



## *In This Issue:*

*SE Magazine for spring 2012*

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# Letter From The Editor

Thank you for reading SE Magazine! SE Magazine is a free magazine and once subscribed you will learn of the latest topics, advice from the music pros and learn what life is like on the inside of Secret Enterprise Productions and Progressive Edge Records. You will be able to keep up to date on latest concert information, upcoming events, artist updates and everything you've always wondered about when it comes to productions and recording studios. You will obtain a wealth of knowledge from the pros on all the ins and outs of the music business and you will also find out what it's like to be a signed recording artist at Progressive Edge Records from the various artists.

We at SE magazine look forward to bringing you the latest highlights of SE projects and promotions as well as reading all the latest testimonials from the various clients of SE. Be sure to subscribe to SE Magazine for all the latest updates and become a part of our SE Family today!

***Thank you for reading SE Magazine!***

*Regards,*

***Shirl Spencer***

*Editor in chief*



# PARENTING THE FUTURE OF ROCK!

## Producer Robbi Spencer

**I** have often times spoken with my new Interns and explained to them in great detail, exactly what their musical journey would entail, but not one of them ever saw it for what it really was and every one of them had to make the same mistakes that I did and learn for themselves, very important lessons about the music industry and the business of music. I would say that as a parent, watching these young people go through the trials and tribulations that my colleagues and I already went through is really hard and it's also really hard to not just jump in and try to help or intervene in some way, but God knows what is best and as long as we stay focused on Him, we won't get too far off the path without one of our friends bringing us back to reality.

**I** wonder about Pastors of large churches and how they manage to make each person feel special, or like they really matter... Not that being that way is being fake, because it is not that way it is just that being only one person, you can only do so much handshaking, so I understand that.

**I** think of my new students as rock stars in the making. Depending on the individual student's level of understanding, expertise, commitment and dedication, they all do different things and go different directions for different reasons. As a Producer, I focus that crazy energy and direct it where it needs to go, which is usually on a recording of some sort. I can only hope that I am not only a positive influence on these young people, but that I am also an encyclopedia of useful information, that they should tap into and drain the vault, so to speak, to hopefully glean some wisdom and knowledge from the life experiences that I have personally had. I have had an amazing life and I would say actually several lives simultaneously and few ever attain that sense of status or glory or whatever. I try not to figure things like that out and just let it be and that seems to work best overall. Let go and let God and quit trying to grab it back from Him!

**I** am very thankful for the entire SE Studios and Productions staff, as well as our people at Progressive Edge Records, Lost Sheep Publishing and Future Dreams Media, because they all work really hard to create this life-changing entertainment as we know it. Love you guys!

**T**here are too many curveballs in life to try and figure everything out, but there are surely things that we just are not supposed to know and I like to leave those things alone, if you know what I mean. When I am producing a record for someone, I try to make it fun for them and try to get them to apply themselves enough to learn the recording, mixing and mastering process so that they are more a part of thing and not just the guy who twangs on the geetar or sings.

**E**ach phase of a recording project is different, but for me... I have to do the same steps over and over, so it gets easier for me, but stays the same for the beginner as they come in fresh off the boat, so to speak... We get all of our music artists on CD Baby and iTunes and lots of other Digital Retailers, so that they can make money from their music.

**M**any of our new artists are receiving checks from iTunes for hundreds of dollars and it is very exciting to see them at the bank cashing their checks and having money to do things with, but not just anything, because this money is very special.... This money was made from their Rock! Who would have ever thought it was possible, but thanks to the Digital Age it is.

**A**s I said in the beginning of this article, depending on the artist's dedication to his or her craft of music and how driven they are to see it become a reality, greatly determines the outcome of the situation. Some artists jam in and jam out and they are done and online within a week, while others will start a song and then we won't see them for a long time and some of our artists actually go MIA and we have to retrieve them from various parts of the world, but that is another article entirely.

**I** now have a very awesome family, but it wasn't always that way. At one time in my life, I felt like a lost little sheep, but I believe that God went looking for me and found me and brought me back to the flock. Once with "the flock", it was up to me to devise a way to have a family and in the process, I realized that all my students were like my own children and how I was actually raising each and every one of them and it really was a life-changing moment for me, when I finally saw things for what they were and not what I have made them up to be in my mind.

