



# High Country News

Serving Boone, Blowing Rock, Banner Elk, and other towns of the North Carolina High Country  
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## Cruis-Control: Cruis-O-Matic Returns to Blowing Rock

Story by David Brewer

For those of us who haven't lived in the High Country since the early 1980s, it's hard to comprehend the importance of the famed P.B. Scott's Music Hall. But for live music fans in the High Country during that era, there was never any doubt about where to go for the best party in town.

Of all the acts that frequented P.B. Scott's, one reigned supreme as the top party band in the land. Cruis-O-Matic, known for their wild stage antics and nonstop, high-energy sets of 1960s classics sat atop the entertainment heap.

After a near two-decade absence from the Blowing Rock music scene, the reformed, rejuvenated and rocking as ever Cruis-O-Matic will return to town for a one-night performance at Canyons on Saturday, May 6. The show will also be a celebration of the one-year anniversary of *High Country News*, officially one year old on May 5.

Before cable TV, the Internet and the home video boom kept people from wanting to leave the house, Cruis-O-Matic, along with acts such as Leon Russell, represented what was to many the golden era of entertainment in Blowing Rock.

Prodded by their cohorts, former Blowing Rock regulars the Sponge Tones, members of Cruis-O-Matic reunited in 2004 for the first time since the early '90s. The show was such a success that the band has been performing monthly ever since.

According to former P.B. Scott's manager/owner Randy Kelly, Cruis-O-Matic was the go-to band for all the biggest nights in Blowing Rock. Kelly kept the band on a six-week rotation, having them back to the club as often as he could.

"Cruis-O-Matic were one of the catalysts that got all the locals out to see their friends and have fun," said Kelly.

Cruis-O-Matic shared stages with bands including The Cars, The Ramones, The Sex Pistols, The Runaways, The B-52s, John Cale, The Nighthawks, The Temptations, The Smithereens and even pop

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diva Cher.

While Cruis-O-Matic primarily plays cover songs from the '60s, they avoid the typical shtick. The band primarily stays away from beach music and wedding band fare, opting for popular one-hit wonders and high-energy dance music that keeps the fans on the floor instead of giving them a chance to head for their seats.

The current lineup of the band includes Edward "Mr. Vegas" Tanner on guitar, Bob "Mr. Leo Sagittarius" Cunningham on guitar, Steve "Brother Aloysius Goodfoot" Bryant on drums and Greg "Johnny Rosebud" Crawford on bass. All the band members share vocal duties.

Speaking of their many engagements at P.B. Scott's, Tanner described the shows as great times for the band. "It was always a pleasant experience," said Tanner. "Nothing bad ever happened to us there."

While the band is eager to return to their old stomping grounds in Blowing Rock, they have all moved on to careers outside the life of a traveling band. This, of course, might explain their joy in reuniting and playing together again.

"We're mainly just having fun because it's not a job anymore," said Tanner.

For those proud owners of the classic P.B. Scott's T-shirts that have been nearly reduced to threads or for those who never got their hands on one, Kelly will be on hand with a brand new batch for sale.

To check out the long and detailed history of the band, as well as listen to releases from their heyday, click to [www.cruis-o-matic.com](http://www.cruis-o-matic.com). Stay tuned for more emerging details about what promises to be a return to form for Blowing Rock's partying past.

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#### *Want To Go?*

**Date:** Saturday, May 6

**Time:** 10:00 p.m.

**Location:** Canyons