

# ARTS DEVO

by JASON CASSIDY • jasonc@newsreview.com



**SOUNDS LIKE CHICO OUT THERE** This Memorial Day weekend, Arts DEVO celebrates the brave local musicians who sacrificed so many tight grooves and fiery licks so that the college students might freely shake the junk inside their trunks. Join me now, all townies! Let us parade on bikes through these now-empty streets to all the backyard parties, patio sessions and barroom jams and howl our appreciation!

This week, two heroic hometown crews that are playing live also will be bringing some tasty new jams to their gigs:

Tonight (May 23), under the umbrella of the themes of “confused wizard and two legged spider” (those who dress accordingly will win “absolutely no prizes”), local glory rockers **Bungo** will unveil a new single under the stars at **Argus Bar + Patio**. And Friday (May 24), super-sized party band **Smokey the Groove** will blow the funky horns for its second recording, **Ontogeny**, during an album-release party at **Lost on Main**. The high-energy crazy-maker “Lobster Bee” is the first song on the album to win me over, while “M’Kay Ultra” wins based on its hilarious title alone.



Smokey the Groove, *Ontogeny*

**SONGS FOR GRIEVING** A few months ago, I shared the story of the incredible song “Refugees,” which was written in response to the **Camp Fire** by Paradise musician **John-Michael Sun**, who lost his home to the flames. As much as that song got under my skin and deserves/needs to be heard, I’ve been remiss in not sharing other musical responses to the wildfire tragedy.



Jason Beltz

One of the most widely publicized was “One of These Days,” by **Nate Smith** and **Miykael Goodwin**, a somber-yet-hopeful song originally released via Facebook video that’s since been professionally recorded and released under the new band name **Cold Weather Sons**. In the

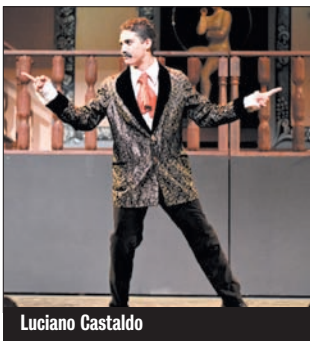
same slow-country-song vein is “My Hometown (Campfire),” by one-time Paradise resident and current Nashville musician **Tim Thurman**.

Others include “Paradise Is Strong” (written by **Jason and Lindsay Beltz**), **Skip Culton**’s “Another Prayer for Paradise,” “I Choose” by **Joanna Carlson** and **Mark McKinnon**’s moving “Just Breathe.”

I’ve started a YouTube playlist ([tinyurl.com/songsforcamp](https://tinyurl.com/songsforcamp)) to collect them all in one place (“Just Breathe” is only available via Soundcloud at this time: [tinyurl.com/McKinnonBreathe](https://tinyurl.com/McKinnonBreathe)), but I know there must be others. Please email links to any I’ve left out.

**CURTAIN CALL** Put your jazz hands up (way up!) for **Inspire School of Arts and Sciences** junior **Luciano Castaldo**. The young theater student received the Best Lead Actor in a High School Musical award at the **Rita Moreno California High School Musical Honors** during a ceremony at the San Jose Center for the Performing Arts on May 13. The state awards are named for the much-decorated musical legend—one of only a dozen performers who’ve won an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and a Tony—and Castaldo was recognized for his role as Gomez in the school’s spring production of **The Addams Family** musical.

Castaldo now heads to Broadway for the **National High School Musical Theatre Awards** in June. He will join winners from other regional programs in the U.S. and take part in 10 days of training with theater professionals that culminates with a performance and the presentation of national awards. Congrats, and break a leg!



Luciano Castaldo

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