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Johnny's Grand Re-opening

Fatty Haze and Chronic play to benefit MDA this weekend

By MELISSA MCGUIRE

Daily News Staff Writer

Johnny's of Custer is hosting a Grand Re-opening this weekend, featuring bands Chronic and Fatty Haze.

The event will have a two-fold purpose: display the newly remodeled Big Room and benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

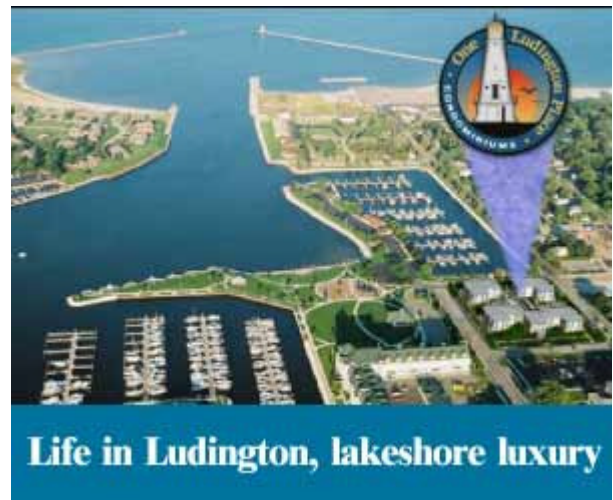
Johnny's has remodeled the more than 50-year-old dance center.

Vic Urban, Johnny's co-owner, said the room has capacity for 400 people and he hopes for a packed house.

"We specialize in dancing here, the bands are both danceable stuff," he said.

All of the members of Fatty Haze are from Mason County. The band has played at Johnny's many times is looking forward to the show.

"We have been together since 2003 and have made some changes along the way, but we are a serious band," said drummer Brian "Woody" Woodhouse.



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The band is a "working band," Woody said, and is scheduled to play 100 shows in the next 20 months.

"We have been through three bass players in the last six months," Woody said. "It's not just all fun and games being in a band, it is work."

Fatty Haze is a variety band, playing a mix of music from classic country to classic rock and learning songs their fans request.

The band, unlike others they say, uses all electric and digital equipment. Woody said he has electric drums and the band doesn't use any amplifiers on stage.

"It's like a whole semi-truck full of amps, the sound we make," Woody said. "Other bands come look at us and like sit there and scratch their heads wondering how we can make a sound like that with the equipment that we use."

Fatty Haze has played other benefits in the area.

"We did a benefit for people who need help with heating costs called 'Rock for Warmth,'" he said. "We knew gas was getting expensive and some people couldn't even fill up their (propane) tanks because there was a \$1,000 minimum on the tanks, people couldn't afford that much, and they couldn't just go put \$100 in their tanks."

The band plans to host a local talent showcase benefit in November, with the winners opening up for a Fatty Haze show at Johnny's.

"If I were a young kid, I would be really excited to play at a place like Johnny's, it's been around for 50 years now," he said.

For more about Fatty Haze, visit <http://www.fattyhaze.com/>.

Another variety band, Chronic, will be playing for the first time at Johnny's on Saturday.

Band member David West said being from Whitehall and the Bridgeton areas, they have already played at a lot of bars in Muskegon and are looking to get their name out there.

"I got in contact with Johnny and sent him some of our stuff and told him we were interested in playing there," West said.

Chronic has opened for Skid Row, Molly Hatchet and Blackfoot at the Sandy Corley Memorial Run.

"We have an explosive show," West said. "We really get into the energy of a good crowd and we hope that people will have fun there."

The band plays a variety of rock music, from Lynyrd Skynyrd to AC/DC and Sammy Hagar.

Chronic's current lineup has been together for two and a half years and plays many benefit shows.

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“We gave the Sandy Corley Memorial Run \$1,000 for the Hackley Cancer Center and we did a benefit show for the Hospice of Oceana and Muskegon counties, which we were able to raise \$1,500 for. If there’s a cause, we do whatever we can to play there,” West said.

Members of Chronic are excited about meeting Johnny Urban, owner of Johnny’s, and say they hope there is a fantastic crowd for the show.

Information about Chronic’s shows, the band, and music samples are available at <http://www.chronicrock.com/>.

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