**I**f the future of music are to change, then I would say "Yes", that Secret Enterprise, SE Studios, SE Magazine, SE Bunnies, SE Spirit Chasers, the Cuddlemuffins and EVERYONE IN SE are responsible for that, because we all put our hearts and souls into what we do here and there is not one person in the organization that has not contributed to SE in some way and to be honest, the people involved with SE including, Brant and Alby and Shirl and Daren and now Phoenix, have all majorly contributed to their success and helped guide the future of rock music as we know it. I have always been very active in my community and have always given to the children and helped with youth programs in the church and I really see a move a God happening that far exceeds anything that I had planned, so I must say that you can expect some real miracles to come out of SE and SE Studios, because God is going to pour out His Spirit on SE Studios!



# Tech Tips From Producer Brant Callahan

## The Internet for Musicians

The Internet is a great resource for musicians especially those just starting out. There are forums like [Gearslut.com](http://Gearslut.com) where you can ask questions about pretty much any imaginable thing having to do with music recording or having someone record for you.

There are online content and publishing sites like **iTunes** as well as being able to obtain physical units delivered to your door complete shrink wrapped.

**SE** has taken advantage of these direct to internet publishing technologies with its artists.

For professional musicians and bands on tour there are streaming resources like **BitGravity**.

**BitGravity** launched the world's first content delivery network built and optimized for on-demand video delivery and HD live streaming.

<http://www.bitgravity.com/about/about.html>

There are many online schools. [berkleemusic.com](http://berkleemusic.com) just to name a well known one. Where you can get a great music education and interact with some of the world's best musicians.

When buying equipment, Just whip out your **Paypal** and it shows up on your door next day, if you don't mind the extra \$30.00! for overnight....

[Sweetwater.com](http://Sweetwater.com) has outstanding personalized service.

For some of the equipment at **SE**, the internet has been invaluable for maintenance and repair....

Our **Sound Workshop** analog board has benefited from user forums in keeping up with current mods to keep that analog sounding fat....

**Brant**



## **Life As A Recording Artist**

**Shirl Spencer**

I've always known I was called to sing. Even as a very little girl I used to sing with my hairbrush for a microphone trying to see myself in the lower half of the reflection of our back door for my dad, my biggest fan. Growing up I would sing in school and participate in school plays and I joined the drama team while in school. I grew up singing in church choirs and then as an adult I played guitar and sang at church. I would participate at writer's night in Nashville where I learned about different styles of writing and techniques from many well known artists. I would sing in bars, city events and different benefit gatherings. I sang and played for organizations such as March of Dimes, Nursing homes, senior centers and The Hunger Task Force. Basically I would sing for whoever listened. I would go into the woods to spend time alone with God and I would write, sing and play guitar for God, the chipmunks, birds and squirrels. I just loved to sing and play because I felt such a freedom of expression that only music can give. It's a dream that many carry and few ever see come true. It has always been my dream to sing for God and the world. When you see your dreams actually become a reality it doesn't always feel like reality in the beginning. Sometimes it takes a while along with a series of events for it to actually sink in. When I first got signed to Progressive Edge Records on December 4, 2011 it felt more like a dream and *not* a reality. It took a while for it to finally sink in. You would think that recording in the studio, making music videos and taking part in various projects such as "The Cuddlemuffin Showdown", "SE Spirit Chasers" and "Americans cutest Couple" would help it sink in but it didn't. Not right away because it felt like too much of a dream and way too good to be true. When I first got signed it felt like such a dream and so unreal to me that I framed my record contract thinking that it



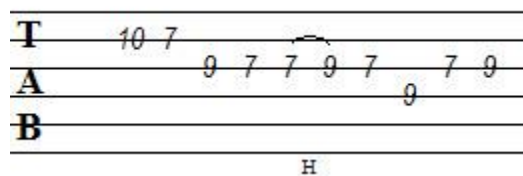
would help it sink in because I would see it every time I entered the room but even then it didn't seem real. Once you're signed to a record label then your music is no longer your hobby. It is your career and your future. It's an amazing dream come true but it's also a many long hours, responsibilities, hard work and dedication. As a signed artist, you have responsibilities and you are required to meet along with certain obligations. Such as having so many songs written and recorded a year, and/or music videos made, making appearances, showing up at showcases, gigs, jams or whatever your producer has scheduled. I wouldn't trade my life for anything and I'm living the life of my dreams. Now, I know you've heard how artists have attitudes and are very temperamental and over sensitive. Well it's all true, we are! The producers here really has their hands full with us but when it's all said and done the end result is a very happy producer, record label, very happy artists and musicians with music that sells. Music that totally rocks and that everybody will love that can affect the lives of anyone who hears!!!



