

Doreen & Remedy Band

Written by By Dee Velasco For the Sun
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Rocking out for the girls

It was once said that girls can rock just as hard as guys can, and for that matter, even better. Holding true to that and proving it tenaciously in the music world is Doreen Etsitty with her band *Doreen & Remedy*.

Etsitty's bandmates are all members of the Diné tribe and are seasoned musicians: Doreen Etsitty-vocals, Steven Etsitty-lead guitar, Freddie Dennison-bass, Kree Kool Johns-drums, Merlin Yazzie Jr.-acoustic. The band primarily plays country and classic rock. They recently performed at the monthly Gallup ArtsCrawl July 13. The band was asked to play in front of Quintana's Music and Jewelry by owners Ryan and Rhonda Quintana. *The Sun* got the chance to sit down and find out more about *Doreen & Remedy*.

Sun: Hi Doreen, Tell me about the band's name.

Etsitty: Well, of course the name *Doreen* comes from me. *Remedy* is more of a solution to combining country and classic rock. At the same time putting a woman up front as the lead singer. In this area, just reservation wide, there's not that many women who front the band. It is a challenge and solution behind the name *Remedy*.

Sun: Do you guys play a lot of covers?

Etsitty: We do a lot of covers, I like to do classic rock covers by Heart, Pat Benatar. On the country side I do covers by Highway 101, Patsy Cline; I love the Judds. We also do extreme classic rock where it's not just me singing, but everyone sings, I do about 60 percent of the covers. All of us add our part in the band and it's a culmination of everyone.

Sun: Do you write your own material as well?

Etsitty: Well, before the band, I was a solo artist. I did a lot of writing and I did about six songs written in Navajo. I did a lot of folk songs and maybe at some point I'll get back to that. I've experienced the chance of being a solo artist and being with a variety of bands throughout my life time.

Sun: How did you get into music and were there any influences?

Etsitty: Wow, as a young girl I always wanted to be a[n] entertainer/performer. But due to my upbringing and background, I wasn't able to pursue that at a younger age. We lived on the reservation where we didn't have electricity, the only thing I listened to was the radio late at night. I love telling this story because I would sneak out the radio and turn it on at midnight where everybody was asleep, and I would listen to the Loretta Lynn show. I had a lot of interest generated from that time where I wanted to sing. I sang regardless, from the time I was about nine years old to now. Of course, country was my first love and somehow perhaps through midlife crisis I turned to classic rock (laughing). My greatest interest was Sharon Burch who is a Navajo folk singer, and because of her influence I was able to write my own folk songs.

Sun: What highlights have you had in your career?

Etsitty: I have wonderful memories that I can share, in my last years of high school and early twenties, I've opened concerts for some famous country artists such as Billy Ray Cyrus,

Sweethearts of the Rodeo, and Martina McBride, before she made it big.

Sun: Those sure are some big names. What is the real passion on why you sing and what challenges do you face, Doreen?

Etsitty: I just want to share the challenges that I have shared with other women in the same capacity as there are other women leads in their bands. As for getting into major performances I still think there's that norm that exist[s] that men are still [more] popular than women. I remember watching Shania Twain being interviewed and she mentioned those same challenges. Men will always be in the forefront and I'm trying to change that and show that women still rock. It's very much so here on the reservation. It's the norm where people go to a concert and see the men singing country songs. That's the challenge that still exists, and I want to let people know and empower them that women can do the same thing.

Sun: How has the journey been so far?

Etsitty: For the longest time I have been with other bands in the last couple decades, that kind of tells you how old I am (laughing). I'm young at heart being only 56-years-old. I was never the front or lead person till I met my husband. We both have a passion for music. We both love country and classic rock, I love what I do, and I know I'll never get rich at it. It's who we are.

Sun: I'm glad you're having fun at it. What does the rest of your family think about it when they see Mom up on stage singing away? I'm sure that's got to blow their minds, yes?

Etsitty: I would sing to my kids when they were small, and they enjoyed that. We had our daughter singing as well, and she seemed to enjoy it, too. I want them to experience music in any capacity, and they may choose another direction in life, and that's okay. I think they've gotten use[d] to seeing me up on stage belting away.

Sun: Wow, I think that's great. I want to thank you for this opportunity and it really shows that you truly love music and feel so strong about it, Doreen.

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Etsitty: Thank you for the opportunity and it was a pleasure.

For more information: visit Facebook/Doreen & Remedy or ☎ (928) 640-0332

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