



The 100s keep alt-country flame burning

By Jason Young

Uncle Tupelo started the movement. The 100s are keeping it alive in eastern Iowa.

The "movement" is alternative country, or "alt-country," an amalgam of country, rock, punk, folk and blues.

The 100s features six veteran musicians who have played most styles of music throughout their careers. Their songs feature three- and four-part harmonies and a layered sound bolstered by banjo, mandolin, lap slide, dobro and fiddle.

"We play 14

instruments between the six of us, so there's a lot of variation," says guitarist and mandolin player Pete Raine, who's also a member of the Wild Shoe Mongers along with multi-instrumentalist Dale Beeks.

The 100s play many originals and a few Uncle Tupelo, Son Volt and Joe Henry covers. The band's founders, lead singer Dave Pedersen and rhythm guitarist Jeff Schmidt, write most of the music and lyrics.

Pedersen and Schmidt have played as a duo for several years. They've slowly added musicians to the lineup, including bassist and banjo player Ken Kemper and drummer Tim Looney.

Raine and Beeks are the newcomers. Pedersen and Schmidt first met the pair at an open-mic night in Shueyville. Last November, Schmidt handed them a demo and asked them to join the band. They accepted in January of this year and



by March the six-piece band was born.

"The music found us and took on a life of its own," Raine says.

Word spread fast about the new alt-country band. Crowds grew dangerously large for the first several shows and popularity hasn't waned.

"It really is cool to have a fan base of people who know you by the songs you play," Raine says. "Most of them don't have any idea what 'alt-country' means. They just like what they're hearing."

The 100s are in the studio working on a new album. For more information, visit www.the100s.com. (Note: The site will be up soon.)



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