

"It was quite an experience," Johnson said. "It was great, but I would like to do it with the full band next time. It was a lot of pressure on you."

Monster Mike Merrifield, who is not the regular drummer for the band, played that instrument for the CD.

The album, which was produced at Strangeland Audio in Phoenix, N.Y., by Scott Patnode, came out late last year and has



**CAROLINE BLUE:** (left to right) Johnny Sniper (bass, vocals), Joe Boyle (drums), and Wayne W. Johnson (vocals, guitar).

12 songs on it.

"I couldn't ask for a better guy to work with," Johnson said of Patnode. "He was very easy to work with. It was a very good environment."

Before making "Not for the Innocent," Caroline Blue had put out an EP called "Slaves for

the Hourglass."

Johnson played bass in a band for five years. He has played guitar for various bands. Caroline Blue is the first band where he has done major vocal work. In other bands, he had done back-up vocals or sang a song or two.

Johnson said he is looking forward to future recordings with Caroline Blue bassist and vocalist Johnny Sniper.

Johnson said some of the songs on the CD have gotten some radio airplay. He said he is just starting to push the album. He said "Pain," "Love Me or Leave Me," "Stay," and "Nothing Would Satisfy You" are the songs on the album that have been getting the most positive response. "Pain" is a heavier song while "Stay" is more on the lighter side.

"We basically play in classic KISS style, but sometimes go a little lighter or heavier," Johnson said.

On the new album, Johnson wrote all the lyrics and a majority of the music. Monster Mike made some suggestions on the music for three or four of the songs. Caroline Blue was started in 2000 and has had some lineup changes since that time. Sniper joined the band in 2006.

Johnson has been writing all of the songs for the band, but

Sniper has brought some material in for the next album and will be bringing more. Johnson said he has a backlog of songs they will be working on. He said he will also write new material.

The band's new drummer is Joe Boyle. Johnson said Caroline Blue just played a show with the new lineup and the performance went well. Johnson said the members of the band want to take it as far as they can. He said the band has made music videos, sold some albums in other countries and wants to keep building on that. Johnson likes the creative aspect of being able to come up with an idea for a song in his head, putting it on paper and then seeing it come to reality on a CD. For the most part, Johnson, who is from Syracuse, N.Y., is a self-taught guitarist and bassist. He has a bachelor's degree in music from Oswego College, but said he learned how to play the instruments mostly through magazines, mail-order courses and from fellow musicians.

# The wide ranging musical repertoire of the Doom Buggies

By **GEORGE AUSTIN**

When it comes to their musical influences, The Doom Buggies list a very wide range of bands from The Who to The Ramones to '70s arena rock.

"We have some metal. We have some Monkees pop. We have some funk," Bruce Allen, vocalist and guitarist for The Doom Buggies, said. "It depends upon what we feel like."

The Doom Buggies consist of Allen, drummer and vocalist Alex Leacock, bassist Carl Biancucci and guitarist and vocalist Chuck Freeman.

Allen said The Doom Buggies get compared to a lot of garage rock and retro bands.

The Doom Buggies were established 14 years ago. Allen was in another band called Pop Gun. He hit it off with a drummer from another band his band played with. When the drummer decided to leave his band, he and Allen started a new band.

Biancucci was in a lot of garage rock bands when they were big in Boston. The Doom Buggies originally had another bass player for five or six years who decided to go back to school and get married. Biancucci had seen The Doom Buggies play a number of times and wanted to help keep them together, so he offered to play bass guitar.

"A lot of those old school Boston

guys liked our music and so they would come to our shows," Allen said. "Some of them still do."

The new self-titled CD of The Doom Buggies, which was released in November of last year at the International Pop Overthrow Festival, has received a good local response. The Doom Buggies have gotten airplay on a lot of the larger Boston and college radio stations. The song "Nightmare" has been played a lot, and the CD is available at the band's shows, Newbury Comics and online at cdbaby.com and iTunes.com.

The band started recording the CD in Vermont with producer Keith Weiss of Verdant Studios. Allen said the studio is "in the middle of nowhere" in the Green Mountain state, but said the band can stay at the studio for the weekend when it goes there. Allen said it took about three years to make the CD.

"We had a lot of material we had to go through, rework and re-finish," Allen said. "Then we had to master it."

Allen said The Doom Buggies is working on six new songs and got a new guitar player so it is a four-piece band instead of a three-piece group. Allen said he has wondered what it would be like to add a second guitar player to the band and so Freeman was offered a place in The Doom Buggies about seven months ago. Allen said it took a little bit of ef-



**PHOTO BY TOM UELLNER**

**THE DOOM BUGGIES:** (clockwise from top right) Carl Biancucci (bass), Bruce Allen (guitar, vocals), Alex Leacock (drums, vocals) and Chuck Freeman (guitar, vocals).

fort to play the band's old material with a four-piece group, but he said new songs have been written with two guitars. Allen said he also wanted a third vocal harmony for

the band's live shows. He said Biancucci is a busy bass player who doesn't sing.

"As he's getting into the band, we're finding more places for him

to sing and add guitar fills," Allen said of Freeman. "It's turning out pretty good."

The Doom Buggies play out two to three times a month. They are asked to do a lot of last-minute gigs because other bands like to play with them and clubs like their music. Allen said The Doom Buggies like to play with all kinds of bands, whether they be heavy metal or pop. Most of their shows are played in Boston. Allen and Freeman live on the North Shore of Massachusetts. Leacock and Biancucci live just to the west of Boston.

Allen writes pretty much all the songs for The Doom Buggies but he does not tell the band what music to play.

"For the most part, I don't have to say much," Allen said. "They know pretty much what the band sounds like."

Allen said he writes about whatever pops into his head, from girls to relationships with friends. He said if the songs are not insightful, he tries to make them entertaining. He said he tries to keep the songs simple. He said he hopes to have some collaboration on the writing with Freeman when they have some time this summer.

Allen has been playing in bands for 20 years since he was in college. His first band was a rap band like the Red Hot Chili Peppers with