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REO Speedwagon and Pat Benatar

Love on the Run Tour

REO Speedwagon - Kevin Cronin (lead vocals, guitar), Bruce Hall (bass), Neal Doughty (keyboards), Dave Amato (lead guitar) and Bryan Hitt (drums) - are ready to roll into 2007 full throttle with their brand new album FIND YOUR OWN WAY HOME, their first studio collection of new material in more than a decade.

The roots of the new album go back to the spring of 2000, when the band joined forces with fellow Midwest rockers Styx for a national, sold-out, co-headlining tour. The tour proved to be such a commercial success that it was recorded live and released on both CD and DVD, jokingly entitled "Arch Allies". The bands appeared together on the *Today* show, VH1, and on numerous syndicated radio shows, including *The Howard Stern Show*.

Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, both bands worked together to organize a series of concerts that would benefit the New York Port Authority Police and the families of the officers who tragically lost their lives.

Over the following two years, REO Speedwagon toured non-stop. In addition to performing in all the expected concert markets, the band got back to its roots in small town America.

"These are the people who supported our music from the beginning. This is REO country", says Kevin Cronin, describing the fans who enthusiastically sing along every night to the songs he has written such as the number one hits, "*Can't Fight This Feeling*" and "*Keep On Loving You*," as well as the classics "*Roll With the Changes*," "*Keep Pushin'*," "*Time for Me to Fly*," "*Riding the Storm Out*," and "*Take It On the Run*."

During this time, the band was honored with a *Behind the Music* special on VH1 and Kevin Cronin was a guest panelist on *Politically Incorrect with Bill Maher*, as well as coming in a close second place on *Rock 'n Roll Jeopardy*.

In 2003, REO joined fellow classic rockers Journey and Styx for the "Main Event Tour," a sold-out, critically-acclaimed arena tour of all the markets that they had been entertaining since the late '70s. Music critics noted that REO had "kept their standards extremely high," and were "thrilling their fans night after night with their incredible power, sheer energy, and songs that will live forever."

New songs have been the lifeblood of REO since its first album in 1971, so it was natural that inspiration would strike during the "Main Event Tour" and drive REO to start writing new songs in between concert performances. The band began introducing these new songs into their live shows and the fan reaction

was positive. The new album was born.

While not on the road, the band has been in the studio for the past 2 years working on their first CD of new songs since 1996's Building the Bridge.

"It has been an intense few years, crazy years for me, but that's when I usually do my best writing," says Cronin. "All of us have been going through some big-time changes, and it shows in our performances on the new record."

The band has teamed up with producer, keyboard whiz and all-around musical genius Joe Vannelli (Gino's brother and musical partner).

"Joe has brought a musicality to the new songs, which is thrilling," says Cronin. "Dave is playing with such amazing versatility, using all his vast arsenal of guitars and amps. Bruce and Bryan, who have always been such a powerhouse rhythm section, have never played tighter or stronger together. And Joe's keyboard ideas are taking our music to places we've never been before, and will allow Neal to take those ideas to our live shows."

The buzz in the REO camp is unmistakable. It is a familiar feeling for this band, one they felt in 1978 during the sessions for their classic album You Can Tune a Piano, but You Can't Tuna Fish and again three years later when they released the 10-million-selling Hi Infidelity.

"We have been through it all and you just feel it when the pieces seem to be coming together," says Bruce Hall, "and I am feeling it big time on this album."

"With some records it feels like you are swimming upstream and others just have a flow," says Cronin. Find Your Own Way Home was conceived out of turmoil, but as these songs have evolved there is a momentum that is seemingly unstoppable. It is cool that it is all coming from this music. That's the way it's supposed to be."

REO Speedwagon is ready to hit the road, barnstorming radio stations in the spring; playing acoustic sets and delivering the first single, the emotionally-charged power ballad "I Needed to Fall."

As REO webmaster (and Paul's little sister) Ruth McCartney put it, "This record is both fresh and old-school."

"I guess unconsciously that is what we were going for," adds Cronin. "We do some of our best work when we are unconscious."

