

# Musician Spotlight on the Lesser Knowns



by Noah  
Griffith

It was a Friday night, near the end of May. I was at the Black Watch Pub looking around at the crowd of people that looked like younger, tamer versions of myself. I was drinking my vodka soda water & lime (thanks Slow-Carb Diet), waiting for the band I came to see.

The Lesser Knowns are a band from New Bedford that is trying to go BIG and make themselves more than what they are now. You might have heard of them; they are promoting themselves like madmen and doing a hell of a job of it.

Right now they are trying to raise money to go to California so they can record their newest CD in a state of the art studio. If professional recording can make the O'Toole's sound like champs, then these guys have a serious chance of going big time.

They need to raise a small amount of money (relatively speaking), and you can get some big bonuses for helping them out just a little. For those of who you don't know them, here are the Lesser Knowns.



Christmas with the  
Lesser Knowns

**What are the names of you members?**

Nick LeBlanc – vocals, guitar, bass

Dan Letourneau – bass, guitar, vocals

Dan McMahon – guitar, vocals

Riley Mello – drums, vocals

**When and how did you guys all meet?**

We all met in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade pretty much. We've been playing music together for about 12 years. At first we were just screwing around and then it became more serious. Our first recordings sounded like horrible acapella that was recorded just using a computer and a mic.

**Minus the 1<sup>st</sup> acapella release... have you any other albums?**

Nick did a solo album in 2008 before the band officially got together. Also in October of 2011 Nick recorded and released a second solo album with Riley playing drums entitled, *Nick LeBlanc & The Pink Beans*.

In 2009 we literally only had five practices before we recorded our first single, "Real Scares Can't Be Seen."

Earlier in 2011 we finally released our first full length album called *Get Famous*.

Here is my experience with your band. I literally went from hearing you practice in your parents basement and not even knowing your band name to seeing you release your album. Then you were in SoCo Magazine, then the Standard Times, and now you're here with New Bedford Guide. Obviously, you are smart enough to start with the smaller news and entertainment sources before moving up the bigger more influential ones...

Anyway. So then I'm in the bathroom, brushing my teeth, and all of a sudden I hear music coming from the living room that sounds very strangely like my favorite song from your *Get Famous* album called, "Drinking Schiltz with Jesus." I went to check it out, and there your album is on t.v., being featured on NECN's morning show in their local music section: I almost s\*\*\* myself and had to shower again. So, the question is: How have you become so good at promoting yourself?

*At this point they were laughing their asses off at me.*

HAHAHA, this guy is the best interviewer ever! (*Yes, they really said that.*)

We do absolutely everything and everything we can; 100% shameless self-promotion all the way. Like you said, we spoke with you guys at Local Oracle about promoting our shows, we've been in the Standard Times and SoCo Magazine. We have even been emailing professional musicians AND WE'VE BEEN GETTING EMAILS BACK FROM THEM; it's the best! Even if we're at a party, we'll stop the music that is playing and put our music on. Whatever we can do.



The Lesser Knowns are great live.

**Who are your favorite bands and how do you describe your own music?**

Everything from AC/DC and Sonic Youth, to Neil Young and bands like Led Zeppelin. Danny explained it like this: "I'm halfway through a two year graduate program to get my MFA in Music Composition with a focus in what they call 'Experimental Sound Practices,' which is focuses on electronic and experimental music. But I don't think we've ever thought, 'Oh, well if we do experimental music, let's just throw some of that in here.' I think it informs our mindset more generally, and leaves the door open to trying new things if it fits the music. There are certainly elements in the kinds of sonic qualities you see in that music that we incorporate into our music, but they can be two very different beasts as well."

*(If you ask me they are rock n' roll)*

**What is all this Kickstarter business you are talking about now on Facebook. You mentioned using it to help you raise money for your newest venture?**

We are using Kickstarter to help us raise money so that we can fly to California to record our next album at Danny's college that has state of the art musical recording equipment. Kickstarter is a program set up where anyone can submit their goal/idea in hopes of finding others to donate money to help accomplish their goal. You set the amount you need to raise and the duration of time you want to raise the money in. If

you don't meet or exceed your goal by the date you put forth you lose the money and NO ONE gets charged or loses their potential investment. We need to raise \$1000.00 by August 24<sup>th</sup>

To learn more about the Kickstarter program, [click here](#). **Click here to see the Lesser Knowns Kickstarter page.**

**Since Danny lives in CA and travels back and forth for shows, what is the practice situation like?**

Yeah he does. As far as band practice goes, Nick, Riley and I (Dan) practice at Riley's weekly, and send demos of the new stuff over to Danny via email so he can learn the new songs and write his bass parts. He'll do the same from California with his demos. It's strange, but when he comes back, it's like he never left. We always seem to pick up right where we left off.

