

FAMILY MATTERS

Eight pages of features, fun and facts with families in mind



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Punk rock mums create a festival first for Derby

Arts event to celebrate motherhood crosses the Atlantic for the first time

BY JILL GALLONE

DERBY mums who smashed convention to form a punk band are now bringing a special celebration of motherhood to the city – a first for Europe.

The Mamapalooza festival will get Derby rocking this month, the first time the event has ever been held in Britain.

It is being organised by punk rockers The Mothers, five mums who formed a band nearly three years ago to give themselves a break from childcare chores.

Beth de Lange, guitarist and mum to Oliver (12), said: "Last year we went to play at the Mamapalooza festival in New York and we were so inspired by what we saw we wanted to do something here."

Mamapalooza is a festival of motherhood, song and creativity and its American founder Joy Rose, lead singer of a band called Housewives On Prozac, is delighted to see it take off in Europe.

She said: "I'm thrilled our good friends The Mothers have picked up the ball and are running with it!"

"Mamapalooza is the only festival of its kind, celebrating mothers in the arts. During May on 30-plus stages across America, Canada, Australia, and now the UK, women will join together to raise their voices."

"Joy is incredibly enthusiastic," said Beth. "She was keen for us to do something here. Initially we thought we would just do a gig ourselves but things have escalated."



MUMS ROCK: The Mothers are, from left, Beth de Lange, Henry Hinds, Izzy Drury, Nicci Wilson and Claire Armstrong. They are all set to host Europe's first Mamapalooza arts festival to celebrate motherhood in Derby.

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The free Mamapalooza festival, which will take place at Derby's Arboretum Park on May 28, from 2pm to 5pm, will include music, poetry, dance and storytelling – plus The Mothers.

The support they have received for the event should come as no surprise. Since forming, the band has been plunged into the spotlight.

Following a feature in Family Matters in 2004, they have appeared on TV, graced the pages of the Guardian and turned down an interview on the Richard and Judy show.

"Three of us have just been to London to record a show for the Baby

"We thought we would just do a gig ourselves but things have escalated."

BETH DE LANGE

Channel," laughed Beth (38), of Chestnut Avenue, Normanton. "But we turn down some invitations because that's not what we're all about."

The mums are keen to ensure nothing distracts them from their music and their original idea – to have some fun and time out from the kids.

Having said that the children – and they have eight between them – are never forgotten. In fact all

the band's self-penned songs express the highs and lows of being a mum, covering everything from nits to burning the tea.

Songs include Wicked Stepmother but "wicked" as in cool; Milk Pistols and Supermum with the lyrics "I don't want to be a supermum, I want to walk and not have to run around after everyone."

As well as Beth, The Mothers are singer Claire Armstrong (38), of Moss

Street, Derby, mum to Callum (seven); drummer Izzy Drury (33), of Fleet Street, Derby, mum to twins Frances and Louis (three) and Floyd (five); bass player Henry Hinds, of Five Lamps, Derby, mum to Jasmine Cope-Hinds (three) and singer Nicci Wilson (36), of Beeston, who is step-mum to Tallissa (12) and has a 21-month-old son, Elvin.

Nicci was heavily pregnant with Elvin when the band first performed live at The Vic, Derby, in May 2004 and cut a hole in her eye-catching punk dress to display her bump.

"We love what we do and rehearse in my cellar every week," said Beth.

"We've matured musically and have lots of new songs which will be unleashed on the public at the festival."

"We've also recorded a CD called Ovulation."

It's not too late to join the Mamapalooza fun. Any mums willing to perform for free, especially if their art form is related to being a mum, should call Izzy on 01332 295165 or e-mail beth@themothers.co.uk.

Meanwhile families are urged to go to the festival on May 28 at The Arboretum, which has a children's play area and cafe.

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Spill the beans on teens

NEARLY a third of GPs think parents of teenagers should not be kept in the dark over health matters such as pregnancy, drugs and sexual issues, a survey says.

A study of 250 GPs across the UK found 30 per cent wanted parents of children under 16 to be given the right to know about their youngsters' health. One in 25 have even gone as far as breaching confidentiality guidelines to inform parents of teenagers without prior consent, the research revealed.

Doctors are required to maintain patient confidentiality unless a teenager agrees to involve an adult, is unable to understand the GP's advice or there are child protection issues. However, 38 per cent believe parents should know about drug misuse, 37 per cent want them to know about alcohol problems and almost a third think parents should be informed about eating disorders.

Are mums truly happy?

PARENTING website Netmums is launching a campaign to Make Mums Happy.

It has teamed up with happiness expert Richard Reeves, from BBC programme Making Slough Happy, and is looking for 1,000 mums to take an online Happiness Test today. They will then follow simple advice, tips and daily exercises throughout May before re-taking the test.

Siobhan Freegard, founder of Netmums, pointed out that mums can get exhausted. She said: "As a mum you are cook, cleaner, housekeeper, entertainment manager, chauffeur, wife, lover, etc. By doing just a few simple things we can make our lives happier."

Find out more at www.netmums.com.