# Guitar Riffs by Producer Albert “Alby” Leon

In the guitar world there is a lot of competition to be original. If you are a guitarist in a band, the most frustrating obstacle you will face is finding the songs that will set you apart from all the rest. Putting aside all of the rules for writing music, the one thing that will give you a song that your audience will remember is having a few awesome riffs. A riff is simply a short, repeatable line of music that sticks out from everything else in the song. You can look at a riff as a signature on a piece of paper... it identifies the piece of music. You may be thinking, “This sounds great, but I don’t have the ability to think outside of the box like that.” The truth of the matter is that anyone can write an awesome riff. The music industry wants you to think that you can’t sound as good as all of your favorite bands. Yes, many of them do have awesome material, but the majority of it does not require a music degree to write. You can use the tools you already have to write original and breathtaking lines that will blow your audience away. In fact, some of you would do better than your favorite bands if you took the time to evaluate the tools you already have. If you have fast fingers, use that to help you develop your own style. My one warning that comes with all of the above advice is to keep it short. The longer your riff is, the more likely your audience will forget how it goes. Even I forget the tune to some of the longer riffs I write, so how do you expect anyone else to remember the tune? The most famous songs of the last six decades were all ridiculously simple and easy to remember. Before you dive into anything involving riffs, there are a few simple but important steps you have to think about. These steps lay the foundation for success and will make playing your guitar far more enjoyable. Choose a key. We all love to run to our guitars and play them until we get something that sounds good. The problem with this is we will reach a point where we don’t know what to do with it or what notes to play. Knowing what key you are in will solve these problems instantly. This also allows you to figure out all of the various scales you have available to you. Run through

the scales you know in that key. Try the major and minor scales and see what sound you like the best. Try to experiment using the techniques that you know. Try limiting the number of notes that you play and keep it simple. Use both the lower and higher notes on your neck. ...Try the above and you'll be well on your way to creating a solid riff, the hook. The hook is the riff that highlights the chorus. It's the most important tune you will write throughout the entire song. It also sounds slightly different from your average riff in the sense that it has the characteristics of a melody. What that means when translated is that it stands out like a vocal would stand out. The key to writing a hook is to make it repeatable. That's why I like to use a few notes. You can use as many as you want, but it may become more complicated than you would like it to be. Here is an example of a simple hook in the key of D:



It's simple and it's catchy. All of the things you want to look for in a riff and the hook for your song. *The word hook in the above context literally means to hook your audience into the music.* Many times you can spice up a riff dramatically by adding in new rhythms and picking patterns, as seen in our above example. If we took the above riff and added more to it, we would end up with a melody (something you could sing to). This defeats the purpose of a riff. While writing melodies is quite fun and very necessary in song writing, it's not what you want when writing riffs. If you're serious about learning to play lead guitar then we highly recommend you read the Gibson's Learn & Master Guitar review over at [www.learntheguitarnow.com](http://www.learntheguitarnow.com).



## Advice From Producer Darin Driscoll

There is an obvious intersection between live theater and good rock bands. I have often said to band mates through the years, “a good rock band *IS* theater.”

I have done hundreds of performances in live musical theater productions as a lead vocalist, instrumentalist and actor. I’ve also done hundreds of club shows and mid-sized venue gigs with rock bands. The work ethic in theater is very demanding and I’ve always tried to bring that work ethic into the rock bands I’m a member of. Average musicians rebel against the idea that they can learn something from live musical theater, as they seem to believe rock and roll is an endeavor where if you do enough drugs, turn up loud enough and dream the dream like Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, rock and roll success *just happens*.

Well it doesn’t just happen. It takes a solid work ethic and intelligence to be successful playing music. Sure, there a lot of very good musicians in pick-up jams all over the world, but a small percentage ever enjoy the success of a packed club/performing arts venue or a double encore at the end of a show for a paying audience. Energy and vibe is an elusive commodity but there are things that a band can do to provide the fantasy (and theater) of a good rock show.

