



INDY'S WEEKLY ALTERNATIVE NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHTING ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Review: Cheese-tastic lounge

BY STEVE CARR

**The Leisure Kings
Jazz Kitchen
Saturday, Dec. 2**

Amidst a raucous crowd that included corporate Christmas partygoers, former WTHR weatherman Bob Gregory and Harry Riser, host of WICR's weekly jazz show *Grand Big Bands*, The Leisure Kings cheesed out an all-timer Saturday night at the Jazz Kitchen. Backed by the 14-piece jazz orchestra Red Baron and His Midtown Blowers, the Kings ran through a 20-song set that included most of their classics and a verse from "Free Bird" in response to a ubiquitous live show request.

Sometimes you just have to fight fire with fire. Other times you just have to breathe fire, which lead singer Mike Wiltrot did — safely outside — but only after damning White Snake for ruining indoor fire-breathing for everybody.

Just to keep it real, the band rolled out a number of their songs unaccompanied by Baron's orchestra, but the show definitely hit its zenith when the horns were in full swing. Wiltrot, no stranger to playing in front of a large band, was more than up to the occasion and normally reserved keyboardist Sean Baker was at his animated best.

One of the highlights of any Kings show is watching how long it takes newcomers to catch onto the joke. AC/DC just doesn't sound like AC/DC when the Kings churn it out — loungified. The corporate Christmasteers, made happy by a pre-show raffle that included "a really cool backpack from Yahoo," were onboard from the anchor hoist, but Gregory, his unmistakable white locks topping a sweater that would have made The Cos proud, seemed a harder sell. He clapped with a hesitant but polite bemusement before apparently deciding, about half way in, that this probably wasn't the death of jazz as he knew it.

The night capped with the awarding of a lamp, featuring a sculpted prospector that had been rescued from a Value Village and glued together the day prior. Wiltrot passed the heirloom to the patron he deemed to have the best posture. "I've been watching," he said, "and you sir must have been one of those kids who walked around with books on his head."

Certainly a highlight evening for Kings' fans, newcomers at the show sure seemed like converts. After all, the standing "O" means damn good show.