For instance, before the Blackwatch gig we only had a couple practices, but Danny managed to learn three new songs. I think that's one of our greatest assets—the fact that we have such great band chemistry that it doesn't matter when, where or how often we play, we're always able to put forth a great show.

**So what's the end goal? I'll be very real: People aren't interested in just giving money away, especially to musicians who don't want to work "real jobs" and just want to play music. There has to be a passion that makes it worth spending money on you, and everyone has to see it. They are not going to be giving you money to go to California if they don't believe in you or think you're not going to be a band three weeks later.**



The Lesser Knowns  
always light up  
the stage.

Our end goal is to turn our intense passion for creating and playing music into a career. There isn't a moment during the day when we're not thinking about the band and what needs to be accomplished or planned- things like booking shows, making flyers, updating websites, writing new material, etc.

I think we really have a unique combination of music, talent and personality that is capable of carrying us a long way, but not without aid and support from our fans, of course. I think anytime someone feels as driven and committed to a project as we do about the band, it's a sign of things to come that definitely should not go overlooked or unnoticed.

**If someone donates money what do they get?**

\$1 gets your name on our "Thank You" list on our CD Cover.

\$5 gets you a digital download of the album.

\$10 gets you an autographed copy of the CD and free digital download.

\$100 gets you...a date with one of the members!

**Well, you've got \$10 from my wallet. I was not as focused at your age as you guys are, but if I had as good of a grip on my dream as you do, I would want someone to help me out with a**

donation. Plus, I'd pay that anyway for your CD so there's really no downside. Alright well you guys get going; it's your turn to get up on stage and rock out.

The Lesser Knowns next show is June 20<sup>th</sup>, at Piano's in New York City.

Cheers!

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## **Sinners & Saints Tattoo and Body Piercing**

NBG's Noah Griffith talks to Roger Choinard, owner of Sinners & Saints tattoo parlor and organizer of the Fender Bender event happening in Onset at the end of July.

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## **Murals by M-C Lamarre**

This local artist is determined to leave her mark on all 50 states!

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# Outdoor Dining and Drinking 2011

Noah Griffith delivers this comprehensive Guide to Outdoor Dining and Drinking on the South Coast.

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## Jimmy and the Hats

For our latest Musician Spotlight, Noah Griffith talks to a truly local band.

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## Tough Mudder

Last weekend, NBG's Noah Griffith competed in the Tough Mudder competition in Vermont.

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## Rose Alley Ale House



by Noah  
Griffith



Hear me RAAH!!!! Yes, it's been known to happen, especially when its beer time, and especially when I'm at Rose Alley Ale House. Home to over 70 delicious brews, a variety of different spirits, and a tiny kitchen that pumps out some serious pub grub, this great little establishment is making a BIG impact on New Bedford. I had the fortunate opportunity to speak with Jay Lanagan, one of the owners of Rose Alley Ale House (RAAH), to find out the things you and I don't know about RAAH.

**So Jay, how long has RAAH been open for?**

A few years now.

**How many owners does Rose Alley have? How did you all meet?**

There are five owners total, and some of us have known each other since kindergarten and others since high school.



**That's longer than I imagined. You guys must have lots of fun working together. What was the idea behind opening up RAAH?**

The basic idea was to get in on what we thought was the ground floor by opening a business in downtown New Bedford that complimented the other businesses around it. The main goal is always to do the best job we can.

**Well it seems like you are doing that so far. What did you hope to bring to downtown New Bedford when you started putting RAAH into motion?**

We wanted to have another venue for residents and tourist alike to enjoy when they spend their time in New Bedford.



Rose Alley Ale House during renovations.

**The building in which RAAH is located was previously called the Cultivator Club, and looked much different than it does now. What was the process like for transforming the building into what we see today?**

We did a lot of work. Looking back, we were probably in over our heads, but we stayed committed and focused and fought to get the doors open.

**Back to the kitchen. What kind of food does RAAH have?**

We have wings, burgers, salads, wraps, fries, entrees, and every so often we have a GOURMET BEER DINNER.

