

On the Beat: Hetelle delivers originality (and fun) with The Oscillators

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Kimberly Hetelle, 26, is one of the founding members of The Oscillators, a seven-member band with a plethora of instruments. The band plays originals and covers, but the group makes the covers their own. Hetelle, along with all of the band members, has post-secondary training in music. The band is working on its first EP, slated for release this summer.

Hetelle at a glance

Talent/instruments: vocals, flute, guitar, piano, mandolin

Social media/website: www.facebook.com/wearetheoscillators

When did you begin performing?

“I’ve always been involved in music in school. Even when I was in sixth grade doing a flute recital — things like that. I was always in choir. When I was in late high school, or just after graduating high school, I got interested in playing the guitar for people and playing a show. My first show was at Swing State, a hookah lounge, in Lake Villa, (Ill.). I guess I was probably 17 when I started doing that sort of stuff.”

How would you classify the music you play?

“It’s progressive, alternative folk rock. It’s always hard picking out a genre.”

What inspires your music?

“I guess you just gotta get something out, you know, having feelings. Just wanting to create something — having a need to be creative and having that outlet. It’s just the way I know how to be creative.”

How did you form the band?

“Me, Jayna and Melissa, the three ladies of the band, we’re best friends and lived together. We started singing in college. We just kind of decided to make it official and gathered more people into our force and rolled with it.”



Who influenced you the most?

“I would say definitely my older brother, Jason. He’s the brother who I’d regularly irritate by touching all his musical things. He’s definitely influenced me musically and taught me about the guitar.”

What is your most notable childhood musical memory?

“My dad was super musical. He had a trumpet laying around. He acquired an electric organ. I remember being very interested in that when I was little — mess with his stuff and get a look at the trumpet. I remember him showing me how it worked. I was very fascinated. My older brother also played the guitar. He’s nine years older than me. He was 12 years old, and I was just a child, and he would get super mad at me for going into his room and pulling out his guitars.”



What is your favorite piece to perform?

“We have a cover of Britney Spears’ ‘Hit Me Baby One More Time.’ It’s totally fun. We totally polka the crap out of it. It’s high energy and just a lot of fun. I like playing the pieces that make people want to move and get us moving and smiling and jumping.”

What do you hope the audience takes from your performances?

“I want them to have fun. I don’t want to be a self-serving band. I want them to want us to keep going as much as we want to keep going — a symbiotic relationship.”

What makes your performance unique?

“We all met in music school — UW-Parkside. I feel like we have that sound for chamber music and try to fill in the spaces and not be delicate with it. Having that training, I think it makes the difference.”