



## ON THE COVER

### Don Perry - Sax Man, Songwriter

By Sage Satori

*Jazzy, Sassy, Smooth and Sensual.*

At the age of nine Don began his relationship with the saxophone. In junior high he begged his mother to let him quit, (obviously she didn't) and he went on to enjoy it through high school and then in rock bands. The Sax got put to the side for a few years while he was raising his kids but when he picked it back up things really started to fall into place. Don's passion for the instrument and the music is apparent in his de-

livery, and in the lyrics.

In early 2001 Don began writing his own music and putting in many hours of



practice. Fortunately he has had the support of his wife Charleen, "She's very patient". His daughter Samantha now lives and works in Erie, his son Joe is a Senior in high school, and also plays sax. Don mentions with slight amusement,

"They've all put up with quite a few years of me. It's a house where the teenagers were saying 'Dad, turn it down!' because they couldn't hear the TV."

A friend, and "priceless" adviser, John Luttrell, who works for Sony, has been a huge help and inspiration. John helped to take the ideas that Don had and transform them into songs. Through John's expertise with production, keyboards, and ear for music, he was the catalyst for Don to bring what he was feeling into what we can now enjoy listening to on his CD's.

When Don plays solo, his sound isn't totally solo, the background accompaniment is recorded specifically for his original music. The Sax alone is incredible, but the backup soundtrack is very enhancing. Pete LeMay lays down the drum tracks and works very closely with Don on the arrangements, Rick Gregory does most of the guitar work, Dan Rose does some acoustic tracks, and the bass tracks have included Jeff Manus, Tom Goll, Chris Nicholas, and even Synthesized. The mixing and recording is done at Woodshed Studios. When you see a live performance you'll hear the recorded background as Don makes his way through the audience with his wireless

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Sax. This makes the experience more personal, and it can become even more fun when the crowd decides to join in on percussion.

Quite a few of his songs are played on his Tenor Sax but there is something special about the 1927 Alto Sax that Don refurbished back to playable condition. He tells me when he first acquired the instrument it was black, the keys stuck, and it wouldn't play a note. After a lot of work and patience it now sounds excellent.

When ask about the future Don says "I just want to play in places where it fits and people enjoy it." "I'll take it however far it can go." Doing some trio gigs at Jazz clubs in Cleveland is definitely in the realm of possibility. The first night I went to listen to Don I had the privilege of hearing John Luttrell on keyboard, and Pete LeMay on drums, joining Don for a set. He tells me that was the first time they played in public together, I must say, it was very enjoyable. Being accompanied live by his soundtrack musicians, isn't a regular occurrence, but it may happen from time to time.

Don has two CD's available "Standing in the Shadows" recorded in 2005 and "Slide Over" recorded in 2006. After listening to them a couple times don't be surprised if you find yourself humming one of the melodies or even singing a couple verses from "Just Think About Now" or "Make Believe". Some of the tracks on both CD's have heartfelt or uplifting lyrics, while most are instrumental, and vary from sassy and jazzy to smooth and sensual. If you love saxophone, as I do, there is no disappointment here.

Every other Saturday afternoon starting May 12th Don will be creating the atmosphere on the patio at Old Firehouse Winery, in Geneva-on-the-Lake. May 19th and alternating Saturdays he will be playing at Austinburg's new little hot spot, Drifter's Lounge, inside the Comfort Inn. Look for Don to be at Joey's throughout the summer as well.

To contact Don you may call him at 440-576-5250 or visit [www.DonPerrySaxman.com](http://www.DonPerrySaxman.com) for more info and show schedule.