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THE CELEBRATION ISSUE

Let the Beat Go On

Liquid Blue is most travelled band in the world.

Most successful musicians know that going on tour is an expected part of the job. But rather than multiple-city gigs, the band Liquid Blue goes on worldwide tours to places like Israel, Lithuania and Denmark.

In fact, one of the group's claims to fame is that it is the most travelled band in the world, having performed in 155 countries and all 50 states. They've performed eight tours of The People's Republic of China—more than any other American band, according to founder and vocalist/songwriter Scott Stephens. One of these trips included a kick-off concert for the 2008 Summer Olympics in front of a sold-out crowd of 8,200.

Why China? According to Stephens, it all started when they were noticed by an influential, well-connected Chinese promoter who thought they had the right ingredients for success in China, which was just beginning to embrace Western rock and roll. "He liked our mix of pop originals, the fact that we were a well-known American cover act and our willingness to learn to sing in Mandarin," Stephens explains.

The band has been awarded a Guinness world record for singing the same song in the most languages—nine, to be exact. Their China tours led to their being signed by a major Chinese label—the only American band to win this honor. Some of their other concerts have been broadcast on national Chinese TV.

But Eastern Europe is also full of Liquid Blue fans. It's actually one of the band's favorite places to play, because it has "the most dedicated rock and roll fans in the world," according to Stephens. "To them, the music represents freedom."

The band has even taken its show on the road to entertain troops stationed overseas. They've played for the troops in 25 countries. "We happened to be on a USO trip in Honduras when 9/11 happened," Stephens recalls. "We were eating breakfast with the troops when the images of the attacks were broadcast. It was very quiet in the room—



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no one said anything. By the looks on their faces, they knew that may be engaged in battle very soon."

Because there was a no-fly policy for a week after the attack, the band had to remain in Honduras. "We offered to play a show for the troops every day while we were there—and we did."

Not all performances go off without a hitch. There's bound to be miscommunication and technical challenges when



China tour



The LaJolla Jewl Ball.



At a Beatles tribute in the small, communist country of Belarus, which rarely sees Americans, the band performed in front of 15,000 rock fans.



At the Jewel Ball guests walked through a satin blue entrance with "porthole" aquariums of live fish.

performing in a foreign country. Stephens recalls a show in Ecuador that was supposed to take place at a college stadium. "When our team arrived in the afternoon they found only two small speakers and no power," he says. "We had language challenges and when show time arrived there was a crowd of thousands gathered but we weren't close to solving the sound issues. We were finally ready to perform three hours later, but most of the crowd had gone home. We did two songs and a downpour started. That was that."

Closer to Home

When the band is closer to home—they're based in San Diego—they're busy playing corporate and social events such as the recent annual Jewel Ball at the La Jolla Beach and Tennis Club.

Every year, San Diego's elite come together for this event, which is organized and produced by Las Patronas, a group

of local women whose mission is to raise money for various charities. This year, the theme was Sapphire, and the décor, clothing, entertainment and set-up reflected jewel tones.

Nearly 700 guests graced the club for the event, and Liquid Blue provided the dance music.

"A colleague recommended Liquid Blue to me," says Jewel Ball Chairperson Sue Wagener. "I went to see them at an event around the holidays. Because we had a mix of ages from 30s to 70s, I let the band decide what music to play. The crowd loved it—in the last 10 years I have been attending the Jewel Ball, I have never seen the dance floor so crowded from the minute we opened until we had to close down at 1:15am! I'm still getting compliments on how great they were!"

Now—can they do that in Mandarin? **es**

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