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# *They are the Champions: Madison*

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By Ian Haygood (<http://bandswap.org/author/ian-haygood/>)

*Today's BandSwap 2014 blog post features an interview with our Champion\* in Madison, Wisconsin. Meet Rick Tvedt: lifetime musician, entrepreneur, publisher and writer, founder of the Madison Area Musician Association (<http://themamas.org/>), patron of the arts, and BandSwap Champion for Madison. Rick has devoted his life to music in a myriad of ways through arguably the most tumultuous and volatile years of the industry. Currently, amongst many other things, he has focused his efforts to raise funds for local music programs in order to provide Madison's youth with instruments, while simultaneously making a sincere effort to shine a national spotlight on Madison's local music scene. The BandSwap team is thrilled to have him on board for the program this year. If there were more Ricks in the world, I'd be willing to wager that things would be a bit more utilitarian, and musical.*



Rick Tvedt (Photo Credit: Mary Sweeney)

***Who are you, and what do you do?***

I have been a musician all my life; joined my first band at eight with my older brother. Had a very successful local/regional run around Madison in the eighties and just missed hitting MTV's Buzz Bin. I was in another big band in the 00's called the Sled Dogs. We were similar to Kansas I guess – very challenging. I published a local music newspaper from 2003 -2007 called Rick's Café. I still publish online at [localsoundsmagazine.com](http://localsoundsmagazine.com) (<http://magazine.localsounds.org/>). Local Sounds is multi-faceted with TV, radio, the magazine and a social networking platform. I also have a music blog (<http://www.madisonmagazine.com/Blogs/Local-Sounds/July-2014/Madison-Winners-Announced-for-2014-BandSwap/>) I write for Madison Magazine. The same year I started the newspaper I founded the Madison Area Music Association (<http://themamas.org/>). We are a nonprofit, funding music programs and providing instruments for Madison-area youths. We present the Madison Area Music Association Awards each year. It's the Grammys only for Madison ([www.themamas.org](http://www.themamas.org/)). I'm currently serving on the Madison Arts Commission (<http://www.cityofmadison.com/mac/>) and am planning a very interesting venue that will double as a music museum of sorts. I have a wife and three children. I'm also a CPA and I have my own business but also am employed full-time with another nonprofit, Working Capital for Community Needs, that does micro lending and value-chain lending in Latin America. I like to be useful.

***Do you have an "official" job title? Do you have a secret job title that you believe actually better describes what you do?***

I guess my titles are: Father, Husband, CPA, Writer/Publisher, Executive Director of the music association and business owner. Really though – I'm a music junkie. My therapist reassures me there are worse addictions.

***Where are you from originally and how did you end up in Madison?***

I grew up not far from Madison in a small town called Mt. Horeb. We had one of the first rock bands there and I used to hitchhike into the city to buy records. I've lived out of Wisconsin but have been back here since 1980.

***For how long, and in which ways have you been actively involved in your local arts community?***

All my life really but especially since 1980. I've morphed from being an active musician to being involved in other ways. It's important to give back, especially when you have experience and understand the needs of others to some degree.

***How do you feel your local arts community and local economy are benefiting from BandSwap?***

I am thrilled that we are doing BandSwap. It is a good idea in so many ways. If I had to pick the most important aspect I would say that getting the city to back something like this is a major breakthrough. Music and the arts need to be recognized as economic drivers and communities need to invest in it. I am so optimistic that being involved in BandSwap is opening a door in Madison and that there are good things to come. The way we expanded BandSwap in Madison this year is especially exciting. We've made it into an all-day event and our selection process picked four runners-up that won prize packages that include CD pressings, video production and one band will be selected to play the MAMA Awards in 2015. The city made all this possible along with the Madison Arts Commission.

***What do you feel is/are the best-kept secret(s) in your city?***

I'll tell you what – for its size I don't think any other city can touch Madison and it just keeps getting better. The amount of talent and the sheer number of bands – really good bands and performers – is just staggering. There are well over a hundred recordings released locally each year here. I know because I count them and track them for Local Sounds. My goal now is to nurture that to the best of my ability and to broadcast that to the masses.

***What does a day in your life look like?***

Oh God, it starts with too little sleep, that's for sure. I'm up at 5:45 and I am fully employed. I need to provide for the family so it can be tough fitting the rest in. I'm typing this in bed and it's getting late! There are many nights when I don't get home until 8 or 9 pm and sometimes even later. It's hard to miss out on time with the family and truth be told, I'm over-committed. But music is what I know best and I feel that the time is right to make things happen that will be very beneficial for the future. Madison is blossoming.

***If you had to listen to one song for the rest of your life, what would it be and why?***

My favorite song of all-time is "Awaken" by Yes (1977) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98-iBpbEbNk>). I love all kinds of music and I have a vast collection. It's silly really – I have more music than I could listen to before I die. I go to great lengths to stay on top of what's current, especially on the innovative end. I watch the college music charts and am constantly checking things out.

***Most memorable concert experience:***

I have seen some incredible shows as I came of age in the seventies. I've seen all the major rock acts as well as jazz greats. The most memorable is a local show by Subvocal. The Sled Dogs opened but Subvocal just blew my mind and there was an aerial dance troupe. The music is an earthy U2 meets Peter Gabriel but darker. Very melodic. I'll never forget that. Peter Gabriel and Yes concerts also stand out.

***Musician crush?***

Kate Bush all the way.



(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/daniel-rehn/9331781314/in/photolist-fdBPth-9YhqMW-e2Qf8->

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Kate Bush (Courtesy of Daniel Rehn)

### *The Rolling Stones, or The Beatles?*

Sorry, no one can touch the Beatles.

*\* The first series of BandSwap 2014 blog posts will present a brief interview with a “champion” from each of the nine cities participating in the program this year. Each champion acts as an integral cog in the complicatedly perplexing, labyrinthine web of convoluted information that is the BandSwap machine (this sentence was approved by the Department of Redundancy Department). That is to say: BandSwap is complex. The champions keep it simple. Each BandSwap champion is an enthusiastic, well-connected ambassador for their city, assisting the SpokesBUZZ team in wrangling event logistics, coordinating PR opportunities and making media contact, facilitating networking and educational sessions, and giving us the inside scoop (like where to find the best ice cream in town). This year, BandSwap will consist of more than 40 events, in nine cities, over three consecutive weeks; without the champions, we’d be praying to meet a magic worm. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0K5ToAqVIY>)*

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