



Sex Hogs II (from left): guest saxophonist Kevin Killion, guitarist/singer Johnny Meehan, drummer Nate Daly and bassist Greg Hopkins.

## Greasin' the hog

### The fun, mischievous rock of Chico's Sex Hogs II

**Y**ou never saw *Sex Hogs*?"

No, I'd never even heard of it when Johnny Meehan asked me the question, and I didn't find it when Googling "Sex Hogs" either—but the internet did take me down some freaky alleys. If the film does exist, it's

either so obscure no one knows anything about it, or it's all in the minds of the band that took its name.

"Our band is Sex Hogs II, which is a sequel to a movie, which is like this '70s slasher flick," said drummer Nate Daly after a recent band rehearsal.

"It's like a summer camp thing with teens, and the teen counselors sneak out of camp to have sex with the townies," Daly added, followed by vocalist/guitarist and co-founder Meehan as the two took turns sharing their origin story.

"And there's like this mystical farm up on the hill ..."

"Hog farm."

"Yeah, there's a pet cemetery kind of thing."

"So they go and like have sex there."

"There's all this bad mojo blood dripping into the teen camp ... from this hog farm. And it makes the teenagers go crazy, and they have crazy sex—to the point where they kill each other."

"Our band is the sequel to that movie."

Before their sequel was born, however, the two musicians didn't even know each other. In early 2015, a few months after moving to Chico from Albuquerque, N.M., Daly put out a Craigslist ad looking for other musicians to play with.

"His bands that he listed [in his ad], I was like, 'Oh shit,'" said Meehan. "And that's one of those things where I kind of fell in love with Nate because he knew about Radioactivity and Reigning Sound."

Daly came to town with his own garagey experience—from playing jittery mod-punk with Oakland's Giant Haystacks to trashy fun-rock with The Scrums in Albuquerque.

And for Meehan, it was in the popular rockabilly-leaning trio The Shankers that he made a name for himself in Chico's scene (literally, some locals still call him Johnny Shanker). After that he transitioned to a variety of punk crews and finally the recently defunct Michelin Embers, a self-described "Western skiffle" four-piece.

For its first three years, Sex Hogs II was a duo, releasing a couple albums and random singles and playing a high-energy, snare-driven, often heavily distorted brand of good-time garage rock at shows that reveled in theatrics. Like the Duffy's Tavern gig when—in a nod to Macho Man Randy Savage—they dressed up in wrestling singlets and challenged the audience to a Slim Jim-eating contest. And then there was the Sex Hogs 11 ("eleven," not "two") show, where nine different bassists were added to the duo, with all of them on stage at the same time for the finale.

"If you got onstage and just played, that's cool I guess," Meehan said of the band's performance philosophy. "But it's also really fun to be a goofball."

Some of the best examples of the band's shenanigans are its wacky videos, from the homage to "as-seen-on-TV" commercials for the song "Kick You in the Face," to the holiday-themed "Merry HogsMaxx" filmed at the local Food Maxx (the chorus: "Food Maxx/Take it to the max/Maximize your shopping power!").

"We needed a Christmas song," Daly said.

"That was another joke that kind of became a reality," Meehan replied.

As of 2018, the band is officially a three-piece, having added bassist Greg Hopkins (of West by Swan and Black Fong) after he joined them for a special one-off party of Blues Brothers covers (naturally).

In April, Hopkins joined the band at Sharkbite Studios in Oakland to record a new five-song cassette, *Ride the Tusk*. Tonight (Sept. 19) at Duffy's Tavern, Sex Hogs II will celebrate during a double-release party with fellow local garage-rockers Beehive. While the band's current guest "Sax Hog"—Smokey the Groove's Kevin Killion—will be onstage for the party, all other antics are top secret.

Though Daly did let slip an idea about a canned-peach-eating contest. You might want to bring moist towelettes just in case.

story and  
photo by  
Jason Cassidy

jasonc@  
newsreview.com

#### Preview:

Sex Hogs II  
tape-release and  
Beehive record-  
release party tonight,  
Sept. 19, 9 p.m.  
Sunny Acres opens.  
Cost: \$5

#### Duffy's Tavern

337 Main St.  
343-7718  
facebook.com/  
duffschico

## BACK TO SCHOOL STUDENT SPECIAL

Small Pita, Chips and a Soda

Not valid with other offers.

**\$6<sup>39</sup>**  
(Must show student ID)

**The Pita Pit**

BREAKFAST • LUNCH • DINNER

240 Broadway St. Chico, CA | 530.899.2847 | www.pitapitusa.com

90.1 KZFR PRESENTS IN CHICO

# 18th Annual Touch of Chico

Healing Massage  
Live Music  
Skill Share  
Sound Healing

Delicious Food, Artisans,  
Vendors and Educational Booths

## Sunday, September 29th

Noon - 6pm at Chico Creek Nature Center

Free to attend!

Experience a variety of bodywork at \$1 per minute

@KZFR90.1 @KZFR90.1FM @KZFR90.1FM @KZFR901FM