

MUSICAL HISTORY

Marty Jourard

One of Gainesville's Made-It Rockers Chronicles the Petty Days

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL STONE

ANYONE WHO HAS CALLED GAINESVILLE HOME FOR EVEN the briefest glimpse has likely heard the scattered icons that the city contributed to rock 'n' roll.

Among the most recognizable: Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, Eagles guitarists Don Felder and Bernie Leadon, and Stephen Stills of Buffalo Springfield and Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young. In the wake of these megastars are the now non-existent venues and businesses — like the bar Dub's Steer Room and music retailer Lipham Music — that helped propel them in their early days in the University City.

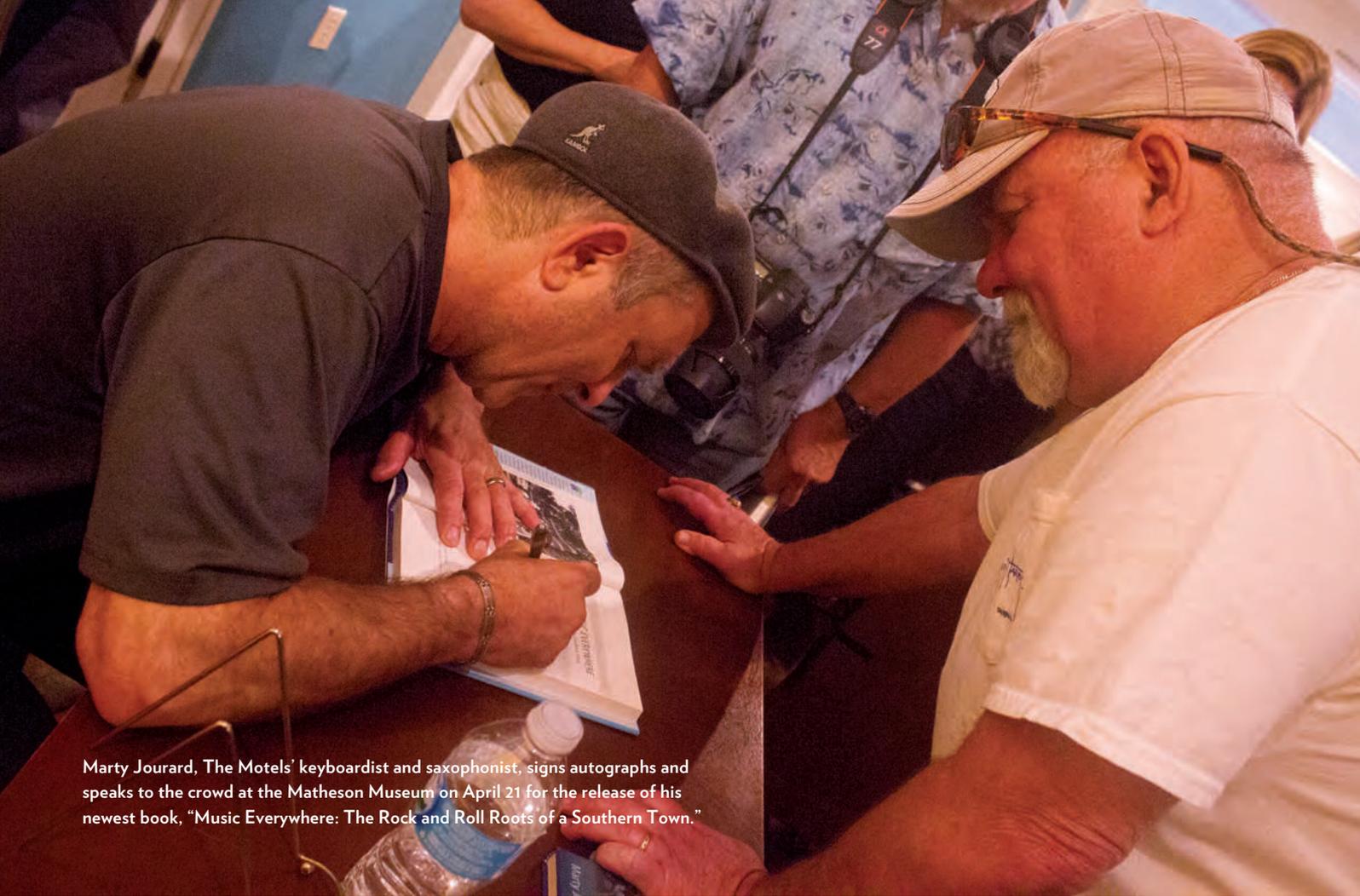
Often in biographies and documentaries, these musicians' hometown and their oft-interconnected

lives (Felder taught Petty guitar at Lipham's, for instance) during the 1960s and early '70s are reduced to quick mentions. This is understandable, of course, because America learned of them only after they moved away.

