

## Arts & Entertainment

# Local band creates series to benefit charities

By Kevin Barrett  
Staff Reporter

A few weeks ago, the seven piece, classic rock band "Club Phred" helped raise more than \$5,500 for the medical expenses of a young woman, Laura, who is fighting Leukemia.

The band is hoping to help raise money for other charitable causes, as well, with a Monday night concert series which is being held from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Shaggy's on Main in Newark.

The award-winning band, which was founded in 2002 and has opened for several well-known artists including The Marshall Tucker Band, is scheduled to play at Shaggy's on many Monday nights for the next few months said Fred Dawson, 57, of Yorklyn, organist for and co-founder of Club Phred.

The money for the charities is raised through the cover charge at the door - \$10 for the general public and \$2 for University of Delaware students. Dawson said that half of the money raised through the door charge goes to the charity, and the other half goes to Club Phred. What's nice, he said, is that the arrangement is completely safe for the charity - all the charity needs to do is provide people to guard the door. The arrangement also poses no risk to Shaggy's or the band, he said.

"The bottom line is that no one is at risk for anything significant, except for a little time," Dawson said.

The band has been attempting to create a benefit series for about nine months, Dawson said. In fact, he said, the series was set to be held at Kahunaville before it closed, and at one time there was also the possibility of it being held at Three Little Bakers in Pike Creek. Shaggy's is a great environment for the series, Dawson said, because it is well-lit, clean, has a great sound system, and the staff is extremely friendly. So far, Dawson said, everything has worked out very well with Shaggy's, and owner Joe Van Horn has been extraordinarily helpful.

The series is beneficial to the band as well as the charities, Dawson said, because it gives the band exposure. Getting paid is not the goal, he said, although it is nice for the band to make a little money, especially because a couple of the bands members drive from New Jersey. The ultimate goal,



Greenville financial advisor Fred Dawson (third from left) leads Club Phred, a classic rock band that also includes Mark Sisk, A.J. Malme, Kathy Layfield, Brian Daring, Keith Ayars, and Gaetano Vinceguerra.

he said, is helping charities - something the band does frequently. He said that, in the past few years, the band has helped raise more than \$400,000 for charities, and the band rarely turns down playing a gig for free if it is for a charitable purpose.

"Being 57 years of age, everyone of the charities we're playing for have directly or indirectly influenced people I know and love," Dawson said.

The first two benefit concerts at Shaggy's, which were precursors to the actual series - the first was for the woman who is fighting Leukemia, who is a friend of Dawson's, and the second was for the Christina Educational Enrichment Fund - were very successful, Dawson said. Club Phred did not share in the proceeds of the first two concerts.

The first official concert in the series, he said, was held on February 26 to benefit the Wellness Community, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing free emotional support, education and hope for people with cancer and their loved ones. That concert, he said, was not very successful, with only about 50 people being in attendance. Because only about \$500 was raised, he said, Club Phred did not share in the proceeds from that concert, either.

While the first concert was somewhat of a disappointment, Dawson said he generally is optimistic about the series. Club Phred has a following, he

said, but the success of the series is also largely dependant on the efforts of the charity in terms of it getting its supporters to attend. Furthermore, he said, as time goes on, he expects more and more adults in the Newark area to view Shaggy's as a destination for dining and socialization. The band is also working to

find more charities that would like to benefit from the series.

"I'm thinking this whole thing, if done properly and given time to evolve and grow, can be nothing but a win-win-win for everyone," Dawson said.

Also, Dawson said, Mondays are generally a slow night at Shaggy's and

for restaurants and bars in general - something that he is hoping his benefit concert series will change. In anticipation of such, Dawson has created a slogan for the series - "Monday is the new Friday".

Van Horn said he also thinks the benefit series is a win-win-win situation for everyone, and that

### PERFORMANCES

Upcoming Club Phred performances in the series include March 26 to benefit the American Cancer Society, April 2 to benefit the Autism Society of Delaware, and April 23 to benefit the Delaware HIV Consortium. More information on Club Phred and the their benefit series is available at [www.clubphred.com](http://www.clubphred.com).

Shaggy's regularly hosts fund-raising events. There are benefit series concerts lined up, he said, until July, and the series could possibly on even longer than that.

Van Horn said he provides a space for the band to play, use of his sound system and technician, and \$100 in food and drink to Club Phred. The benefit to his establishment, he said, is the exposure it gets from the series, as it attracts people who might not normally patronize Shaggy's.

"It's a chance for me to expose different people to the restaurant," Van Horn said.

In addition to Dawson, who plays a 400-pound Hammond B3 organ, there are six other members of Club Phred - Keith Ayars, Brian Daring, Kathy Layfield, Mark Sis, Gaetano "Vince" Vinceguerra, and A.J. Malme.