



"Just like the ocean under the moon:" Local band Polyshades discusses psychedelic surf rock

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EAST ALTON - There has been an explosion of new music in the Riverbend area over the course of the last year and a half.

Basements, with names such as "Metal Gear" and "The Fox Hole" have been hosting bands from across the country, which now call Alton one of the best places for a "DIY (do it yourself)" show in the Midwest. From that atmosphere has come several examples of local talent. They do mostly original music, which is expanding Alton's cultural footprint into St. Louis.

Polyshades, who practice in East Alton, are among one of the more groovy and unique bands coming from the area. Comprised of Ricky Wilson, Nathan Luck, Zach Toner, Cody Hale and newcomer Drew on the keyboards. When asked to describe their sound, the band agreed they had a lot of influence from old psychedelic and surf rock like 13th Floor Elevators and some songs by the more well-known Zombies. New music inspiring them includes bands such as Growlers and Allah-lahs.

The band started in the winter of 2014 when Toner and Hale, who had been playing music together since childhood when they both attended school in Wood River, and Wilson and Luck, who had been playing music together since that summer, decided to all start jamming as a band. The four had similar tastes in music and goals regarding music creation, and thus Polyshades was born.

"We really want to do a barbecue show or something," Toner said. "We need to raise some money to do some more stuff with the band, so we should find someone with a swimming pool and just have an awesome barbecue show."

Wilson said they recently completed the recording process of a full album with local recording studio, Lighthouse Sounds. That album is currently being mixed. The band said it may be completed by the beginning of fall 2017.

Until that album drops, however, there are plenty of chances to hear Polyshades. Recent [video sessions at Lighthouse Sounds](#) have included the group, and can be found on the studio's YouTube Channel alongside sessions from other local band, The BonBon Plot, and St. Louis instrumental math rockers Jr. Clooney.

An album called "Sawhorse Sessions," released in 2016 can also be found on popular musical streaming service, Spotify, and is being offered for sale at a "name your price" rate on popular music hosting service, [BandCamp](#).

While their recordings are professionally done, a lot of the local fanfare regarding Polyshades comes from people who have seen them live. A colored liquid light show broadcast to a white background adds to the psychedelic experience of the show.

Upcoming shows for the band include:

- A June 16 show at Mineral Springs Mall's historically haunted ballroom as part of the "Countdown to Snixfest."
- A June 25 show at the Palamino Lounge in St. Louis
- A July 6 show at the Schlafly Bottleworks in St. Louis
- Snixfest - a benefit for the Sam Biggs Memorial Foundation to help local families and children coping with childhood cancer - on July 22 at Gordon Moore Park
- The return of Loosey Goosey's Piasa Summer on Aug. 12

More information and future show dates can be found on their Facebook. Shirts from the band can also be purchased at shows, and feature their logo in vintage font with a tie-dye background.