

## The Rock and Roll Relics —on a mission to save the oldies but goodies

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If you still listen to FM radio, you'll notice it's seriously lacking in "oldies but goodies."

Where do you go to hear "Earth Angel," "Louie Louie," "Tequila," besides satellite radio? 105.9 maybe. 95.9, if you can get it. Or you could try the Baker Park Bandshell this weekend.

The Rock and Roll Relics will open the 36th annual Celebrate [Frederick](#)! Summer Concert Series when they bring the songs of the '50s and '60s back to the stage -- complete with hula hoops, beach balls and dancers in the audience. Well, that last part depends on you.

All longtime musicians, Relics members said they stick with rock and roll because they want to preserve it.

"It was an innocent era," Relics bassist Chip Chiappone said. "Life just seemed a lot easier."

"These songs are about love and kissing and good times," [Frederick](#) resident and longtime keyboardist Pete Storm said.

"People look back with nostalgia," Chip said.

The Relics play a cross section of rockabilly, rhythm and blues, Motown, beach and Elvis, plus a little bit of psychedelic and folk rock.

The band got together about a decade ago and has gone through some member changes, but its mission remains the same.

"When we started playing these songs, they weren't oldies," Chip said. "We just don't get tired of it."

He moved from New York City to Gaithersburg in 1988 with wife and longtime guitarist Gail Chiappone and figured they were retired from music after playing in hair bands and a wedding band.

But during a friend's 50th birthday party, they used an electronic drum machine and played music and that was the birth of the Relics.

"We've been a band ever since," Chip said.

They play mostly covers but have written a few songs that are modern with the same oldies-but-goodies style. One such tune is about surfing the Internet, set to the style of the Beach Boys.

They released an album, "Don't Quit Your Day Job," of nine original songs, some of which have been played on radio stations in Virginia, Florida and Massachusetts.

Storm joined the band two years ago, after responding to an ad.



Photo by Bill Green

The Rock and Roll Relics kick off the Summer Concert series in Baker Park. From left are drummer Billy Miskell, keyboard player Pete Storm, lead guitar player and vocalist Gail Chiappone and her husband bass player Chip Chiappone.



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"I called Chip and said I'm a rock and roll relic looking for another rock and roll relic," Storm said.

"We were about to give up, and then Pete shows up," Gail said.

Drummer Billy Miskell, who lives in [Middletown](#), joined about a year ago. The youngest of the group, he's encouraged them to try out later, more psychedelic rock songs.

Still, each member loves oldies.

"We're on a mission to make sure this music doesn't die," Chip said. "Its only saving grace is Disney -- they sneak (old songs) in. If it wasn't for that, kids wouldn't know them."

Kids love their shows.

"We are fanatic about dance music," Pete said.

They try to keep the crowd going with the Stroll, the Twist, The Jerk, the Watusi.

The Relics play about 75 shows a year, mostly in the quad-state region.

In 1998, they performed as the opening act for The Beach Boys.

They've got a couple of niches -- car shows, high school reunions -- they're booked until 2011 with reunions.

Shows give "people the chance to hear this kind of music live," Gail said. "Even if they're not dancing, they're singing along."

The Relics are true to the spirit of the original songs and don't offer much of their own interpretation.

"We applaud the pioneers of rock and roll," Pete said.

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[www.rocknrollrelics.com](http://www.rocknrollrelics.com)

[http://www.fredericknewspost.com/sections/art\\_life/display\\_ent.htm?StoryID=91347](http://www.fredericknewspost.com/sections/art_life/display_ent.htm?StoryID=91347)

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