

PROBABLE CAUSE IS ABSOLUTELY GUILTY



by Bruce Gifford

Probable Cause is the prime suspect in the infamous case of *Dance 'til ya Drop Rock 'n' roll*, the band's slogan. The moon was full and it was the night of the equinox. This writer was at Cheers To You in 12131 S.E. Holgate Blvd., to investigate Probable Cause at the scene of the alleged dropping. The band was on a dimly lit stage playing classic rock 'n' roll. This lineup is familiar, a person could be sure that something was afoot.

Bass player Marv Slifman, has played with the band for eight years, the newest member to join. That's a long term! The Beatles were only together for four years before they broke up!

The only original member of the band is guitarist/singer Greg Dawson. He books the band, sings and plays guitar. The other two members are Dana Watson on drums and Mark McDermott on guitar and vocals. It's a testament to these players that they've been able to stay together so long and you can hear the result of their long-held relation in their playing.

A silent member who deserves notice is Sharon Dawson, Greg's wife, a major part of the crew. She helps haul gear, does sound checks and helps with the stage mix, does the mailing list sign up sheet and other types of promotion.

She's an inspiring force in the band's makeup and is well known among Probable Cause's following. On the dance floor, she weebles and wobbles but never falls down.

A virtuoso lineup of players does not guarantee an exciting band. Technical competence is important but does not always lead to success. Probable Cause has that special chemistry that has kept them together and in demand. They have a big fat log in their fun furnace that energizes their musical core and radiates the excitement that people need. When you see 'em, you'll hear it, see it, feel it, get in to it and do it, dance 'til ya drop!

Cheers To You has been around for a while. It was formerly Club 122, a topless bar. There is still a mirror behind the stage and along the side of the dance floor, left from the exotic dancer era of the bar. Several years ago, they had a jam on Wednesday nights featuring Kelly Dunn on drums and Tim Helms on guitar and vocals. They stopped having live music a few years ago, but now the music is back!

Cheers To You has not changed much. It's got a large dance floor, surrounded by comfortable seating, good food from the kitchen and a well-stocked bar. Their menu includes steaks, grilled specials, chicken tacos and appetizers, such as nachos. The wood panel interior with dimmed bar lighting, including a couple of banks of black lights, creates a comfortable stay. A couple of pool tables and video games around the bar are provided for entertainment. The quesadilla and beer are both good menu choices.

During their first set, Probable Cause played *What I Like About You* by The Romantics, *Rock'n In The USA*, *You're Mama Don't Dance*, a Tom Petty tune *You Wreck Me*, *All My Lovin'* from the Beatles and *Kryptonite* from 3 Doors Down. The vocals on all these were excellent. Everybody in the band helps with the backup vocals, which makes songs like *What I Like About You* sound totally convincing. The audience responded on the dance floor and everyone had a good time.

It's said that eventually people start to drop on the dance floor at Probable Cause events. This writer really wanted to witness this, but, because the alignment of the moon, earth, sun and stars and wife across the table, it was time to leave, while everyone was still dancing. So, it will have to wait 'til next time to witness the drop thing.

If you are snooping around Portland for a band guilty of playing fun classic rock tunes that make you wanna dance and have fun, then make sure to add Probable Cause to your suspects list. You'll find them absolutely guilty of playing high-energy classic rock and stealing the show whenever they can.

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