

Rockin' it out at the Anchorage

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They call their show "Niagara's best kept secret."

Those words are right on the poster hanging on the wall in the warm and rustic The Anchorage, where the exposed brick walls hint at its former life as an engine factory in the early 1900s. There, every Saturday night for the past two years, The Niagara Rhythm Section has been entertaining patrons with blues, rock, jazz and, well, whatever sounds they happen to fancy that particular.



Niagara Rhythm Section guitarist Steve Grisbrook and guest Johnny Max play as if they were regular band mates.

The band, made up of bassist Steve Goldberger, guitarist Steve Grisbrook, drummer Dave Norris, percussionist Penner MacKay and Herb Nelson on keyboard, keeps the music fresh by inviting a special guest each week.

It's the guest who sets the tone for the night, Goldberger said, with the band going along for the ride.

"If they want to do Moondance in hip hop, we'll do it," he said.

The Feb. 2 show featured Toronto blues singer Johnny Max, someone they've played with many times before. The familiarity is evident in the easy back and forth between Max and his bandmates for the night. Jokes and playful banter are mixed between the songs.

"But a lot of times, the first time somebody comes in, we have no idea what they're going to do," Goldberger said. "That's the beauty of it."

There's only one rule for the Saturday Night Showcase Series -- no rehearsals allowed.

Each week can feature an entirely different sound, from rock and blues, to jazz, folk, Brazilian and county.

The Niagara Rhythm Section is off Feb. 9, with special guests Accordion Crimes in their place. Upcoming shows starting Feb. 16, will features guests Maz Cann, Maria Aurigema, Gayle Ackroyd & Ed Kopala, Lance Anderson and Mark Rutherford.

A schedule of guests for the Saturday Night Showcase Series can be found at www.stevegoldberger.com.