**Yes, that's right. You just had a Mayflower Beer Pairing Dinner. What's your best selling food item?**

Buffalo wings, and our burgers. You have GOT to try one of our burgers.

**What kind of regular specials does RAAH have?**

We have a great chicken wing specials during football season. We also have all-you-can-eat boneless chicken for \$5.99.

**Has the change in the economy had any effect in RAAH's business?**

Of course we all share the discouragement of the recession,

but we have learned from it and we are all having fun working through it.



Some of the beers on tap at Rose Alley Ale House.

### **How many Beers does RAAH offer on draft and bottle?**

All-in-all we have 38 beers on tap and I don't even think I can start to count the number of beers we have in bottles: I think there's usually between 36-40, but we are always changing it up and adding new beers to the list.

### **What is the Mug Club?**

The Mug Club only happens once a year during the month of February. An individual has to drink 28 beers a specific list (made by Rose Alley) in the 28 days that make up February. So one beer a day and you're good.

### **What is the fastest time that someone has finished the list in?**

That would have been this year and it was too fast: We are getting ready for next year to make a institute a, 'maximum beers allowed in one day' rule. It's really for the safety of

the individual. The beers that we carry here classified as micro brews (smaller breweries) and have more alcohol than your average Bud or Miller Lite, sometimes even double the percentage, so we don't want anyone overdoing it.

### **What are the benefits of being part of the Mug Club?**

Personalized RAAH gear, a hand-blown 25 ounce glass mug, made by local artisans at the New Bedford Antique Glass Museum near the Wamsutta Mills. Everyone who finishes all 28 beers gets their own glass. The glass stays at Rose Alley and they can use when they come in for a drink. This lasts for the entire year until the next Beer Summit, where they can then take home their old mug and sign up to get a new one. And yes, if someone wants a new mug they must drink a whole 28 more beers in 28 days.

### **Was this year any different than last year?**

Yes. We doubled the success rate for those participating, so congratulations to everyone who finished.



### **Do you have any big events coming up this spring?**

There's a lot going on in the city this summer and we are going to be part of most of it, if not all of it.

### **Okay, last question... What's going on in Plymouth? There is a buzz around town that you may have another project going on there.**

We've been exploring the idea of a Plymouth restaurant, but we need to make sure it is the right fit of the people in the building, the people in the neighborhood, and for us. It is a lot of responsibility.

**Alright Jay, thanks for taking the time to sit down with me.**

**I'll let you get back to work.**

*The Rose Alley Ale House is located at 94 Front Street New Bedford, on the corner of Rose Alley and Front Street in historic downtown New Bedford. It is open seven days a week, from 11:30am to 2:00am. Their phone number is (508) 858-5123, and you can also find them on Facebook.*

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## **Tom Lanigan: Irish Music from an Irishman**



by Noah  
Griffith

Since last month, Hibernia Irish Pub has been hosting Irish sessions every Sunday, from 4-7:30 PM. These events provide a great opportunity for people to enjoy traditional Irish music performed by a true Irishman, but some of you may be wondering just what an Irish session is.

According to the *Field Guide to Irish Music Sessions: An Authoritative Guide to Enjoying Irish Traditional Music in its Natural Habitat*, an Irish session is:

*“...a gathering of Irish traditional musicians for the purpose of celebrating their common interest in the music by playing it together in a relaxed, informal setting, while in the process generally beefing up the mystical cultural mantra*

*that hums along uninterruptedly beneath all manifestations of Irishness worldwide."*

Tom Lanigan hosts these Irish sessions at Hibernia. He was born in Dublin, where he lived until he moved to the United States with his family seventeen years ago. He sings and plays guitar in the Tom Lanigan Band, with whom he has already released an album, *As The Light Declines*. The band is also in the middle of recording a second album, with a limited release EP on the way as well. Just last week I had the chance to speak to Tom about his brand of traditional Irish music:



Tom Lanigan  
on stage.

**Well good day to you, Mr. Tom Lanigan. Please tell me who you are and what are doing here in New Bedford?**

I'm an Irish singer/songwriter playing one of my first shows ever in New Bedford, at The Hibernia Pub.

