

# TALK OF THE TOWN

## Mary Beth Cronin - Lead Vocals



Mary Beth's singing career started at the Cherry Avenue Elementary School in Sayville, N.Y., where as a fifth grader, she sang music from "Godspell" in the school chorus. Her natural love of music led her to dabble in playing violin, tympani, keyboards, and guitar in her search for self-expression, but the stage was where she would find her niche. By the time she was in high school, Mary Beth was studying acting with Lillian Pape. She also played multiple parts as a nurse, a reporter, and a screaming teenage fan in a school production of "Bye-Bye Birdie". After graduation in 1979, she continued her acting with the Ivy Lane Repertory Group in a production of "Strange Bedfellows". In 1980, Mary Beth was introduced to a band she loved as a teen, The Bay City Rollers, and had an opportunity to visit their recording session for the "Ricochet" album. Being in the studio and watching the Rollers make a record inspired her to focus on a music career. One night at a party, she approached the band "Insane Element" and asked to audition as a singer. She passed the audition and joined the band, playing clubs in New York City and Long Island, and gaining her first recording experience until the group disbanded a year later. By 1986 she had formed Grand Passion and embarked on a vigorous campaign of work. The group began recording and performing at clubs like CBGB's, My Father's Place, The Limelight, Kenny's Castaways, and a series of public TV appearances. Mary Beth also appeared at IMAC in a Sam Ash sponsored tribute to Elvis Presley, as well as numerous appearances on The Joe Franklin TV show. Through the years, through changing lineups, Mary Beth's sheer will and persistence has kept the band together through some very hard times. Without a doubt, she'll continue to persevere like the "trooper" she is. Her influences include: The Pretenders, The Cars, The Beatles and David Bowie. She has recorded with: Felix Hanemann of ZEBRA and Billy Pascali of VANILLA FUDGE.

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## Billy Reutlinger- Bass guitars and vocals



Billy is a multi - talented musician who has been with the group since 1996. He learned his first guitar chords from his uncle at the age of eight, and took it from there, playing guitar in bands for many years before switching to bass. After playing a P-Bass for six months, he switched to a 5-string because it was "more flexible". "Flexible" is a good word to describe Billy, who is equally at home on guitar or bass, and plays both in the band (but not simultaneously!) His musical influences include Frank Zappa, Jimi Hendrix, Robin Trower, and Chris Squire. His experience playing in R&B, Funk, and Soul bands add plenty of feeling to the group's sound. It takes a lot of heart to convey feeling in music, and it's no coincidence that Billy is also a dog lover who supports local animal shelters with his time and money. If he should find an abandoned pooch, you can bet that Billy will find a home for the animal, as he has done in the past. He's all heart, and his loyalty and commitment to the band over the past seven years remains one of Talk Of The Town's great strengths.

## Joe Bivona – Guitar, Backing Vocals



Joe Bivona is a veteran of the Long Island music scene, having played in various and sundry classic rock, jazz blues and wedding bands over his 30 year career. After having grown up on a steady diet of British invasion pop and American garage-band rock, Joe switched gears and dived headlong into R&B after hearing Marvin Gaye's seminal anthem "What's Goin' On" on AM radio. What followed was a long progression of gigs in rock, pop and R&B bands over the next 20 years; Joe's just as home with playing Beatles tunes on his 12-string Rickenbacker as he is playing Funkadelic tunes on his beat-up Strat. In the midst of all that music, Joe established a writing/PR career, and has worked with Blondie, Donna Summer, Blue Oyster Cult, Eric Carmen and Al Jarreau among many other. In the early 90's, Joe heard a tune by contemporary jazz guitarist Jeff Golub, which triggered a love affair with instrumental jazz that continues to this day. Among his many influences are Norman Brown, George Harrison, Ronny Jordan, Larry Carlton, Peter Buck, Paul Jackson Jr.

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## Jay Sharkey - Drums, Vocals



Jay has been performing over 30 years. His inspiration came from the first wave of British invasion bands' versions of the American blues masters' classics. In 1973 Jay went to England to join a major label act called " Spontaneous Combustion ", which was produced by Greg Lake. While visiting Greg Lakes home, Jay was introduced to Mr. Lake's German Shephard, which bit him. Spontaneous Combustion performed at The Marquee Club as well as the Bournemouth College with Suzi Quatro in the UK. 1974: Performed in a band called 'Crossroads,' all-original N.Y. southern rock. And in 1975: Jay performed in a Tri-state rock show band called 'Jezebel'. From 1976 to 1980 he played in a number of all-original bands. In 1980 Jay joined a band called Lynn Todd and Peroxide who recorded a 6 song EP. They performed all over NYC including: Max's Kansas City, CBGBS, Great Gildersleeves, Trax and also several venues on Long Island including: The Roxy and Sparks. During this time, Jay auditioned for Billy Idol for the White Wedding album. He performed 4 songs with Billy Idol and Steve Stevens but unfortunately did not get the recording gig. Throughout the 1980's, Jay worked with various bands including Teenage Furniture and then went on do recording with another band called Alter Ego, which splintered off from Lynn Todd and Peroxide. Their 6 song EP is distributed in Italy. Jay's musical influences consist of: Mitch Mitchell, Charlie Watts, Dave Edmonds, Elvis Costello, The Police, Joe Jackson, Nick Lowe and The Cars.

## Cosmo LoCricchio - Keyboards, Bass guitar and Vocals



Multi-talented keyboardist Cosmo LoCricchio's interest in music started in elementary school with clarinet lessons, leading to playing drums in many rock 'n' roll bands including a band that backed rock legend Chuck Berry at a benefit at Hofstra University, Long Island, New York. With a keen interest in synthesizers, Cosmo switched to electronic keyboards. In addition, he is quite adept as a bass guitarist, working with several artists, including Award Winning Country Music Singer/Songwriter Mary Lamont. With his enthusiasm, wide range of experience, and love of harmonies, Cosmo is a welcome addition to Talk of the Town. Quote: "I will keep on playing 'til the end."