But it leaves an obvious gap in the equation and in history: What is it about Gainesville that made the city an incubator for the aforementioned names plus those who'd come later, including Against Me!, Sister Hazel, Less Than Jake and Charles Bradley?

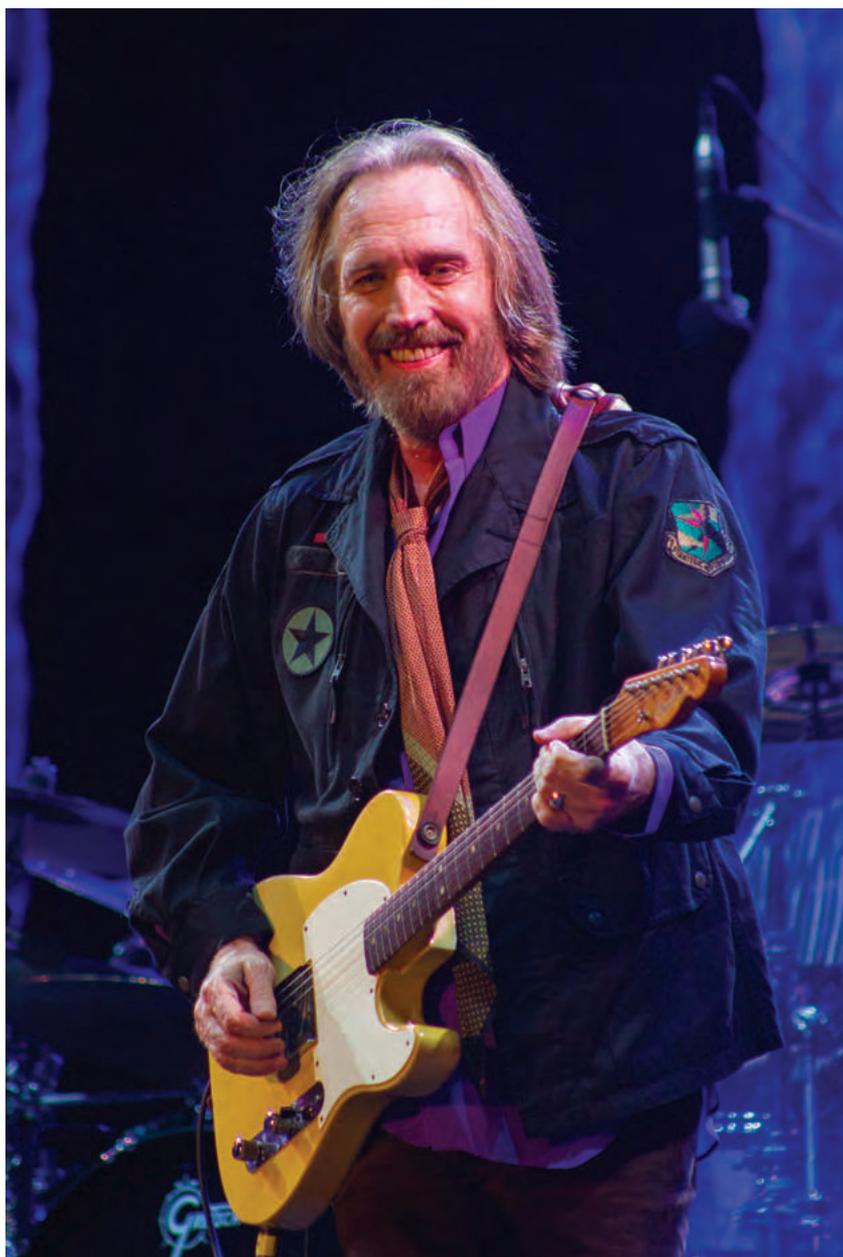
Enter Marty Jourard, who targets what was in the water — and the keg — in his new book "Music Everywhere: The Rock and Roll Roots of a Southern Town," released in April by the University Press of Florida.

It tells the story of how the regional music scene exploded following The Beatles climb to prominence



Marty Jourard, The Motels' keyboardist and saxophonist, signs autographs and speaks to the crowd at the Matheson Museum on April 21 for the release of his newest book, "Music Everywhere: The Rock and Roll Roots of a Southern Town."





and took eight individuals from dingy bars and frat parties to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Along the way, readers meet the peripheral businesses, venues, promoters and other musicians who helped in the future all stars' formative days.

Though by trade a musician himself, Jourard seems like one of the more appropriate people to play historian and writer in this case. The 61-year-old grew up in Gainesville. He hit it big in rock (new wave, really) as the keyboardist and saxophonist for The Motels during the band's peak in the early '80s. And perhaps most importantly, he jammed right alongside the characters he writes about.

