



The Sierra Sweethearts are, from left, Lynn Zonge, Kristell Moller, Cindy Gray and Catherine Matovich. COURTESY/THE SIERRA SWEETHEARTS

# Play anything

The Sierra Sweethearts

## Some bands that play traditional

Americana don't look they're having much fun. If the musicians get lost in the history of it, or obsessed with their own chops, then it's serious business with zero enchantment.

The Sierra Sweethearts are another matter. They give po-faced bluegrass and folk a kick in the keister. They know how to make you laugh, and yet these four musicians have the musical skills to play Americana with the authenticity it deserves.

The band features founders Lynn Zonge on guitar and Kristell Moller on stand-up bass and mandolin. The two were friends for years before playing together starting in 2012 as the Sierra Sisters. Within about a year, they started to play with Catherine Matovich on fiddle and Cindy Gray on six-string banjo and guitar.

And play they have. Every type of venue you could imagine has hosted the Sweethearts, and their musical style has expanded accordingly. For one of their first gigs in Yerington, Moller said the group bluffed that they could play songs by the Andrews Sisters, so they added that type of Americana to their repertoire.

"So that type of music became a big part of what we do, because we will take

just about any gig, anywhere, anytime," she said. "That's when Eric"—her husband—"started calling us the Women Who Will Play Anything."

For instance, the Sweethearts sometimes play their own arrangement of "Born to be Wild," the classic rock staple by Steppenwolf. While some of their songs are serious, most have a comedic edge to them, and that also has a range—from silly to subtle.

"We do alternative versions of bluegrass songs," Matovich said. "They've always been songs that were written by men where the women don't do so well, so we'll change the lyrics to suit our whims."

"It's part of the shtick that we do," Gray chimed in. "We do a lot of comedy where we gently make fun of men."

Doesn't that get the bluegrass purists annoyed, though?

"Not their wives," Zonge said, to hearty laughs all around.

The band's audience has recently expanded to include an ongoing tour of historic venues in smaller Nevada and California towns, including Goldfield, Tonopah, Amargosa and Lovelock. They plan to play next year in Pioche and Eureka.

"I've been involved with the arts before, so I just wrote a grant to the Nevada Arts Council to get some funding for travel," Gray said. "So, when I'm writing this grant, we need to have a lofty mission, and I started to think about why we are doing this—'because it's so dang fun' ended up as my reason. So, I started putting out feelers and coordinating all the different venues."

Zonge said that these experiences have really put it all in perspective for the band. "People from all over the world visit Goldfield and Tonopah, and that's because of the history," she said. "And it's just gorgeous, the wide open spaces, and you have the rich history of these boom-and-bust towns. And people are so friendly to us. People there are really hungry for live music. It's a great way to celebrate the history of Nevada." □

For more information, visit [sierrasweethearts.com](http://sierrasweethearts.com).



# ZOMBIE CABARET

## A PROVOCATIVE & CHILLING HALLOWEEN BURLESQUE PERFORMANCE

### FRI, OCT 25 & SAT, OCT 26 9PM SHOW

**\$25 TICKETS AT [HARDROCKCASINOLAKETAHOE.COM](http://HARDROCKCASINOLAKETAHOE.COM)**

Must be 21+. Live Entertainment Tax of 9% not included in ticket price.

**⚡ HARD ROCKIN' ⚡**



**WICKED**  
LINEUP

FRIDAY, OCT 25	SATURDAY, OCT 26
<b>LIVING DEAD DJ</b> GUITAR PLAZA   FREE CENTER BAR   FREE  <b>WALKING DEAD WINES</b> VINYL   FREE ADMISSION W/ PURCHASE OF CABARET TICKET 7PM - 8:30PM	<b>LIVING DEAD DJ</b> GUITAR PLAZA   FREE CENTER BAR   FREE



**LAKE TAHOE**

**[HardRockCasinoLakeTahoe.com](http://HardRockCasinoLakeTahoe.com)**

50 HIGHWAY 50  
STATELINE, NV 89449

844.588.ROCK  
#MADEFORMUSIC  
@HRHCLAKETAHOE