

Steppenwolf Revisted features different lineup, same classic songs

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Count on the spirit living on when Steppenwolf Revisited comes to perform at the Elk Valley Casino in Crescent City on Sept. 14.

There's been one version or another of Steppenwolf touring for the past 50 years. Due to a bitter split among band members, lead singer John Kay kept legal ownership of the group's name and toured until his retirement last year, appearing as John Kay and Steppenwolf.

A rotating lineup of the other founding members toured using some form of the Steppenwolf name. The latest lineup is headed by a longtime associate of the band, guitarist Glen Bui, who is bringing the "Born to be Wild Tour 2018-19" south from his home base of Seattle.

Founding Steppenwolf keyboardist Goldy McJohn was touring with Bui until McJohn's death in 2017. "I was in a band way, way, way back in the day (called) Pegasus," Bui said. "We were okay, having fun, with some limited success. Then I ran into Goldy in a music store in L.A. He was touring in a version of Steppenwolf, due to the license agreement, with Jerry Emondton, and I got to play with them."

That New Steppenwolf didn't last, but with signature hits like "Born to be Wild" and "Magic Carpet Ride," the sound did. Fans clamored for virtually any version of the band.

Bui got the opportunity to reunite with McJohn a few years back when they crossed paths again in the Pacific Northwest. "I ran into Goldy at an Alan White record-release party," Bui said, of the founding member of Yes. "He said, 'Let's play again.' We put together the 'Born to be Wild Tour.'"

For the full, long and convoluted retelling of the Steppenwolf lineup, read McJohn's version online at <http://magiccarpetrideinc.com>.

In addition to Bui on guitar, the current lineup features:

- Bryan Knapp on drums, from the "Born to Be Wild Tour" and Iron Butterfly
- Armond Blackwater on keyboards/bass, from Steppenwolf 1977/78, Barry White, Oris Day, Ricky Nelson and "Born to Be Wild Tour"
- Dillon Smith on vocals from "Born to Be Wild Tour," Dillon Cash Band/Johnny Cash Tribute
- Traci Bland on backup vocals.

Regardless of which lineup Bui takes with him, "It's about the music, not about egos. Keeping the music alive is worth it more than anything else, putting a smile on faces," Bui said.

For example, their lineup once was invited to a Gresham, Oregon rodeo, where the manager was a huge fan of Steppenwolf. It was an intimate crowd, to say the least.

"We played in front of the fair staff," said Bui. "All cowboys, six people who worked for the fair and the manager. They had a little-kid break dancing to 'Magic Carpet Ride.'"

Fans at the Elk Valley Casino can expect a 90-minute to two-hour show. "We'll play the main Steppenwolf songs the fans really, really know," said Bui, "plus we'll play whatever the audience wants - 'Rock Me,' 'Never Too Late,' 'Sookie Sookie,' a few standards and covers, some original stuff.

"But it's always really fun. We like to jam. We're very good at keepin' on goin' and jammin'."

Online presale tickets are \$20, available at <https://bit.ly/2m7IC15>.