After the promotional tour, the band will head to Europe for a tour of theatres in the U.K. and then appearances at festivals in Sweden, Belgium and Germany. A nationwide co-headline tour with Boston is being planned as well.

2007 looks to be a major comeback year for a band that never really went away. While other bands went on hiatus when they hit rough times, REO has toured every year since its inception in 1971.

"We love to play live," says Hall, "it just keeps getting better."

With the release of Find Your Own Way Home, the band feels its energy rekindled and its purpose renewed. This is not an ending at all; rather a new beginning. Kevin, Dave, Bruce, Neal and Bryan have something to prove.

Look out America: the Speedwagon is rolling at full speed ahead in 2007.

Pat Benatar

More than three decades ago, Pat Benatar began breaking rules and blazed a new trail for female rock stars. Pat was bold, self-assured, and independent. She was alluring but not exploitive. She was vulnerable but not weak. She was strong-minded without being hardhearted.

Songs such as "Love Is a Battlefield," "Hit Me With Your Best Shot," "We Live For Love," and "Heartbreaker" became anthems for a new attitude. At the dawn of MTV, Benatar was the image of the female rocker for an entire generation of young woman, and the young men who loved them. That generation has grown up with her and others have walked down the path she helped pave.

Still going strong, Benatar has been married for 28 years to guitarist, songwriter producer, collaborator and soul mate Neil Giraldo . The parents of two daughters, Pat and Neil have been touring almost non-stop for over three decades.

Benatar is acknowledged as the leading female rock vocalist of the '80s. During this time she was nominated nine times for Grammy Awards for Best Rock Vocal Performance (female), winning an unprecedented four Grammy Awards in consecutive years from 1980 to 1983. Benatar has also won three American Music Awards. Of the sixteen original and compilation albums released during her 30+ year career, seven were certified platinum and three were certified gold. One of the most popular performers in rock, she is also one of the most recognized and admired female artists.

Born Patricia Andrzejewski in Brooklyn, New York she was raised in Lindenhurst, Long Island. She always wanted to be a singer and started singing in elementary school, performing in community projects and church choirs. She began studying privately in junior high and continued through high school. At 19, she married her high school sweetheart, (becoming Pat Benatar) and moved to Richmond, Virginia , where she worked as a bank clerk and moonlighted as a singer in lounges and local clubs.

In 1975, the couple moved back to New York , but they soon divorced. Determined to follow her dream, Benatar took to performing cabaret on Long Island before being cast in *The Zinger*, a short-lived off-Broadway sci-fi musical composed by Harry Chapin. She then hit the Manhattan cabaret circuit,

incorporating more rock and pop into her repertoire of standards and Broadway show tunes. As with many young performers, she also showed up at open mike nights at Catch A Rising Star, a showcase club featuring singers and comedians. Her three a.m. rendition of Judy Garland's "*Rock-A-Bye Your Baby With A Dixie Melody*" earned her a steady slot there.

Then, in 1977 came her turning point. For Halloween, she wore a streetwise vampire costume (black tights, short black top, black eyeliner) to a party at a Greenwich Village café. Instead of changing clothes for her gig that night at Catch A Rising Star, she went on stage in costume, performing her usual set. Only this time, instead of the usual response, the audience stood and cheered. Suddenly her powerful singing (later to reach a 4 1/2 octave range) was matched by an equally powerful image.

The following year, Benatar signed to Chrysalis Records. Multi-instrumentalist Neil Giraldo, a respected session player who had worked with several Midwest-based groups as well as being a member of Rick Derringer's band, was brought in as musician and arranger. The two sparked an immediate rapport on stage and off, put together a band, and relocated to Southern California.

Benatar debuted with the platinum album **In The Heat Of The Night** (1979) and both "Heartbreaker" and "We Live For Love" charted in the Top 40. Her next album, **Crimes Of Passion** (1980), rocketed to #2, reaching quadruple platinum, and including her first Top 10 hit, the gold-certified "Hit Me With Your Best Shot." The album also spawned the video for "You Better Run," the second ever to air on MTV, which debuted that year. In addition, **Crimes Of Passion** copped the first of her Grammy Awards.

