Written by By Dee Velasco For the Sun
Friday, 15 December 2017 10:47



SpeckFest hits nine years in Gallup's heavy metal scene

They say that music makes the world go 'round. That was definitely true on Dec. 8 - 9 in Gallup. The cold nip in the air couldn't stop music lovers and metal heads from enjoying different concerts around the area on those weekend nights.

ArtsCrawl was in full swing, with local bands rocking the crowd. Negative Zero performed, and acoustic performances also took place along Aztec Avenue from different artists.

The Gallup Downtown Conference Center had a rap show going on, featuring Razakel and the Slice Girls, Omega Sin, Don Orias, Thommy Nekro, Flipsyde, and special guests Ill Nickel, Bizirk, and Earn1.

One concert, called SpeckFest, was highly anticipated in the rock and metal genre and was held at Wowie's Event Center.

Marking its ninth year, Speck Entertainment brought in numerous local metal bands to rock the house. Bands on the bill included Testify, Shadow Remain, Faceless, Quell the Occult, Phx Amongst The Dead, Born of Winter, Unsheathe, Almost Lost, and Klendathu.

But the real attraction at the SpeckFest show was the headlining band, “Butcher Babies.” A sea of black clothing greeted the metal band as they took the stage Dec. 8.

Butcher Babies’ music has been described as heavy metal, groove metal, and thrash metal, and they are especially known for their aggressive stage appeal.

What makes Butcher Babies unique are the two front women, Heidi Shepherd and Carla Harvey, whose antics have caught the attention of many fans.

Shepherd and Harvey are both from Los Angeles, and formed the heavy metal band in 2010. They gained success with their high-pitched screaming vocals and sultry costumes, one of which involves placing black electric tape across their breasts.

The band took the name from the Plasmatics song, “Butcher Baby.” They added their own style and flare and proved to be a hit.

Having interviewed the band in 2013 at the Mayhem Festival in Albuquerque, they made true on their promise to come back to New Mexico.

“We love playing New Mexico and the fans are just super crazy and we love that, so definitely we want to come back,” Shepherd had said after her 2013 performance.

BUTCHER BABIES SHOW PROMOTES LOCAL BANDS

Promoting their latest album, *Lilith*, which dropped in October, the band took the stage on Dec. 8, and did what they do best – rock the crowd. They also performed songs from their other albums, *Goliath* and *Take it Like a Man*.

Having Butcher Babies perform in Gallup was an early Christmas present for the fans as well as for the bands on the bill who were excited to open for them.

One local opener was Shadow Remain.

Drummer Eric Joe, along with singer and guitarist Everett Jim, was thrilled to be sharing the stage with Butcher Babies.

“It’s actually pretty cool, I saw them in Albuquerque the other day and they were bad ass!” Joe said.

The vocalist Jim agreed.

“It’s an honor to be on SpeckFest, and for Shadow Remain to be on stage with Butcher Babies is an honor too,” he said.

Reese Tsosie, a vocalist for Quell the Occult, said the band is barely a year old, and to be playing at SpeckFest with Butcher Babies is mind blowing.

“It was so awesome and felt so unreal and exciting, and glad to be here,” Tsosie said. “I can’t believe it’s almost a year since we started. I feel blessed and hope to continue into the next year.”

Nate Ashley on drums couldn’t believe it either.

“It was like an awesome vibe and really felt all hyped up,” Ashley said.

Tsosie said the band plans on going into pre-production either this month or the beginning of the New Year and hopefully will record five new songs before April 2018.

No stranger to the metal scene, Irv Wauneka of Born of Winter was happy to be playing in Gallup again, but even happier because this was his first time seeing the Butcher Babies.

“We haven’t played Gallup in a long time and it feels good to be back here, I had fun despite some technical difficulties,” he said. “It’s great meeting new friends and I’m excited to meet the Butcher Babies, I’ve never seen them perform so I’m excited to catch them.”

For more info, visit Speck_Revelation on Facebook.

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