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For Carole Hanzel, it's all about the Bass!

By "CP" Christopher Peppas

When doing a story about a great utility player, one is usually referencing a *baseball player*, not a *bass player*.

But for our purposes of describing Carole Hanzel, it is the ideal sobriquet for a bass player who can and has fit in just about every configuration of musical groups and combos and plays every genre imaginable.

Carole performs from a pastiche of everything from jazz to blues to rock to show tunes. Heck, she didn't mention Klezmer Music, but that was likely just an oversight on her part.

And Carole can sing the tunes as good as she can lay down a bass line for the rest of the musicians. She does it with an unbridled enthusiasm that belies her eighty years on the planet.



"Being a female bass player and a vocalist, I always had work," Carole said in a recent interview. "I've been blessed, let's just say that."

Other than brief stints in the seemingly disparate careers of hairdresser and bartender,



Carole has made her living playing music. Taking time in the middle of it all to get married and raise two sons and a daughter.

Carole moved to California and was a staple in the music scene there from 1980 to 1999 when she made her return to the Athens of The Midwest.

Carole is currently the leader of her own band, Carole and The DV8s, which has been around more than fifteen years. And she holds the line and chips in with vocals in Scotch & Soda for what everyone agrees is at least ten years...probably twelve, maybe thirteen.

More recently, Carole became a member of the sextet, Drive with Horns and its own mini-me, Mini Drive, a four-piece. She performs two-piece shows at senior facilities and duo shows at bars and restaurants with Tom Sorce.

If you need a bass player, 'Who ya gonna call?' Invariably, the answer is Carole Hanzel, naturally.

Vocally, her main influences are Bonnie Raitt and Anita Baker. Locally, Carole also said she listened to and got a lot from Adekola Adedapo, who was featured on these same pages a while back.

"I guess when it comes to singing, I'm a Jill of all trades," Carole said. "I take something from this person and that person and then I put my own twist on it."

It comes as no surprise that Carole takes a turn at "Let's Give



Them Something to Talk About" by Bonnie Raitt and it is as bluesy as all get out.

Carole started playing guitar at age thirteen and by seventeen, she was in an all-girl group called the Royal Queens playing CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) dances. This is where many local groups like The Robbs, The Messengers, Family at Max, Twistin' Harvey & The Seven Sounds, The Ricochettes and many more all got their start.

"I taught myself to play the bass when I was twenty-two, twenty-three years old," Carole said.

"I was in a band once and the upright bass player got sick and I just stepped in and took over," Carole explained. "I started getting serious about it, taking bass lessons and I've been playing it ever since."

Another trademark, if you will, of Carole's work on stage are her performing what she calls "goofy songs." They are songs you don't hear every day.

There's the bouncy "Too Much Stuff" and the sassy "It Ain't the Meat, it's the Motion by Maria Muldaur to name a couple. Of course, no self-respecting bass player's setlist would be complete without Meghan Trainor's oft-misinterpreted anthem "All About That Bass (no treble)."

You can see that there is no shortage of opportunities for you to go see Carole Hanzel perform. Now, you just have to go to a show. She flat-out makes every band she's in better and that's all you need to know.

