



Search for: in All

Current Conditions
Temp: 52°
High: 52°
Low: 24°

- News Sports Business Editorial Lifestyle Entertainment Multimedia UPublish

- Jobs | Homes | Rentals | Autos | Biz List | Stuff for Sale | The330.com | Daily Deals | Shopping/Coupons | Obituaries | Pets | Place an Ad | RSS

Events Calendar

January 2011 calendar grid with event search bar and 'Submit an Event' button.

PUBLISHERS CLEARING HOUSE WIN \$1 MILLION LIFE! a year for LIFE! Enter Now! SuperPrize Winner Announced February 28th!

Homepage > Local News > Top Stories >

Youth, music fill Night

Families, teenagers, revelers flock to downtown locations for some alcohol-free fun and to ring in the new year

By Betty Lin-Fisher
Beacon Journal staff writer

Published on Saturday, Jan 01, 2011



The band called Twin Engine from Lakewood, Ohio performs in the Battle of the Bands at the John S. Knight Center during the 15th annual First Night celebration on Friday in downtown Akron. (Paul Tople / Akron Beacon Journal)

View more photos >>

First Night Akron — the annual family-friendly downtown bash to usher in the new year — wanted to try something new for its 15th year.

Among the new things during New Year's Eve festivities on Friday were a Teen Battle of the Bands and the 15 Machine, a large-scale STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) project. The effort included separate pieces made by students at seven area middle schools and put together to create one machine to start off the

midnight fireworks.

The Teen Battle of the Bands this year replaced First Night Idol, which had been held for six years, said Lisa Knapp, communications director for the Downtown Akron Partnership.

"People had requested a battle of the bands before. We always like to find new ideas for teenagers, so we thought it would be good to engage them and vote for their favorite," Knapp said.

Bands were invited to submit videos; eight bands were then highlighted on the organization's website to be one of the five bands chosen by online voters to perform at First Night.

The five finalists, MessyFace, Twin Engine, Noize From the Basement, And Then the Stars Fell and Elephant Society, each played sets for First Night onlookers, who could then vote for their favorite.

Top prize was the right to play a show at the downtown venue Musica, tickets to a show at Musica and a trophy.

Paige Dobbins, 16, a sophomore at Jackson High School's School for the Arts and a bass player for MessyFace, said it was going to be fun to play for a crowd at First Night.

"We're all children of First Night. Our parents would bring us here. It's cool to be on the other side of it now," she said of her band, which performs alternative and

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS
The Institute for the Study of the Judiciary, Politics, & the Media (IJPM)
Find out more

DailyDeals.Ohio.com
\$10 for \$20 Worth of Food and Drinks at The Office Bistro and Lounge
BUY NOW!

Most Commented Stories

Table with 2 columns: Story Title and Comment Count. Includes stories like 'Kasich picks Indiana official to oversee Ohio EPA' and 'Mother given prison time in scalding'.

In This Section

- Youth, music fill Night
- Mangini expects to learn his fate on Monday
- Kent eco-group in 40th year of preserving green space in community
- Doctor calls it a career after 10,000 deliveries
- Homeless man receives rebuilt bike
- Business news briefs
- Renewable-energy law criticized
- Airlines raising fares as oil costs, travel grow
- Goldman Sachs, Intel make list of favorites
- Nexus S cuts the clutter

Most Read Stories

- Mother given prison time in scalding
- Akron man dies after shooting
- Burglary reports from Akron police - Dec. 30
- Rittman woman seeking help after accident is hit by car, dies
- Tax rate will fall next year in Ohio
- Ohio father, son, jailed in child slayings
- Comics & Games
- Akron court joins pairs' lives
- Youth, music fill Night
- Norton teacher accused of providing drugs to students
- Complete List >>

Blogs:**Ohio Politics/Elections:**

High court ruling prompts new Ohio campaign rules

Cleveland Browns:

Transcript from press conference with Browns offensive coordinator Brian Daboll

Marla Ridenour on Sports:

Rob Ryan states his case

Cleveland Cavaliers:

Varejao out vs. Bulls, Mo and Boobie questionable

Varsity Letters:

Glenville wide receiver reportedly gets offer from Zips

The330:

Families, teenagers, revelers flock to downtown locations for some alcohol-free fun and to ring in the new year

Tribe Matters:

OF Travis Buck signed with Tribe and invited to camp

First Bell - On Education:

Researchers study primates to learn how they restore social harmony

The Heldenfiles:**Pets:**

Lost: Siberian Husky in Cuyahoga Falls

Akron Zips:

Live Updates – Akron vs. Arkansas-Pine Bluff

Buckeye Blogging:

Official statement from the NCAA regarding suspensions

All Da King's Men:

New Year Looking Up Already

Blog of Mass Destruction:

Ringin' Out, Usherin' In

Akron Law Café:

Ezra Klein's Gaffe: Belittling the Constitution by Considering Only the Text

Car Chase:

What's Your Automotive Christmas Wish?