A good rock show doesn’t start out with on-the fly sound checks, guitars tuning loudly and a drummer test-banging on the toms to make sure they are actually drums. A good show begins with the band taking the stage with purpose, picking up their instruments that were tuned and pre-placed (or come on stage with them) and the sound engineer slowly bringing the house music down. Not a peep should be heard from the band before the band cross-fades with the house music into a well executed intro piece. The intro should be powerful, tonal, not overly

drawn out (get to the point already) and is for the purpose of capturing the audiences' imagination that they are about to see *a show*.

I realize that shows where multiple bands are stacked up in a back-line makes it difficult to control the environment. In cases such as this, do your best to expect (and assist if appropriate) a fast line-up change from the band exiting. Always tune your instruments before taking the stage and don't expect perfect stage sound. Yelling into a mic for monitor changes should be reserved for emergencies only. Ideally, sound checks should be done in an empty club 2 hours before show time to allow for a decent sound check and time to "get away" for a while before performing.

Remember, a good rock show is like good theater: Well rehearsed, well executed and captures the imagination of the audience. Set-lists are another very important piece of the puzzle...but we can talk about that next time, I have an open jam to attend.



## UPDATES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Thank you to all of our faithful supports here at SE Studios and our partners on the Internet and in other places in the world! Without your support, we could never do what we do and because of your generosity, lives are being saved and people are seeing that there is a better life awaiting them.

The SE Mobile R&D Center is fully operational now and we are proud to say that our music and videos are available for a host of digital platforms, including all Apple products like the iPod and the iPad.

Friday night music will start up again soon and you will be blown away to see the lineup that we have for you this Spring/Summer, because the stars have all aligned to bring us talent from afar and when you find out who it is, you will crap your pants!

Shirl and Robbi Spencer are hard at work on many original songs including "Is It True?" and "I'm Still Here", that have turned into some killer duets and iTunes sales do not lie, so we are very thankful for them and wish them continued success!

Progressive Edge Records has signed many new artists this year and we are very excited to announce the release of the Old Man Spitface album entitled "Up Yours!" which will be available May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Be sure and get your copy!

SE Studios goes underground and permanently removes itself from the public's eye by operating as a **Private Music Club** for elite musicians and artists, looking for safe haven in a paradise world of recording! This is what we have done...



# Entertainment News

These just HOT off the presses!!!!

New music artists just signed to Progressive Edge Records include LIL POOKZ & METTL, who are without a doubt some of the most talented wordsmiths around! Brant Callahan also signed with Progressive Edge Records, as did Phoenix McKee and Brendon Butyrin, and all of them will be producing music at our NorCal Facility, otherwise known as SE Studios. They are all extremely talented and committed to their art and we believe that they have what it takes to make it!

LIL POOKZ is working on a Hip-Hop/Rap Album entitled "Deadly Note Project" which will feature some new tracks that will just blow your mind! LIL POOKZ, formerly of OVERDOSE, is now on his way to getting his new music on iTunes!

METTL is finishing up his new CD entitled "Reflecting Pool", which is a journey through the mind of the ex-snowboard king, who now focuses most of his time in the studio working on rap and slam poetry projects. METTL has collaborated on many projects at SE Studios and he is always a lot of fun to hang out with!

As **summer 2012** swiftly approaches, SE prepares for an awesome season of live music and private parties. SE has grown to epic proportions and so have our parties, often featuring live music from well-known music acts in the industry. Friday night music has become a popular attraction in the area, but is limited to an invite-only basis. We are fun-loving people, but we do not allow drugs at our facilities. For more information about becoming a member of SE, go to our site:

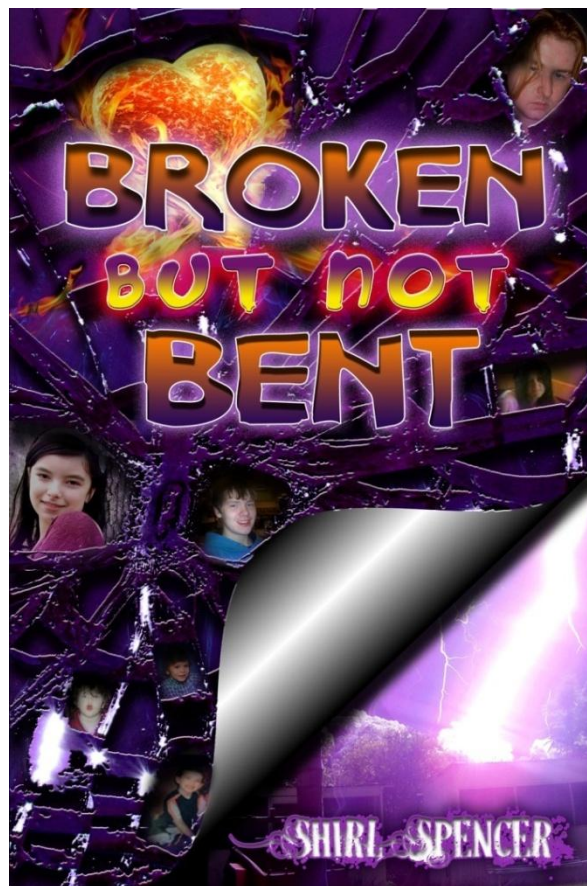
[SecretEnterprise.com](http://SecretEnterprise.com)





