

No ordinary girl group

Angela L. Gorter

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At a recent rehearsal, The Girls seemed lost with just two out of three vocalists present.

The youngest member, Lauren Hull, 14, was on a family vacation and would return the following week.

Brittany Klarich, 17, explained that she and 15-year-old Carrie Vieweg couldn't achieve as rich a harmony as they are used to creating without the complete trio.

And she should know.

Though Brittany has been with the band just eight months, she has been dubbed the "harmony specialist" of the group.

"We were looking for someone who can hear harmonies. Not just when they listen to the music, but from hearing chords," said Fred Grupe, founder of The Girls, on how Brittany entered the band.

The Girls will be showcasing their talents at 7:30 p.m. Thursday at the Concord Township Town Hall gazebo.

They specialize in country, ballads, 1960s and other classic hits.

To a nonmusician, it's hard to believe that The Girls are all teenagers. Well, at least the vocalists are all teenagers.

While Brittany is the oldest of the trio, she is decades younger than several of her band mates, local veterans of the music scene with years of professional experience under their belts.

And that's perhaps why when The Girls perform, they steer clear of today's Top 40.

"I used to choose about 98 percent of the songs," Grupe said. "Now the girls get together at (instrumentalist Walt Vieweg's) — and God bless 'em cause this is something that we have been dreaming about — and if they practice a song that they like, they decide."

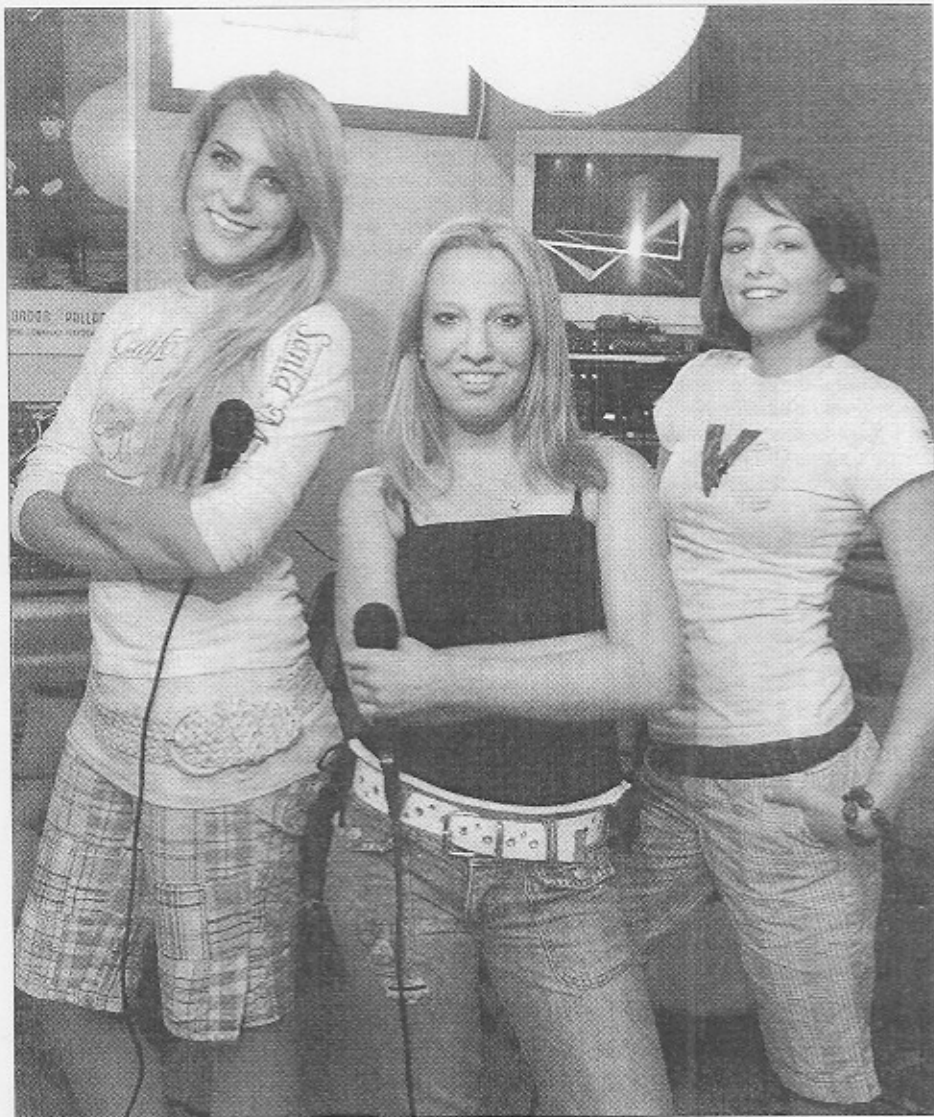
"We like to approve the songs to make sure with the generation gap, it helps us to be more universally appealing," he said.

Lauren, the newest member of the group, brought her own musical style when she joined in March.

"The experience has been ... I can't even explain it. It's so fun to do, to be on stage, performing for people and being with your friends performing," Lauren said.

A fan of the Rolling Stones, Lauren said she developed her matured taste in music from her parents.

"My mom was a singer," Lauren said. "She was in Mentor



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Brittany Klarich, 17, left, Carrie Vieweg, 15, and Lauren Hull, 14, comprise The Girls, a singing group backed by veteran musicians such as Fred Grupe and Dan Rose.

High's Top 25. And my dad just played music all of the time (around the house)."

All three girls began performing in front of an audience through school choirs and area karaoke nights.

Carrie and Lauren, both students at Riverside High School in Painesville Township, have each won contests at Wings in Geneva Township.

Carrie, who was a founding member of The Girls, has won a singing contest at FYE Music Store at Great Lakes Mall in Mentor, performed in Las Vegas and recorded in Nashville.

Her solo rendition of "Unchained Melody" by the Righteous Brothers has been played on WKKY-FM 104.7.

The local station has also picked up Lauren's rendition of Fleetwood Mac's "Landslide."

Lauren is also working on an unnamed solo project with

The Girls: Musicians

David Alzey: Drums, percussion. He is also a member of Mortia's Chair.

Fred Grupe: Bass guitar. Founding member of The Girls, he is also in Abbey Rodeo.

Karl Peters: Lead guitar. Peters is the newest band member, and he is also in Sour Mash.

Dan Rose: Acoustic and electric guitar. He provides the full-scale recording studio for The Girls in his basement.

Walt Vieweg: Vibes, flute, trumpet, sax and harmonica. Vieweg is Carrie's father.

Danny "Slick" Watkins: Keyboards.

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Grupe and Dan Rose, who plays acoustic and electric guitar for The Girls.

There, she said she is able to perform more classic rock music that she loves.

Brittany, a senior at Berkshire High School in Burton Village, is a visual artist as well as musically.

She is trained in every medium of art with the exception of oil painting, she said.

"I have always been involved

in the arts. I did it my whole life," Brittany said.

"I haven't thought about what I want to do musically yet," she said about her aspirations after she graduates this year.

As president of Berkshire's Art Club, Brittany is also creating drawings for a coffee table book with Grupe to go along with his poetry.

"This threesome is really dedicated. I am so proud of them," Grupe said.