

**The Times-News
By Charity Apple**

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Salesman turns to roots rock; he'll play Sunset Rhythms tonight

David Dyer is a salesman by day - a musician by night.

"This is my passion," Dyer, dressed in a suit, said in an interview at the Times-News. Dyer was pointing to his solo CD, "Crossroads Grocery." The 11 songs are a blend of bluegrass, rock and great storytelling.

"You Don't Shake Me (The Yeah Yeah Yeah song)" sounds a lot like something The Beatles would've sang back in its heyday. Then there's "Save Me," a twangy rock anthem. Dyer grew up singing in bluegrass and country bands.

"It's Americana music, roots-rock story-telling," Dyer said. "They're true stories ...stories about growing up in the low-country of South Carolina." The song, "Big JES" is about his grandpa, the late John Ellis Smith, a poet who wrote a regular column for the Salisbury Post, under the penname "Big Jes." Dyer has written all of the songs on the album and it was released on his own record label, Spot-Tail Records.

Shana Morrison, daughter of rocker Van Morrison, sings background vocals on "Save Me" and "Vangeline." And they perform the duet, "They Don't Know."

The CD was produced by Scott Matthews of Hit or Myth Productions, Mill Valley, Calif. Matthews has worked with the likes of Van Morrison, Bonnie Raitt, the Beach Boys and the late Johnny Cash. That's how Dyer met Shana, and eventually Van Morrison, whom he described as "quite and artistic."

Musicians in his band, David Dyer and the Crooked Smile Band, can do some name dropping, too. Jim Crew, keyboardist/vocalist, has composed, produced and recorded original music and/or sound effects for film and TV, computer games, etc., including the movies, "Pulp Fiction," "When Harry Met Sally," and most recently, "Lion King 1½."

Pedal steel guitar player Allyn Love has shared the stage with country musicians Jo Dee Messina and Steve Wariner. Crew and Love play on the record. Other members of the band are Ken Weigand, bassist, background vocalist and Fran Dyer on drums, percussion and background vocals.

Dyer now lives in Raleigh with wife Cheryl and their two kids. He performs a lot of solo shows and a few with his band.

Today, he'll play the Sunset Rhythms Concert Series at the Burlington City Park, a gig he discovered through fellow music lover, Bob Byrd, of Burlington. Admission is free.

For now, the band is focusing on various state events and festivals. A show at Local 506 is planned for June 18. And Dyer said he's booked through January 2005.

"Bands tend to evolve over time," Dyer added. "We've got a good thing goin'. I think we're headed in the right direction."

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