

Best of the Quad Cities: Best Night Out

Written by administrator

Wednesday, 13 February 2008 03:18

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Best Karaoke

1. Rusty Nail

2. Tiddley Tap

3. RIBCO

At 2606 West Locust Street you can find the best karaoke in the Quad Cities. Our readers have selected the Rusty Nail for this honor, and it's easy to see why. You can sing to your heart's desire five nights a week, Sundays through Thursdays, from 9 p.m. until 1:30 a.m. ABC Karaoke has a large number of songs to choose from, ranging from country and easy-listening to classic and hard rock. While you're doing your best Michael Bubl , Cher, or Toby Keith, don't forget to ask the fun-loving bartenders and servers about their nightly drink specials and wonderful menu selections. The "Nail," open seven days a week from 11 a.m. until 2 a.m., also offers live music on Fridays and Saturdays and has Mike & Mary performing before karaoke on Wednesdays.

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- **Rick Martin**

Best Place for Cheap Drinks

1. Len Brown's North Shore Inn

2. Bleyart's Tap

3. Kelly's Irish Pub & Eatery

3. Tiddley Tap

Best Venue for Live Music

1. Redstone Room

2. RIBCO

3. i wireless Center/The Mark

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The Redstone Room leads a bit of a double life. On the one hand, it lets local bands on its stage. On the other hand, it's hosted acts of national renown. (In the last week, the venue has brought in Grace Potter & the Nocturnals and Chris Smither.)

The national angle was by design, said Santo Pullella, Redstone Room manager and talent buyer. The local angle was out of necessity.

The equipment, production specs, and acoustics of the Redstone Room were meant to be topnotch, Pullella said. "That was all built to be the best," he said. That's why the Redstone Room is able to land acts that normally wouldn't play such a small venue, with its capacity south of 300 people. National acts are further attracted by the not-for-profit mission of the Redstone Room's parent organization, the River Music Experience. "They know that we're teaching music to the community," Pullella said.

Plus, he added, bands enjoy playing smaller places, as long as the venue, equipment, and staff are professional. "They still like to do intimate shows," he said.

With local acts, Pullella said the venue needed to reach out into the community, to get people to buy into the Redstone Room concept. "I had to stretch out to the local bands," he said. "If we hadn't gotten the local scene on, I might not be talking to you right now." Upcoming local bands

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include Speedfinger, Katalina, and Drunk Dead Gorgeous.

As for the future, Pullella does have a wish list, ranging from jazz guitarist Al Di Meola to the alternative metal of Mushroomhead to surf-guitar legend Dick Dale. It's that type of eclecticism that earned the Redstone Room the title of the best music venue in the Quad Cities.

- **Jeff Ignatius**

Best Venue/Organization for Live Theatre

1. Circa '21 Dinner Playhouse
2. Adler Theater
3. ComedySportz Quad Cities

Best Place to Get Arrested

1. District of Rock Island

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2. Downtown Davenport

3. Rock Island

Best Casino

1. Isle of Capri

2. Jumer's Casino Rock Island

3. Riverside Casino & Golf Resort

Best Late-Night Cheap Eats

1. Ross' Restaurant

2. Village Inn

3. Taco Bell

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Best Locally Brewed Beer

1. Bent River Brewing Company
2. Blue Cat Brew Pub
3. Front Street Brewery

With some stiff competition in the Quad Cities, two things that distinguish the beers of Bent River Brewing Company from its peers are variety and volume. The brew pub at 1413 Fifth Avenue in Moline typically has eight of its beers on tap, and has had as many as 14 at one time, said brewmaster Corbin Ayers.

Those range from the smooth and easy - such as the Mississippi Blonde and the American Wheat - to the sturdy, muscular Uncommon Stout to the ... errr ... *distinctive* spice of Jalapeño Pepper Ale.

Ayers said that later this week he'll be releasing a coffee beer - with a different flavor profile from Uncommon Stout, slightly darker and made with a different type of coffee. A Pilsner is scheduled for March.

Ayers said he began home-brewing three years ago, and that he's had to re-work some of the

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Bent River recipes - because of the hop shortage, for example.

He declined to name a favorite Bent River beer, saying that it depends on the season and the time of day.

For a Quad Cities winter such as this, I heartily recommend the Uncommon Stout, and submit my plea for more abundant Jingle Java.

- **Jeff Ignatius**

Best Place to Find Unusual Brews

1. Old Chicago
2. Bent River Brewing Company
3. Blue Cat Brew Pub

Best Place to Dance

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1. Carriage Haus

2. 2nd Ave.

3. Keller's Ranch

Best Gay Bar

1. Club Fusion

2. Mary's on 2nd

3. Augie's

Best Sports Bar

1. Rookies Sports Bar

2. Sports Fan Pizza

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3. Overtime Sports Pub & Grub

Best Place for Bar Games

1. Jack's Locust Street Tavern

2. Fargo Dance & Sports

2. Rookies Sports Bar

Score! The exclamation shouted when you've won something, correctly answered a question, or scored a point, run, or goal. With all the games available for folks to play while relaxing at Jack's Locust Street Tavern, you're bound to hear someone shout "Score!" sometime during the hour. Jack's LST has some familiar bar games - three pool tables, tabletop shuffleboard, two dart boards, and foosball. Among the video games are Big Buck Hunter and electronic Bean Bag Toss. (Guess you can't put someone's eye out playing that one.) Try your hand at the vintage "Quik Poke" coin-operated poker/dice game. Although the signs in the front windows at Jack's say "Warm Beer" and "Lousy Food," bartender Michelle tells us that the beer is indeed cold, the food is great, and the employees are *very* charming. Celebrating 30 years at this location, you can visit Jack's seven days a week until 2 a.m. at 331 East Locust Street in Davenport.

- Rick Martin