**Nice. I love Irish music. I heard a little bit of your music a couple weeks ago and you sounded really good. I also like the idea of an actual Irishman playing Irish music. Where do you normally perform?**

I perform all over. This is my 11th year as a full-time musician, and I just go where the work takes me. My usual

route has me going through Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

**Do you perform much in the South Coast area?**

Besides Hibernia Irish Pub, I play Cape Cod quite regularly at the O'Shea's Olde Inne and The Sons Of Erin. I love the Cape because of how many great musicians and great people there are: It's a real education.

**How long have you been performing Irish sessions?**

Most Irish musicians get involved with sessions in one way or another, but I don't play them very well. My band's style is a bit different, more along the folk/rock Irish style. Thankfully, we've been able to play it in one form or another for the past eleven years.



**That's why the music I heard at Hibernia was a little different from what I normally would expect to hear at a traditional session. You are putting a more modern spin on a classic pastime. How did the band come together?**

Music has always been a part of my life, and through the years I have played with many great musicians. This current lineup has come together very organically, and it's been going great. We can accommodate anything from a solo show to a six-piece band.

**Is this the first time for many of your members being in a band?**



This is definitely not the first band for these players, and I feel blessed to have access to their talent. Here is the lineup:

**Tom Lanigan**-Vocals, Guitar and Djembe,

**Brian Bercher**– Bass Guitar

**Jordan Tirrell Wysoki**– Fiddle and Mandolin

**Sue Young**– Bodhran, Vocals and Whistles

**John Eagan**– Guitar, Vocals, and Harmonica

**Chris Leary**– Piano and Organ



The Tom Lanigan Band performing.

**Do you guys have jobs outside of the band?**

Some of us have jobs on the side, but the goal is for the music to be full-time. I want to be able to have the whole band out playing full-time, and we're on our way there.

**Good for you guys. Well, for all the ladies out there: Are you single?**

I am not single, but I'm a musician, so God knows how long she'll put up with me.

**Haha. Yeah, I imagine it can get tricky sometimes. Have you ever gone on tour?**

I have toured Europe and the United States. I feel like I have been very fortunate to have done so.





Tom Lanigan

**Do you have any big shows or events coming up?**

We just opened for *Derek Warfield & the Young Wolf Tones* for the second year in a row, at RiRa in Portsmouth, NH. We are looking forward to the *Canton Irish Music Festival* and *The Dorchester Irish Music Festival* this summer. We love the festivals and can't wait to get back out there. There will be more to come, but that's what we have confirmed for now.

**Is there anything else you'd like to add in here?**

In closing, I'd like to say that this music, and the tradition involved, is my calling. It is a hard road to travel, but I am in this for the long haul.


*For those wanting to learn more about Tom Lanigan, or check out where he will be playing next, visit his website: [www.tomlanigan.com](http://www.tomlanigan.com). There are videos there so you can check out samples of his music. The band is available for shows, with contact info through the website. Also, don't forget to check them out on Facebook to get access to all their latest information.*

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# The Alex Sullivan Scholarship

# Trust Fundraiser

The Alex Sullivan Scholarship Trust is holding its fourth annual fundraiser on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at The Sky Room in New Bedford from 7:00 PM – 1:00 AM.

Alex Sullivan was a student athlete at New Bedford High School. He  was one of the original members of the NBHS Wrestling Team that excelled on the wrestling mat. He graduated from New Bedford High School in 1999 and went on to graduate college at Umass Dartmouth . He passed away on June 6, 2007 in a work-related trucking accident. This event is held annually to honor Alex and memorialize the man in the sport and school which he loved.

Each year, The Alex Sullivan Scholarship Trust provides scholarships for selected members of the New Bedford High School Wrestling Team who are pursuing higher education. Your support will help us accomplish this goal.

The event will feature a buffet style dinner catered by Me & Ed's Restaurant, numerous raffle prizes, entertainment provided by DJ Garret Gomes and live music by No Sane Man.

The Alex Sullivan Scholarship Trust is an independant organization that is committed to supporting our young adults in their journey of seeking higher education.

In order to give The Alex Sullivan Scholarship the full benefit of this event, your generosity is essential.

For more information about The Alex Sullivan Scholarship or how to purchase tickets for this event visit our website at [www.alexssullivansscholarship.org](http://www.alexssullivansscholarship.org)

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# Spotlight on FINS



by Noah  
Griffith

*"Did someone say FREE PIZZA? Where!?"*

*"At FINS!"*

*"When did they get food?"*

That's usually how the conversation begins when I bring up FINS Bar & Nightclub, located at 37 Union Street in downtown New Bedford. FINS *does* have a kitchen, and has had one since its been open. However, recently some major changes have been made.

