

profile



Dog Only Nose

Or How I Conquered The World Through A Cutest Dog Contest, An Introspective Profile Of George "Little Georgie" Rossi

By Greg Jackson - Article photo by Rob Howard/Cover photo by Laura Brazak

George Rossi aka "Little Georgie" of The Shuffling Hungarians fame has once again thrown himself into a campaign to enlighten and raise the collective consciousness of our community. (Thank you Connie Chung)

Well known for his extravagant and individually brilliant previous attempts, Rossi has chosen the vehicle of entering his Shih Tzus Huckleberry and Doodle in a worldwide cutest dog competition. Using long developed theories around web-based social networking sites, he's recruited a small army of believers with the promise of spending the entire prize (an annuity he would sell) on a Hawaiian luau victory celebration for his top participants. The Cutest Dog Competition is sponsored by All American Pet Brands, offering ONE MILLION DOLLARS as the grand prize. Awarded through 12 weekly internet voting contests to determine 12 finalists, then 4 semi-finalists, then a winner. As this article is published the competition is entering the final week of 12. Huck and Doo have placed in the top 30 of 80,000 entrants the last 5 weeks, the last three in the top 10 and top 5 of week 10!

The story of Huckleberry and Doodle has become a viral phenomenon on facebook and myspace as voters from as far away as England and Australia are participating. Rallied by an outpouring of creative input from the participants, the campaign has become and always was about much more than a dog contest.

It always has been about more, when we reach for something outside ourselves it brings energy to the spirit, fire to our creativity and joy to our collective conscience. The driving force behind his endeavor is the back story, best told in his own words, can be found at www.huckanddoo.com under "The Story of Huck and Doo".

Needless to say George's eloquence rivals his musicianship. The dog's birth and survival are the essence of their campaign and the heart of George's mission. He'd like us to look beyond our normal everyday lives and imagine a better collective existence. Think of what happens here each March. Amidst freezing cold and wind driven snow the communities energy gathers behind The Orange as they begin competition in the NCAA tournament and our spirits are entwined. We live and die with each taken jump-shot and the heat and passion grows with each game win. Would it not be intelligent to apply this theory to other things? Of course it would. Consider the possibilities if we actually reached beyond the lowest common denominator status our town is relegated to. What if our individual creativity helped raise our community to discussion on a national level?

This is the story so far. While some have perceived the mission as crazy, meaningless and even annoying, the band of followers keeps growing. At the time of this writing Huckleberry and Doodle were in 5th place during week 10 with 2 weeks to go after this.

Consider the idea of thinking larger than a dog contest, think where the power of positive action could rise different facets of our lives. Take a moment to imagine, believe in yourselves and take the small risk of looking silly. Our community deserves more, your friends, family and you deserve more.

We hold music eternally connected to our souls don't we? It's why you read this paper and how you've read this far into this piece. There are much bigger things afoot for this group of pranksters, they believe in themselves and deeply desire more for everyone.

This campaign is raising the visibility of Syracuse and Central NY, there is a huge meatball being served and all everyone has to do is realize what's in front of them and dig in. 80,000 dogs in a nationally covered story and Huckleberry and Doodle are in the top ten, let's get together and push them over the top. The opportunities are boundless. If 80,000 entrants each had 25 friends, that would mean 2 million sets of eyes looking in on our community if Huck and Doo reach the semi-finals. What does this say to you?

Why not check out more of George's writing and the progress of Syracuse's dynamic doggie duo on their quest to win The Cutest Dog Competition at www.huckanddoo.com, sign the guest book and tell them where you're from, Herby-one does! **Smell the pineapple, it's pineappley!**

shows clearly on stage as the interactions between band members and the crowd made everyone feel a part of the performance.

The Z-Bones consist of: Lorne Coon on bass, Louie Fortin on drums, Mike Gridley on guitar and vocals, Mike Lounsbury on percussion, harmonica and vocals and Ed Zacholl on guitar and vocals. As one of central NY's longest running bands their style is well honed and reflects on each track of their newest release.

zy.go.ma.tic opens with the straight forward "You Must Be Kidding", penned by Eddie Z., telling a tale of love gone wrong and turned back around on the protagonist. "Not Enough", the first Mike Gridley track, sounds reflective of the "almost the one" feeling we all have in our lives.

Quick harmonica and guitar licks set the emotion and the backing harmonies set that wanting feeling at first listen. "Cross The Line", co-written by the whole band is one of my favorites from their live performance and reads well on disc, especially when the layered harmonies kick in. Almost wistful in it's appreciation of a chance given. "Shimmy Like A Skeleton", the next Ed Z. offering is a classic Z-Bones "get up and dance y'all" rave up. One of the best examples here of the energy this band brings to a live concert. "Feels So Good" lets the boys show off their reggae element through the rhythm guitar line, Louie's drum feel and syncopated lead vocal line. The track placement is perfect as the overall feel of the cd continues to build. "Hard To Explain" is the next story in the quest for harmony, happiness and how we move on to the next chapter. A thematic element that seems to run through this recording.

"Morning Glory" sounds victorious with it's upbeat drive and soaring guitar solos, almost a spirit content with it's place ranging from it's light acoustic opening feel to it's well resolved ending. "Coulda Woulda Shoulda" shakes it's fist at longing while finding contentment in a man's being what he really is, no matter what the perception of that may be to others. The guitar leads come through even stronger here, much like the character in the song. Very effective.

"Everybody's Neighborhood" has a very Dead-like feel in the groove, easily translated to live performance. When Mike blows his harp you can picture the crowd moving, then the band grooves so hard you can't help but want to move. The closing track, "Put Some Miles On This Year" is the perfect finisher of this well crafted collection recorded at Ulster Street Studios, produced and mixed by the band themselves.

Quite eclectic in it's opening, this piece is The Z-Bones at their most oblique. Giving the listener space to inject their own meaning and feel once again that they are a part of it. This is The Z-Bones doing what they do best, taking a big part of themselves and sharing it with all of us.

Be sure to catch The Z-Bones live, their communal feeling reflects strongly there and you'll find yourself moving and smiling as much as the band does performing. You can learn more and keep up with the band at their website: www.zbonezone.com and on facebook at facebook/The Z-Bones. **By Greg Jackson**

The Z-Bones – zy.go.ma.tic



Sandra Jackson/Visual Design - 2009

The Z-Bones may well be one of Syracuse's best-kept secrets, well, better called a treasure. Boasting a nearly two decade history they've coined the phrase, "Melting Pot Music". After seeing them live twice this year and hearing their new cd, it makes perfect sense. The band blends elements of rock, reggae, funk, bluegrass and Americana that seamlessly move from one to the other. It was my pleasure to introduce them last spring as they took the stage to open for The Machine at the NYS Fairgrounds. Frankly they were the highlight that evening, then to watch them warm up the crowd before Childhood's End's annual concert at Island-Fest this past summer. Their tight, family-like relationship