Let's Talk Real Estate:

Rumors: Hookah, Coffee, and Burritos Oh My

Sound Check:

George Jones concert at Civic Theatre postponed until 2011

See Jane Style:

The Long Story

HRLite House:

Social Media Website

rock songs.

Emily Gambone, 14, a freshman at Field High School, plays guitars and sings for Noize From the Basement. She started the band of players from Field, Tallmadge and Cuyahoga Falls high schools by putting up a flier at Woodsy's Music in Kent, where she takes guitar lessons. She eventually found band mates who then found others. Gambone also taught a friend how to play bass to finish out the band.

The alternative and rock band has played at several venues, including bars where the musicians are too young to get in on their own.

They've also been the opening act for several area bands of older musicians.

"They always are normally really supportive," said Logan McNeal, 14, who plays drums and is a freshman at Tallmadge High School. "They probably think we're just be a bunch of kids until they hear us play."

Twin Engine, a contemporary rock band made up of students from Lakewood and Strongsville high schools, was playing in its first Battle of the Bands. Members said that after the shows, they would probably go ice skating downtown.

The First Night activities make downtown Akron a lot of fun, said Linda Hale and her partner, Carol Dobbins, both of Wadsworth. They were taking a break from First Night activities to grab a bite to eat at the John S. Knight Center.

Hale and Dobbins said they had been to the original First Night in 1996 and to a few others over the years. They decided to return on Friday, when the air was damp, but temperatures were a springlike 50 degrees.

"It's gotten so much richer," Dobbins said.

Said Hale: "They figured it out. It's really nice. People with kids must really love this."

Hale and Dobbins had been to Summit Artspace to see some kids' activities, artwork and a sitar player. They planned to listen to some jazz at the Knight Center.

"It's nice to be here at night and feel safe and have stuff to do," Dobbins said.

While New York City's Times Square has its New Year's Eve dropping ball, downtown Akron had a large-scale Rube Goldberg Machine, a deliberately overengineered machine that performs a very simple task in a complex fashion, usually including a chain reaction.

Students from seven Stark and Summit County middle schools created different parts of the machine, which was set up on South Main Street Friday night.

The 85-foot-long structure was designed to set off 15 fireworks counting down to the midnight fireworks display, Knapp said.

Organizers were videotaping different machines. Starting next week, the videos will be online at <http://www.firstnightakron.org> so people can vote for their favorite school's machine. The winning school will get a year's supply of science supplies — up to a \$2,000 value from sponsor Time Warner Cable— and a segment on the local cable show *Ask Time Warner*.

Betty Lin-Fisher can be reached at 330-996-3724 or blinfisher@thebeaconjournal.com.

[Click here to read or leave a comment on this story.](#)

You might be interested in:

- [Father gets 6 years in prison for making daughter replace deceased mom in bed \(News - Ohio.com\)](#)
- [Husband shoots wife to death, then himself in Green \(News - Ohio.com\)](#)
- [Scheme detected at second area bank \(News - Ohio.com\)](#)
- [Et cetera \(Entertainment - Ohio.com\)](#)

Story tools

[Email](#) [Print](#) [Save](#) [Reprint](#) [Most Popular](#) [Subscribe](#)

Share this story

[BOOKMARK](#) 

Inside Ohio.com

MUSIC



Musicians rise and fall in 2010

LOCAL HISTORY



Mighty mud maidens

HOME & GARDEN



Holiday magic alive in memory

ARTS & CULTURE



Monet's art makes great impression

MOVIES



Coens display 'True Grit' in iconic film



[Classifieds](#) | [Contact Us/Feedback](#)

[About Ohio.com](#) | [Advertise](#) | [About Our Ads](#) | [Terms of Use & Privacy Statement](#) | [Copyright](#)



©2011 The Akron Beacon Journal • 44 E. Exchange Street, Akron, Ohio 44308

Website design by Sanctuary Media Group