## What's NEW with the Sheep?

Shirl Spencer's "Broken but Not Bent" is an amazing true-story account of the events that claimed the lives of three of Shirl's children in 2002. Her new book exposes the injustices in the Alabama legal system and abuse in the world and with the help of TEAM JUSTICE, a division of Anonymous Worldwide, the word is getting out about the man who was responsible for the tragic events that ensued. She is a courageous woman!



[CLICK HERE TO GET YOUR COPY TODAY!](#)





## **SE BOARD MEMBERS:**

Brant Callahan  
Albert "Alby" Leon, III  
Robbi Spencer  
Shirl Spencer  
Darin Driscoll

## **SE MUSIC ARTISTS:**

Secret Enterprise  
Old Man Spitface  
Robbi Spencer  
Shirl Spencer  
Dimeburg  
Brendon Butyrin  
Brant Callahan  
Lil Pookz  
METTL  
Tramp Sandwich  
The Swingin' Dicks  
MC Square Plain White Rapper  
Derek Lilienthal  
Alexander Agapiades

## **PREMIUM SE MEMBERS:**

James Lafayette  
Laura Fellows  
Dave Pike  
McFinn Lovere  
Steve Miller, Jr. & Annette  
Melissa Leon & Family  
Holcomb Brothers Band  
Cool Blue Band  
Skyler Myers  
Howie Duetsch

## **HONORARY SE MEMBERS:**

Kitten  
Phoenix McKee  
Joe Weaver  
Sandy Hendricks

## **FRIENDS OF SE:**

Bret  
Chris  
Clark Davenport  
Darby Davenport  
Melissa Leon  
Bill Johnson  
Thomas Agapiades  
Bonnie Connor  
Ave Guevara  
Mark Richardson  
Joe Weaver  
Phoenix Mckee  
Jessica Lindsen  
Maris Bradley  
Gene Fleitas  
Joe Bigornia  
Rick Crabtree  
Aaron Mansfield  
Kyra Lawrence  
Zoeie Maddock  
Jayme Bug  
Kyle Oaks  
Michael Powers  
Members of Anonymous  
Jeffery Myers  
Chris Carrol  
Dakota Berzins  
Dylan Turner  
Renita Dunn  
Lizardweb  
Beau Lyle  
Cassandra Morgan  
Jessicarose Lindsen  
Jon Hollingsworth  
Tamika Ann  
Wade Maddock  
*...And too many more to list!*



# The Last Word

There is much to report about the recent events of **SE Studios** and **Progressive Edge Records**. Many new artists have been signed to Progressive Edge during December 2011 and April 2012. A complete list can be found below. Websites will be created for all artists who do not already have one, as well as their own page on the Progressive Edge Records website, located at: [ProgressiveEdgeRecords.com](http://ProgressiveEdgeRecords.com).

## NEW MUSIC FROM PROJECT ALABAMA JUSTICE 2012

	
<p><b>SHIRL'S NEW SONG</b> "I'm Still Here"</p>	<p><b>NEW SONG BY OMS</b> "Fly Eyes"</p>

Our new projects featuring various members of **Anonymous** have gone quite well and we look forward to releasing more tracks soon! There are a lot of collaboration projects in the works as we speak, so you will be blown away when you hear who we actually pair-up for some of these most amazing tracks you have heard in a long time, I am sure. We are constantly blending styles and meshing genres together to create new styles of music that might have never been heard before we went crazy in the laboratory!

**NEW MUSIC CAN BE HEARD AT PROGRESSIVE EDGE RECORDS ONLINE:**

[ProgressiveEdgeRecords.com](http://ProgressiveEdgeRecords.com)

