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## Local scene only whets musicians' appetite

By Adam Rodewald

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Performing on stage becomes ingrained in a musicians' head from the moment they touch an instrument, says 25-year-old Elijah Blair.

There are three reasons it appeals so much to him: The genuine love of music, a desire to entertain and the reward of others enjoying his work.

"I guess it's all those things and a little more narcissism to keep pushing to get on bigger and better stages," he says.

For members of the BackTrax Band, playing in a group gives a them something to work for and improve upon.

"You have to be addicted to it. You have to be a music junkie or you won't enjoy it," says BackTrax keyboard player Donnie Keiffer, 70. "Like hunters and fishermen, it's in their blood."

"We'll stick with it as long a we can," adds bass player Wayne Jellish, 57.

So can Marshfield satisfy their addiction?

"I would say this area is more of a stepping stone to get to a full-time musician," says Blair, who sometimes must travel to other communities just for an open mic night.

Marshfield alone doesn't have enough of an established scene, but central Wisconsin has enough to "start your expansion," he says.

"Enough" works, however, for a seasoned group like the BackTrax Band that only wants one or two shows per month.

"We never wanted to be busy every weekend because we have other things we want to do with our families," says Jellish.

One of Marshfield's greatest opportunities is the VOX series, where local musicians have the



zoom

Donnie Keiffer sings and plays the keyboard for the BackTrax Band.

*Contributed photo*

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### More information on the web

[Link to live recordings of Elijah Blair and BackTrax band](#)

### Coming tomorrow

Local music fans talk about what makes a live band rock.

opportunity to open for nationally touring bands, says Blair.

"There's nothing better for your music career than making contacts with those types of people and groups," he says. "I think it helps raise the bar as far as what you're doing with your own music."