

Student dreams of career in music

By Penticton Herald Staff
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NOV 26
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Jonathan Paul Babich is a student at Okanagan College (Penticton campus) and a graduate of Penticton Secondary School.

"JP" works part time as a cook at the Hooded Merganser, plays guitar and sings in a local band called The Pasties. He has a supporting role in the forthcoming production of Hair, presented by Soundstage Productions.

The Herald met with JP for some Small Talk.

Herald: The Pasties. How did you come up with that name?

JP: My bandmates Rob and Harley wanted to call us Paste. I didn't like it.

It was Sept. 24, 2008, and Rob and I were in Vancouver seeing the Smashing Pumpkins reunion tour. We were talking with my sister, who said, 'You're not going to call yourselves the Pasties?' When we heard that, we just knew it.

You're 6-4. Did you play basketball?

Yeah. I couldn't score, so I quit.

How can you be the tallest kid on the floor and not score?

I think it was my sense of co-ordination, and I tend to walk into things sometimes.

I did play hockey and rugby, and I love to snowboard.

I knew I liked music more than sports.

Who was your first musical influence?

MJ (Michael Jackson) for sure.

I remember being five years old and dancing to the song from Free Willy. I performed it in front of my whole family. There was such a grooviness to it.

How did you feel when heard about Michael Jackson's death?

It was on my prom. All I could think about was when I'd dance to Billie Jean. Luckily, the DJ played it that night, and everyone was dancing hard for Michael that night.

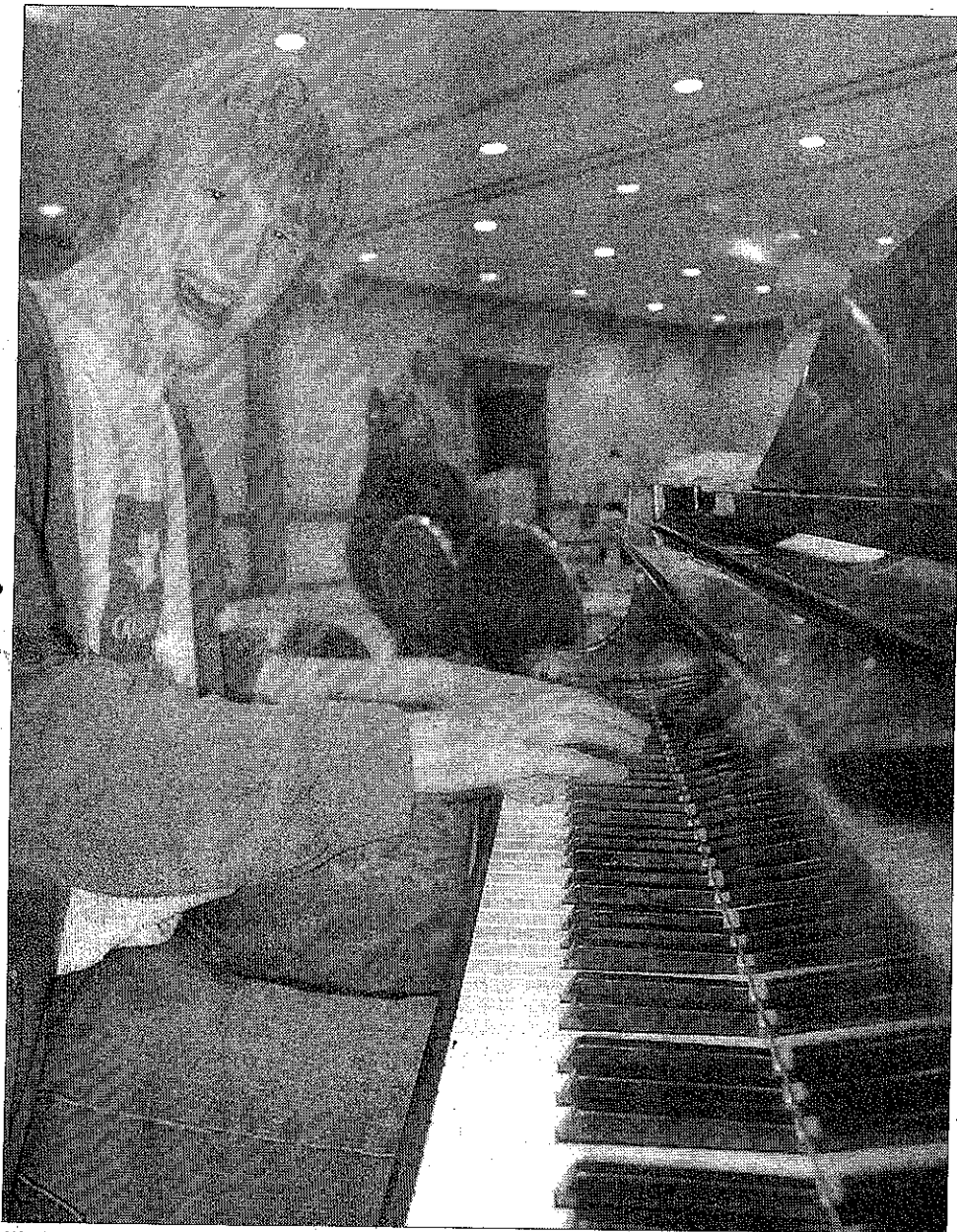
He died on a positive note and he died a hero.

What are you listening to these days?

Incubus is one of my favourite bands. I'm really into blues. Taj Mahal is sweet. I like the new Flaming Lips album.

I'm also now listening to a lot of Beatles.

The Grateful Dead's Lonely Hearts Club Band is a good



JAMES MILLER/Penticton Herald

Jonathan Paul Babich belts out a song during a rehearsal for Hair. The guitarist and singer with a band called The Pasties gave up early on a life in sports and instead pursued music after being inspired by Michael Jackson.

What's your favourite food?

Pizza, with just cheese and some ranch dip; sushi and patty.

Your band is extremely energetic and enthusiastic on stage. How did you develop that?

I saw a show with a bunch of different bands when I was 13. It was my first concert experience, and I was able to feed off that energy.

Do you get tired after a night on jumping around on stage?

No. I'm out of breath, but never tired.

Favourite movies?

Nightmare Before Christmas and Alice in Wonderland were both good musicals. I liked Blow with Johnny Depp and Almost Famous.

What are your career ambitions?

I want to own a record label. The record industry kinda sucks right now, but I love music and definitely want to do something that has something to do with music.

What's the coolest Christmas present you ever received?

I had a Constantina (accordion) given to me. It

had been in our family for years, originally belonging to my great-great-uncle Florian. That was probably my favourite gift. I'll walk around the house playing it, and if I get a nice little melody going, I'll work on it.

How did you get into Hair?

I saw the peace sign and I was pretty into that. I saw the movie and was kind of amused. I liked some of the songs (in the movie). The more I found out about it, the more I liked it. And the songs in Hair are great.

Finish this sentence. The greatest athlete of all time is . . .

Bobby Orr, but that would be hockey. I'd have to think on that one.

You're a teenager. How late are you capable of sleeping in to?

Until the sun doesn't reverse. Any time really.

What skills does your older sister have that you wish you had?

She's good at school work and she has a good time management system. That's what I need to do — develop time management . . . but I'm going to.