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# Forecast is a band with a difference

by RON ALLETON

At first glance they don't look or sound a whole lot different than other bands that have played Prince George.

But when you get behind Forecast at the Simon Fraser Inn cabaret you find some unusual and interesting ingredients.

For starters they have six members, which makes them a bit larger than most live bands that play rooms here.

And they feature a girl singer up front — in fact they had to build an extension for the stage to have enough room for her.

And with members from three provinces and as far away as Montreal they are indirectly doing something for unity.

But, most unusual, they are mainly jazz musicians who play a more readily-accepted form of commercial music to make a living.

Forecast has been together a year, but in its present form only one month.

This is just their second engagement together, but you can't tell, because they blend so well.

Four members of the group have been together for a year and singer Denyse Brault of Montreal is the newest arrival.

Other members are Bob Walker of Saranina, Ont., on horns, Glenn Smith of Toronto on guitar, Garnet Morse of Vancouver on drums, Robert Bruyere of Montreal on bass and Dennis Ziebart on keyboard.

Their average age is 23 and in the group's short history they have spent two months backing the Platters.

Unlike many rock bands which simply grind out imitations of popular groups, Forecast does all its own arranging.

It's a show band, with not too much commercial rock.

As the members talked, a tape played on stage of Earth, Wind and Fire, a group which has had a influence on their sounds.

They talked about how the music business isn't nearly as glamorous as many people think; how difficult it is to work new members into a group; how difficult it is.

to get established and progress and how the swing to recorded or taped disco music is affecting live bands.

There is considerable movement among musicians at this level and working a new one in requires much work — often taking time off from performing.

Then there is the time needed as you hope the group evolves into something successful.

Economics play a large part in musical entertainment.

The disco scene is becoming big and that is forcing some lesser-talented groups to move to other areas, or disband.

At the last club the band played they were the final live group, as the room switched to disco.

Denyse left Montreal for the same reason.

Musical talent alone isn't enough — there is a tremendous cost for equipment.

Denyse's microphone alone is worth \$400. Some bands go into debt for thousands of dollars for equipment.

Forecast is starting with about \$12,000 to \$14,000 worth and that's just the "bare bones."

Many people who visit cabarets think bands have a soft life — sleep until 9 p.m., then play four hours — party all night and sleep all day.

Forecast uses about 40 numbers which are constantly changing.

They play four and one-half hours, six nights a week, doing five sets each night of between 30 and 45 minutes.

What you don't see is the time they spend rehearsing — at least as much as they do performing.

Denyse is amused when people often ask "Is this all you do, or do you work?"

A lot of groups start and never get too far before breaking up.

Some have the talent to succeed.

At the Simon cabaret — until the end of next week — the Forecast is for good entertainment.



Denyse Brault up front with Garnet Morse and Robert Bruyere of Forecast at the Simon cabaret.