

News-Press ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

This
Week's
Hot
Tickets

July
10
Thursday

The Alarm

9:30 Club
7 p.m.

815 V St. NW, D.C.
202-393-0930 • 930.com

Friday

The Speaks

State Theatre
7 p.m.

220 N Washington St., Falls Church
703-237-0300 • thestatetheatre.com

Saturday
12

Brazilian Girls

9:30 Club
11 p.m.

815 V St. NW, D.C.
202-393-0930 • 930.com

Sunday
15

Asylum
Street
Spankers

Jammin' Java
2 p.m. & 8 p.m.

227 Maple Ave. E, Vienna
703-255-1566 • jamminjava.com

Dayna
Kurtz

Iota Club & Café
8:30 p.m.

2832 Wilson Blvd., Arlington
703-522-8340 • iotacubandcafe.com

Press
PASS

with
The
Alarm

BY MIKE HUME
FALLS CHURCH NEWS-PRESS

It was October of 2007 and Mike Peters, frontman of Welsh rockers The Alarm, was on top of the world. OK, so it helped that he was already at 18,500 feet, doing what he loves most — performing music — on the slopes of Mt. Everest.

"It was an experience I'll never forget," Peters says. "It was quite difficult to sing at that altitude because the air is in short supply."

But even more impressive than a rather winded Peters performing as part of the highest-ever, land-based concert was the fact that the singer was still drawing breath at all. Two years earlier, Peters was diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukemia. It was the second time in his life he had heard a cancer prognosis, having prevailed in a bout against non Hodgkins lymphoma in the mid-1990s. The doctors were stunned Peters had even survived to hear the second diagnosis. At the time of the exam, tests revealed his white blood cells numbered

nearly half a million per cubic millimeter of blood. A healthy human's white blood cell count is somewhere between 4,000 to 10,800.

While Peters received chemotherapy treatments at a hospital in Wales, he often gazed out the window at the peak of Mt. Snowden, the highest point in England and Wales and a summit he had often visited when he had been healthy.

"It became symbolic to me because I wanted to get myself to the point where I was fit enough and well enough to climb back to the top of the mountain again," Peters says. "By doing that it meant my recovery."

Peters continued to perform with The Alarm while he received treatment. During a tour stop in Texas, Peters told his goal of returning to Snowden's peak to an American leukemia specialist.

"He says, 'Well that's amazing, why don't we go to Everest?'" Peters recalls. Texans always do think big.

So in October of 2007, in remission from the chronic lymphocytic leukemia, Peters belted out his lyrics from one of the

highest points in the world.

"We had to keep it down though," he says. "We didn't want to start an avalanche."

The bout with cancer again put things in perspective for Peters, who said he gained an unparalleled love for his two boys, his wife and, naturally, his band.

With a new album, *Guerilla Tactics*, released on Tuesday, July 8, Peters is trying to rekindle a fan base that has followed the band from its early-lineup incarnation that toured alongside the likes of U2 and Bob Dylan. To do so, Peters is making the most of the new tools at his disposal. Releasing several Internet-only, mini-albums over the past few years, and utilizing discussion boards and MySpace pages to build up a cyber community.

"When punk rock happened in 1976, I was a computer operator at the time, so I was aware of what was going on in the world in terms of technology. Now it's what everyone does," Peters says. "It's like the record industry is over and now it's much more of a level playing field and you're as good as your ideas."

To hype the July 8 release of *Guerilla Tactics*, Peters performed a "guerilla style" show in New York's Times Square. During the performance, the band was opening an Internet feed to allow laptop-toting fans to rip the album from the airwaves of Midtown Manhattan. Over the phone three hours prior to the 12:30 p.m. show, Peters noted just one slight snag.

"There's a police car parked right where we're supposed to perform," he says. "This should be quite a little adventure. I just hope we don't get arrested."

Barring any detention by New York's Finest, Peters and his current bandmates — bassist Craig Adams, drummer Steve Grantley and guitarist James Stevenson — are set to play 9:30 Club on Thursday, July 10.

As his career continues into its third decade, Peters plans to keep relying on the technological tools at his disposal, and to further draw inspiration from the trying times of his past.

"When we were making our second record Roger Daltrey of The Who came to see us," Peters says. "We were asking him about his career and how they sustained it for so long. He said that you find out more about your band in the dark times than the successful times and it's in those moments that you build your futures. And I found it to be really true."

• For more information, visit www.thealarm.com. Tickets for the 9:30 Club show, which also features *The English Beat* and *The Fixx*, are \$35. Doors open at 7 p.m.



THE ALARM (PHOTO: HEIDI CALVERT)

FCNP CHOICE CUTS



The FCNP staff savored these mid-summer songs this week:

- Mike Hume— *I'm Amazed by My Morning Jacket*
- Nicholas Benton— *Light My Fire by The Doors*
- Jody Fellows— *Fire by Jimi Hendrix*