

Novi News

A GANNETT COMPANY

PRICE: \$1 • THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2011 • hometownlife.com



JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Novi resident Amanda Morgan strums her guitar in her home on Aug. 15. Morgan's tune "Just Wanna Know Why" recently topped 96.3 WDVD-FM's 'The Radio Cafe' Indie Music Channel poll. The 17-year-old recorded the song in New York City when she was 15.

Chasing a dream

Chart-topping Novi teen to perform at Arts, Beats & Eats

By Nathan Mueller
Staff Writer

Amanda Morgan was just 4 years old when her singing talent was first recognized in a nursery school play.

She was getting on stage at family parties singing with the bands three years later. By age 10, she had written her first song.

Now 17, and a senior in high school, the Novi resident has the number one song on 96.3 WDVD-FM's "The Radio Cafe" Indie Music Channel poll.

"Just Wanna Know Why" is her second song — the first was

"Ten Steps Back" — that has topped the charts in less than a year, making her the youngest artist to ever lay claim to the top spot as chosen by listeners.

"It feels really good and is nice to know that people believe in my music that much," she said. "It's a little surreal."

Morgan, who recorded her first CD at 15 in New York with Sean Burns and Fran Cathcart called "Land of an Endless Sea," grew up in a musical household and taught herself to play the guitar three years ago.

Her music is a cross between pop, rock, country and adult alternative, and her focus is

on getting into the pop country genre.

The inspiration for her music comes from her life, and her teenage years have been anything but normal. Morgan said it has been hard maintaining friendships because of the demands of her career, and many people don't respect what she is trying to accomplish.

"Instead of crying into a diary, I cry into my guitar," she said.

Her mother, MaryAnn, said while it has been hard to see her daughter hurt, it's also

Please see TEEN, A2

TEEN

Continued from page A1

made her more mature and prepared to handle an unforgiving industry.

Said Morgan: "I know if I don't believe in myself I won't make it."

And that belief is what drives her every day.

On top of performing, Morgan — with the help of mom and dad, of course — manages her own career. She runs her website, www.amandamorganmusic.com, looks for shows, and when someone orders a CD or souvenir from her site she is the one who packages it and sends it out.

The teen also had to show mom she could manage both her school work and career, and she hasn't disappointed. Mor-



JOHN HEIDER
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Novi musician Amanda Morgan, 17, will be performing at Arts, Beats & Eats on Sept. 3 at 12:30 p.m. on the Citizens Bank Stage, her biggest performance to date.

gan plans to attend college in Arizona next year and pursue a degree in business economics.

"I will be a chief econ-

omist (if singing) doesn't work out," she said, noting that she hopes to have a record deal when she is 18.

MaryAnn said performing always came "naturally" to her daughter and her "wow factor" is what makes her unique.

"Seeing her live is what people need to see," she said. "She is a natural on the stage."

Morgan, who is constantly thanking her fans, said her career highlight so far is seeing a video of a 5-year-old girl on YouTube singing her songs. She even told Morgan that she wanted to be her for Halloween.

Being under 18 has kept Morgan out of getting some larger gigs, but that will change on Sept. 3 when she is set to perform at Arts, Beats &

Eats in Royal Oak. Morgan is one of more than 250 music acts at the event, and will be on the Citizens Bank Cultural Stage from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. that Saturday. "It's definitely the biggest (show), and I am excited for the exposure," she said.

Morgan will have her CD as well as other swag available for purchase, but ultimately she hopes people enjoy her performance.

"I hope they get a feel of who I really am because I try to write songs people can relate to," she said.

Fans can contact Morgan on her Facebook page at www.facebook.com/AmandaMorganMusic.

nmueller@gannett.com
(248) 437-2011, ext. 255