

Want to rock to help needy? Pabstolutely!

Assorted ramblings from the world of entertainment:

- The outdoor patio at Up a Creek Tavern in Howland was packed Sunday for the Blues Benefit Reunion Barbecue.

Members of some of the most popular Mahoning Valley bands of the late-'60s and '70s as well as current performers came together for a full day and evening of music.

The event was organized by Tommy McCoy, a 1973 Howland High School graduate who has recorded with such artists as Levon Helm and Garth Hudson of The Band, Commander Cody and Stevie Ray Vaughan's Double Trouble rhythm section of Chris Layton and Tommy Shannon. McCoy was back home for his high school reunion and put the show together as a benefit for breast cancer patients at Forum Health Trumbull Memorial Hospital. McCoy was born at TMH and his wife, Vicki Taylor McCoy, died 10 years ago from breast cancer.

The musicians all donated their time and Up a Creek own-



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er Mark Matash donated use of the tavern and the food for the event.

The day was a hit financially. Christine Ruggieri, director of Community Relations at TMH, said about \$4,700 was raised for the hospital's Ireland Cancer Center. About \$1,000 came from the auction of an electric guitar donated by The Music Center and autographed by all of the performers. The person who made the top bid donated the guitar back to the hospital, and Ruggieri said they plan to hang the instrument in the cancer center as a tribute to McCoy's wife.

It also was a hit musically. I was only there for a couple hours but heard plenty of great music. McCoy played blues and rock standards backed by Damian Knapp and his band, Fester Presley. When McCoy

wasn't playing, he was working the crowd like an infomercial spokesman as he pumped up the auction price on the guitar.

John Sferra (Glass Harp), Bill Lord (who played in the Measles with Joe Walsh) and Mark Baranski formed an incredible power trio, playing a set that included songs by Stevie Wonder and The James Gang. Sferra laid down a thunderous beat while handling the lead vocals on "Crossroads."

Jim Golen won me over with his first song (a cover of Steve Earle's "Copperhead Road") and he got some help from the members of The Bridge on Jimmy Buffett's "A Pirate Looks at Forty."

The crowd seemed to have a great time basking in their old musical memories (this was the rare show where I lowered the median age of the audience by being there) and creating a couple new ones.

For those missed it, McCoy indicated he'd like to make it an annual event.

- There's another musical event for charity this weekend

with a somewhat younger appeal.

The Royal Oaks, billed as the oldest bar in Youngstown, will have its second Pabstolutely Fest on Saturday.

The music starts at 12:30 p.m. with Larry Shankman, followed by Rocket Radio, Undercover Saints, Album, Thunderider, 1Point3, Hobo Gang..., B.J. O'Malley, Turbo Lovers, Guitar Bomb, Rebreather, Gil Mantera's Party Dream and The Sweet Ones until The Cheats take the stage at 12:20 a.m.

The music will be featured on an outdoor stage, and vendors will sell a variety of goods.

Admission is free but donations will be collected for ISLE and The Purple Cat, both programs for adults with disabilities. Additional information can be found at www.myspace.com/theroyaloaks1 and by calling 330-744-5501.

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