That was just the beginning. Her next album, **Precious Time** (1981) went double platinum and outdid its predecessor by hitting #1. **Fire And Ice** brought Benatar her second Grammy. Other platinum albums followed. **Get Nervous** (1982) was Top Five and featured the Grammy winning "Shadows Of The Night," **Live From Earth** (1983) boasted the gold, Grammy winning, Top Five hit "Love Is A Battlefield" (and it's classic video) **Tropico** (1984) shined its spotlight on the Top Five charting "We Belong," nominated for Best Pop Vocal Performance (female).

Following the gold **Seven The Hard Way** (1984), who's Top 10 Grammy-nominated "Invincible" was the theme song for the film *The Legend of Billie Jean*, Benatar took time off to become a mother. She and Giraldo married in 1982, and in 1985, became the proud parents of a baby girl, Haley.

Between 1988 and 1989, Benatar released **Wide Awake in Dreamland** that spun off the Top 20 hit "All Fired Up." The song earned her another Grammy nomination along with another nomination for "Let's Stay Together." In August 2001, her greatest hits compilation **Best Shots** was certified platinum.

In 1991, Benatar fashioned ahead of its time the retro-swing effort, **True Love** (1991) backed by the roomful of Blues rhythm section. Pat successfully modernized her sound for the critically acclaimed **Gravity's Rainbow** (1993) while continuing to tour with Fleetwood Mac, the Steve Miller Band and others.

1997, Pat released **Innamorata** (CMC International), her first original album in four years. That same year, she was also invited to perform at Lilith Fair where so many female artists enjoyed the fruits of their success thanks in part to the seeds planted by the pioneering Benatar. In 1998, 8-18-80 (CMC), an album of live recording from her concert that long-ago night at the Old Waldorf in San Francisco, was released.

In 1999, Benatar and Giraldo opened their private vaults and compiled an extensive 3-CD collection **Synchronistic Wanderings: Recorded Anthology 1979-1999** (Chrysalis/Capitol). This definitive collection spans her entire career and contains rare photos and previously unreleased material. Synchronistic Wanderings includes the album versions of all 19 of her Top 40 singles.

This great collected works also includes songs from soundtracks like *Speed* and other films, contributions to tribute/benefits projects, precious unreleased live recordings and outtakes, B-Sides, and rarities never before available on CD. It even includes the demo version of "Love Is A Battlefield," perhaps Benatar's signature song.

In the summer of 2002 Benatar released a live CD and DVD. The CD **Summer Vacation Soundtrack Live** and the DVD **Summer Vacation Live**, featured a 90-minute concert filmed at the Grove Theatre in Anaheim, California. In addition they debuted four new songs ("I Won't," "Girl," "Out Of The Ruins," and "Please Don't Leave Me") as well as previously unrecorded acoustic versions of "We Belong" and "Love Is A Battlefield." **Summer Vacation Live DVD** also included special features such as behind the scenes footage and exclusive interviews.

In August 2003 Benatar released her first album of new songs in 7 years titled **GO**, on Bel Chiasso Records, distributed through the Welk Music Group. Benatar says it's a "contemporary guitar-driven record." "I like it, it sounds like us, but in the natural progression of where we should be," she says.

Also in 2003 Benatar joined Martina McBride for an episode of CMT's *Crossroads* which quickly became one of the show's most popular episodes to date.

Then in October, 2008 Benatar was inducted into the Long Island Hall of Fame.

Over the years Benatar has been busy in front of the camera appearing in cameo roles in several hit TV shows including WB's *Charmed*, ABC's *Dharma and Greg* and on the Fox series *That 80's Show*. Her story has also been featured on shows like A&E Biography, Lifetime's *Intimate Portrait* and on VH-1's hit series *Behind The Music*.

Most recently, Benatar has been working on her long awaited autobiography "Between a Heart and a Rock Place" where she talks about her life, rock 'n' roll and how her generation changed music forever. Published by Harper Collins, it is due to be released on June 15, 2010.

Thirty years after starting her recording career, Pat has found that unique balance between family and career. Continuing to do what she loves, Pat Benatar is still rocking.