In fact, the book's cover photo is a group shot from 1973 that features Jourard cracking open a beer next to pre-fame Petty. The gathering was a picnic for the bands Mudcrutch (the precursor to Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers) and Road Turkey, which included Jourard and future Heartbreakers drummer Stan Lynch.

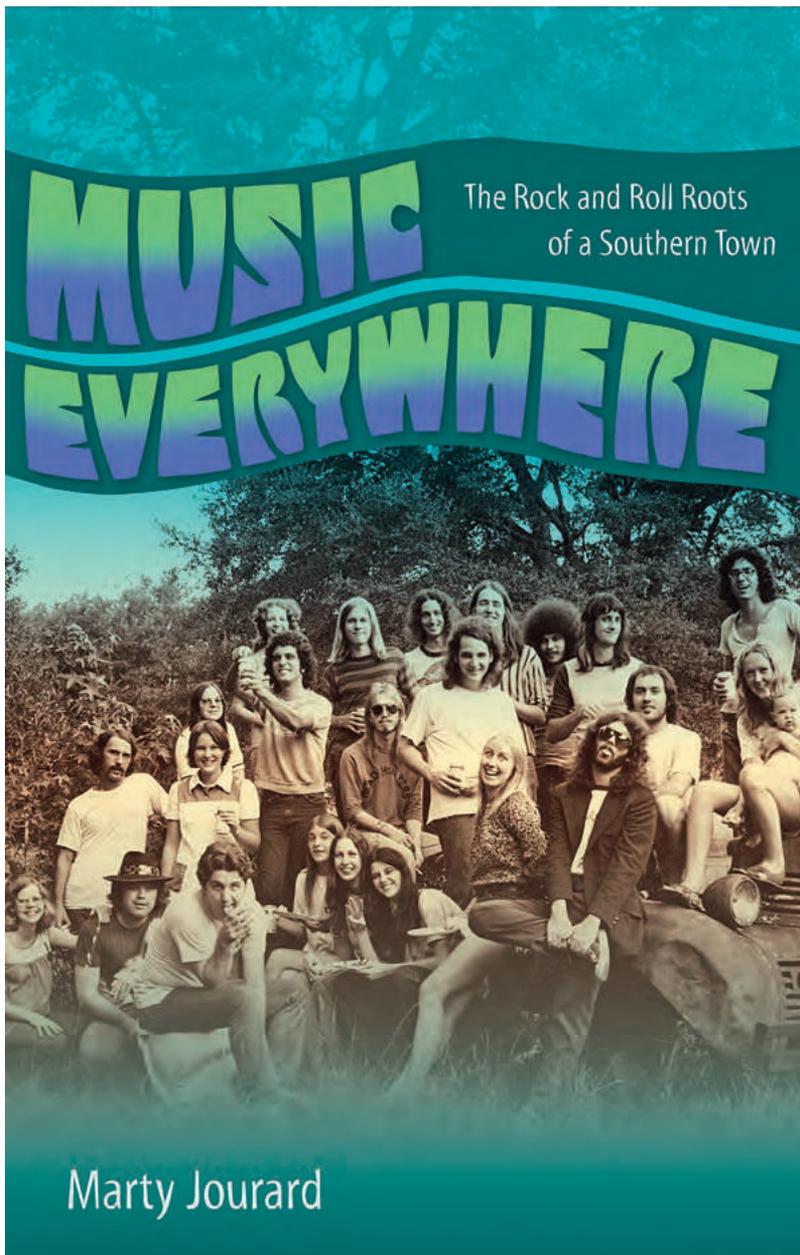
"Writing a book is actually easy. Don't let anybody tell you otherwise," Jourard joked with a packed crowd during his book signing on April 21 at the Matheson Museum. "You start with the first word, then chose a second word and continue this simple procedure until you're done."

"There's just one catch: From the million or so words available in the English language, you have to choose the exact right word every time. When you and your editor decide that you made most of these choices correctly, you're done."

He then quoted the first eight words of the book: "This is a book about people and music."

Matheson director Peggy Macdonald, who also writes for *Our Town*, said more than 200 copies were sold at the signing and that the book has emerged as the most popular item ever in the museum's shop.

"We have never seen so much excitement over one book," she



The cover of “Music Everywhere” features a 1973 picnic photo that includes future members of Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers and Jourard opening a beer next to Petty himself. Petty is seen performing with the Heartbreakers during the 2013 Hangout Music Festival in Gulf Shores, Alabama.



said. “People continue to come in the museum to buy Marty’s book — and in many cases, people came in because they’re in the book. In other cases, they just remember events that are talked about in the book.

