

# Even before the holidays, some entertainment is a bargain

By **JERRY FINK**  
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If you're looking for entertainment during the holidays that won't bust your Christmas budget, there's plenty to choose from.

How about the quirky show band Ricky & the Redstreaks, always a hit with rodeo fans? Or the legendary Brenda Lee?

Then there is Lisa Donovan, a Broadway-caliber vocalist who has opened for such greats as George Burns, Bob Hope, Don Rickles and Rich Little. And singer Mary Ellen Spann, considered by some to be one of the brighter up-and-coming stars on the jazz horizon.

## Ricky & the Redstreaks

The Redstreaks are back in the saddle with shows at the South Point during the National Finals Rodeo.

The band that had performed on the rodeo circuit for many years broke up during the 2004 NFR, and the band members went their separate ways.

"It was for different reasons," said John "Ricky" Jackman, the class clown who helped form the band that became the Redstreaks almost 40 years ago. "Some were just getting tired. Bored."

In its heyday, the band easily would attract crowds of 5,000 fans or more — and of all ages.

In May, Jackman decided to resurrect the concept of the band — lots of



SUN FILE PHOTO

*Ricky and the Redstreaks co-founder John "Ricky" Jackman holds up a trophy to be given to a woman in the audience at the Stardust Pavilion in 2003.*

clowning around and nostalgic rock 'n' roll. So he dusted off his old costumes, hired all new band members and hit the road.

Jackman is the only original Redstreak; he returned to his hometown of Placerville, Calif., when the group dissolved.

The six-piece band includes vocalist Tracy Bing. "She weighs 90 pounds soaking wet," Jackman said.

"Truthfully, the show is bigger and better," Jackman said. "The band is younger, it has the desire and more creativity. I tell you, I feel like an old field general."

The show is a blend of cabaret corn, sexual innuendo and old-time rock 'n' roll — Jefferson Airplane, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and ZZ Top. Jackman says the song list still includes the clas-

sics but has been updated to include numbers by the likes of the pivotal punks, the Ramones.

**Details:** 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. Thursday though Dec. 9; South Point (formerly South Coast); free

## Lisa Donovan

Donovan, who recently moved to Las Vegas from Florida, will perform Wednesday in Summerlin.

Fans of the early '80s syndicated TV game show "Face the Music," hosted by the former Tarzan Ron Ely, may remember Donovan as the co-host who sang pieces of about 11,000 songs.

Donovan is no stranger to Las Vegas, appearing here frequently in the early '90s. In 1994, she had a four-week gig at the Desert Inn that turned into seven months. She often shared the stage with singer/game show host Peter Marshall and sometimes alternated shows with Keely Smith.

Donovan's repertoire includes show tunes from the movies and Broadway, ballads and R&B.

**Details:** 7 p.m. Wednesday; Starbright Theatre, 2215 Thomas Ryan Blvd., Summerlin; \$13 for Summerlin residents and \$15 for nonresidents; 240-1301

## Mary Ellen Spann

Spann will perform Dec. 10 as part of the Las Vegas Jazz Society's "Rising Star Jazz Series."

Spann, whose latest CD is "Little Red Robin," has performed extensively in New York; Nashville, Tenn.; and Europe.

Guitarist Joe Lano will be a featured guest.

**Details:** 2 p.m. Dec. 10; Whitney Library Concert Hall, 5175 E. Tropicana Ave.; \$17 general admission, \$12 students and seniors, and \$8 for Jazz Society and Guitar Society members; tickets available at the door; <http://veg-asjazz.org>

## Brenda Lee

Lee will be "rockin' around the Christmas tree" in Primm later this month.

The singer known as "Little Miss Dynamite" turns 62 on Dec. 11. One of the first teen idols, Lee has been performing since the age of 10 and made her first recording at age 11. She's best known for "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree," but her hits include "I Want to Be Wanted," "I'm Sorry," "Everybody Loves Me But You," "Sweet Nothings" and "Nobody Wins."

She's a member of the Country, Rockabilly and Rock and Roll Halls of Fame.

**Details:** 8 p.m. Dec. 16; Buffalo Bill's Star of the Desert Arena, Primm; \$24.95; (800) 386-7867

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