

LOCAL NEWS

Strange Days lead audience to The Doors

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For the Record Gazette

No storm could rain on Strange Days' parade. Not with Jim Morrison on stage.

As ominous clouds hovered, the audience and weather was on edge last Thursday at Banning's Playhouse Bowl, but the performances of The Doors tribute band was edgier.

The band, composed of lead singer Jason Tosta as Jim Morrison, keyboardist Michael Jacobson as Ray

Manzarek, guitarist Robert Carsten as Robby Krieger, and drummer Derek Smith as John Densmore, provided a great performance.

Strange Days performed many of The Doors' classics, including, "Light my Fire," "Hello, I Love You," "Riders on the Storm," and "People are Strange."

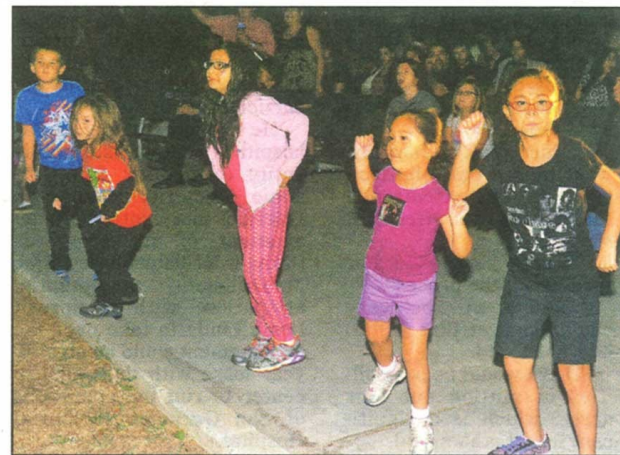
Although most of the audience members had either heard of The Doors or had heard their music, fewer were familiar with Strange Days, or had ever seen them play before.

"I've heard The Doors music before. They're beautiful," said audience member, Derek Biby.

Some of the audience had even been listening to The Doors for most of their lives.

"I don't know Strange Days, but I've been listening to The Doors since I was a little girl," said Paola Guerrero.

Guerrero was given an opportunity to share her love for The Doors with Tosta when he called her to come sing with him. He knelt down at the edge of the stage to hold the microphone to her.



Young audience members danced to the music performed by Strange Days during a concert at the Playhouse Bowl.



Photos for the Record Gazette by Carl Booth
Members of the band, Strange Days, brought the music of The Doors to Banning on Aug. 21

She was excited and happy to have the chance to sing with him.

The band was lively, accurate in costume and behavior, and upbeat. Band members never stayed in one place because they were always moving around the stage to perform — The Doors were known to do just that, espe-

cially Morrison. Tosta frequently played with his microphone cord, often swinging it around.

Strange Days also got the audience dancing in front of the stage. Along with singing, Tosta would also play a maraca and, like Morrison, Tosta would run and jump around

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the stage as he and the band performed.

Tosta would also interact with the audience members throughout the show. Some of his most memorable interactions with the audience, along with singing with Guerrero, included letting a little boy play with his maraca, and later when he accepted a red bandana from one of the audience members.

After letting the little boy play his maraca for a while, he asked for it back, finished the song and then said that the little boy had kept better time playing the maraca than he did.

As for the red bandana, Tosta had put it over his shoulder, and tied it to his microphone pole, but it eventually travelled around the stage. Tosta would shake it around in the air during his performance and when he was done with it he tied it to the headstock of Carten's guitar.

Tosta, a resident of Los Angeles, said, "There were some happy songs and in a way they were kind of dark. I just found myself haunted by just the way it was coming into my ears and settling with me. Even at that age it drove me to start searching

out and listening to their music."

The interactions helped the audience open up to the band members a little bit and broke the line between audience and performers. Some of the audience even said things to Tosta in between songs from their seats or used lighters to go with the atmosphere.

Tosta said that he had not seen people actually light their lighters in a long time.

The summer concert wouldn't have been the same without the intermission performance by Citra Benhar, 13, and Tory Humphrey, 15.

Coming up with their own choreography, the hip-hop-contemporary dance using Drehz's "Torn" amazed everyone watching.

Benhar said, "It was an awesome experience and we both had tons of fun. Dancing is our passion and we love performing."

Annette Salazar, 23, residence of Banning, said that she was at the concert to do a class review for school, but was glad she came nonetheless.

"Me and my husband agree it was energetic and fun experience, it was great seeing the people enjoy it this much," says Salazar.