Last year, during the week between December 25th and December 31 st, FINS closed its doors in order to make some major alterations to the interior. The carpet is gone, the walls have been painted, the ceilings look brand new, and there is even a pool table now, which has created a totally different vibe inside. In my opinion, that is something that was really needed.

About two weeks ago, I had the opportunity to sit down with the owner, Dennis Audette, to find out why he decided to go with a new look, and how things have been going since the New Year brought us a new Fins.



So Dennis, first question: What is your social security and DOB?... Haha just kidding. How long has FINS been open? FINS has been open for five years now.

**What is the meaning behind the name?**

I was painting the walls blue and thought to myself, the place looks like a fish tank, so 'FINS' was launched.

**Well that's as good a reason as any, and it works considering New Bedford's history. Why did you decide to get into the bar business?**

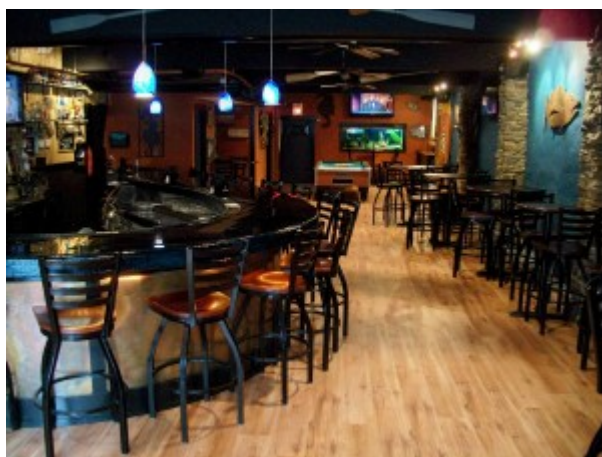
Downtown New Bedford had been changing over the last decade, and I saw an opportunity to create a fun place for people to socialize.

**Yeah, you couldn't get a better location. Right on the waterfront and now you're surrounded by other venues, with each drawing its own particular crowd. It makes for some serious foot traffic around here. What did you do before opening FINS?**

I've always been self employed.

**Why did you decide to renovate, and how would you describe the Fins face-lift?**

Late last year, my staff, some very good friends and I worked on the renovations. It was time to lighten and brighten the place to give FINS a fresh new look and vibe. We wanted to be more welcoming, with a tropical, brighter, more updated feel.



**Well you have certainly done that, everything looks great. As I mentioned earlier, your just one of many other bars and nightclubs at this end of Union street. What sets FINS apart from the rest?**

We are the only tropical-themed bar downtown, and the only place on lower Union Street that you can play pool. Our music is now geared towards Top 40, '80s, '90s, and old school dance music, so you will always hear something that you will know and remember. We are also offering our place for private functions, such as birthday parties, bachelor/bachelorette parties, and almost any other function you can think of.

**I have had your food before the renovations and it was delicious. What kind of food are you selling now?** Pizza. Not only pizza, but the best thin crust pizza you can get downtown.



**Do you have any food specials?**

Friday & Saturday nights we offer free pizza on the bar starting at midnight, and on Sundays, cheese pizzas are only \$1.00.

**What kind of regular specials do you have each week?**

We have a special shot of the week, and we give out sweets for all the ladies. For example: brownies topped with whipped cream, gourmet chocolates...things like that.

**That is something you usually only see around Valentines & Mother's Day, and you do it all the time. What big events do you have coming up?**

Nothing in particular, just getting ready for another fantastic summer in downtown New Bedford.

**Is there anything you would like everyone to know?**

We would like all of our old and new friends to come see all the changes, and feel the new vibe at Fins. If you haven't been to our place in a while, you need to come in and check us out!!

Hear that everyone! Get your butt down to FINS and check out the interior (there's a new outside coming soon too!). Also check out FINS Discount Coupon on New Bedford Guide's Southcoast Discount Coupon Page, good for a FREE PIZZA with ANY purchase!!!

**FINS Bar, Grill & Nightclub:**

37 Union St. New Bedford MA 02740

**Hours of Operation:**

Wed-Fri: 4pm-2am.

Sat: 5pm-2am; Sun: 3pm-2am

**Kitchen Hours:**

Wed – Sat: 5pm-12am;

Sun- 4pm-12am

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