“There’s just so much nostalgia.”

Like Petty, Jourard and his guitarist brother, Jeff, left for music mecca Los Angeles, where they did hit it big with The Motels. The band’s most popular songs were its two top 10 hits: “Only the Lonely” and “Suddenly Last Summer.”

(Perhaps not coincidentally, Jeff Jourard was an early Heartbreaker and is credited on “Breakdown” and “Fooled Again” from the debut album in 1976.)

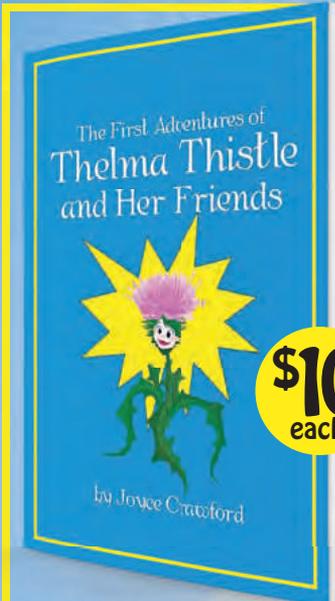
“What I [brought] to the table was the skills I honed in Gainesville,” Marty Jourard told *Our Town* by phone of his move to California. “And it turns out as we all went to L.A. and we saw we were these hicks that came from this little hick town, we

realized we could play better than most of these people because we’d played thousands of hours in clubs and we learned hundreds and hundreds of songs.”

Also the author of “Start Your Own Band” and the “Marty Method: How to Play Piano and Understand Music,” Jourard noted how he enjoys taking on the role of scribe while recognizing other names — mainly one in particular — sit higher on Gainesville’s rock hierarchy.

“I’ve never sat around thinking [about] the pecking order of things in Gainesville,” he said. “But if you’re going to play the star game, the guy is Tom Petty. I mean, he’s sold 80 million albums, and it’s about Tom Petty.”

While “Music Everywhere” concentrates on the past, of course, a bit of the buzz during the book signing looked to the present and future, with some questions during the audience Q&A asking when Gainesville will return to full power as a rock incubator.



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Journalist Jourard explained how music — geographically and stylistically — is cyclical, meaning that while there aren't constants, peaks are liable to rise again from the valleys. He drew a comparison to the stock market, where a big boom can happen one day and a downturn the next.

"There's a big cycle, and you've got to look at it in terms of decades," he said by phone. "It just happened that everything lined up for a dozen years in Gainesville, but the basic infrastructure in Gainesville is prime to support the next music scene that happens."

Indeed, Gainesville's core does have scattered outlets for live original music, perhaps most notably High Dive, and it welcomes punk rockers once a year for The Fest music festival.

But mixed in is the type of thriving cover-song scene that doesn't promote original songwriting, and the city also lost a hub for such inventive musicianship in The Jam, the University Avenue bohemian haunt that had to shut down at the end of May because the block, like many other plots near the University of Florida, is being turned into multi-story apartments.

Compounding the problem more broadly, Jourard said, is machine-built music, which takes away from the authenticity that was a cornerstone of yesteryear's great compositions.

"What happens is that when you have inspiring music that you're hearing just as a musician, it's going to inspire you to create great music," he said. "If you listen to, like, Justin Bieber or Madonna and that's where your daily diet is, you're not going to suddenly come up with some amazing thing."

"You listen to any country song now ... and you can hear autotune on everything. You can hear it."

Yet one simple factor in Gainesville is keeping the door open for any of tomorrow's rockers who think they've got what it takes but just need a place to grow: college kids with expendable money who want to have a good time by drinking beer and listening to live music.

After all, Jourard said, it does come down to money in a lot of ways: Dub's owner James "Dub" Thomas and Lipham's owner Buster Lipham were — had to be — businessmen,



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and where there are college students, there is music business.

“It feeds upon itself, and you can say it’s the equivalent of a real estate boom or an economic boom. And there’s just a period where that happens,” he said. “Now, Gainesville is prime for it to happen again because you have a massive student body [and] you’ve got a lot of recreational money.”

Today living in Seattle, Jourard teaches songwriting at Cornish College of the Arts there, among other things, and the father of two recently became a grandfather.

When talking of his past and present career, he sums it up plainly.

“I’m just a guy enjoying playing music and writing music and writing about playing music,” Jourard said. “All the writing I’ve ever done has been about music because it’s what I know.”

And as for the future rock career of his hometown: “Maybe Gainesville’s biggest contribution to rock history was The Eagles, Tom Petty, Steve Stills, but we don’t know yet because time marches on. It could happen. The likelihood of it happening in Gainesville is higher than in many towns.” **OT**

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