

A REWORKED CLASSIC

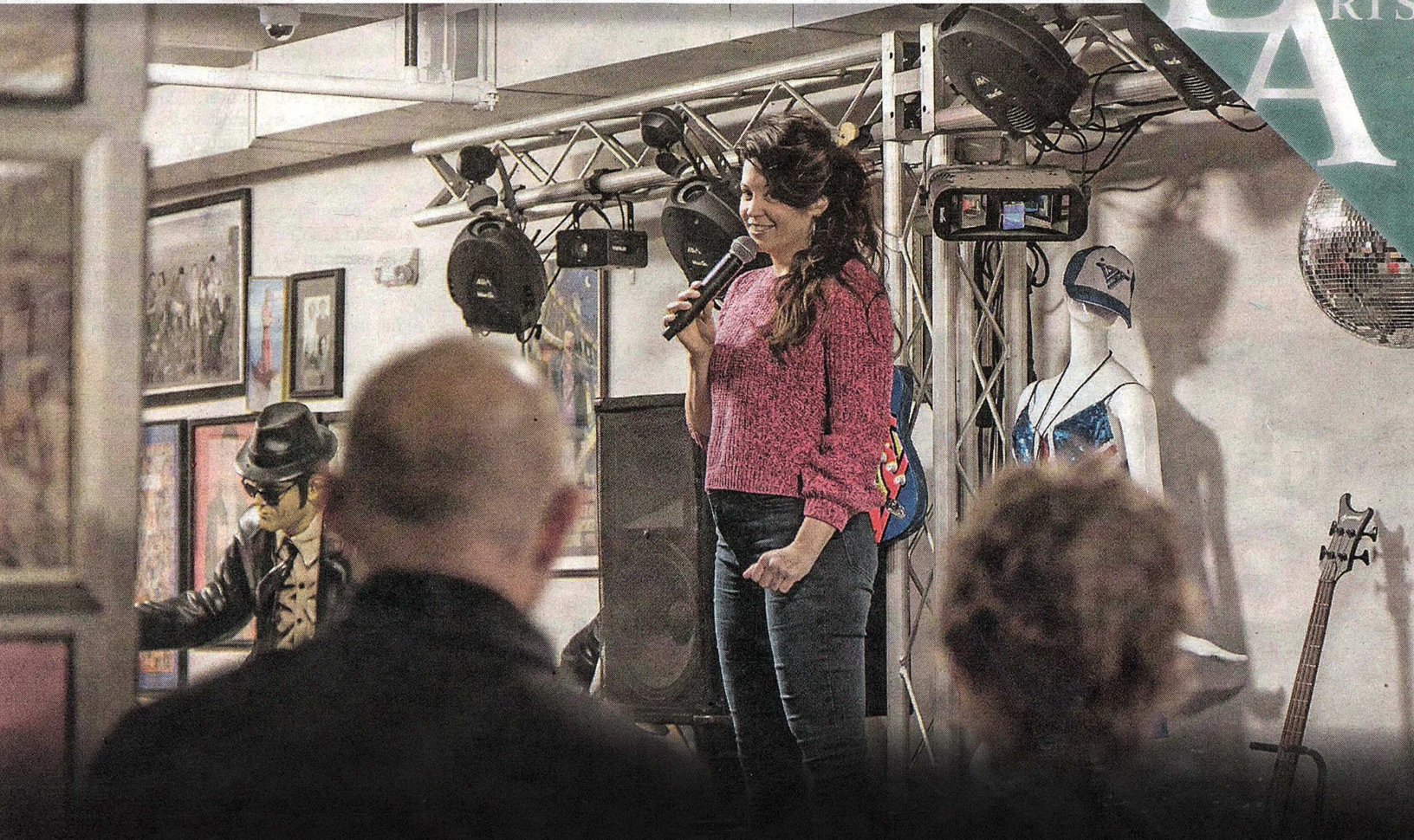
HP residents star in Lake Forest play, Page 20



FRESH FLAVOR

22CM editors seek out minty cuisine, Page 22

LIFE &
LA
ARTS



It's kind of a funny story

Highland Park comedy club opens with stand up showcase, Page 19

Comedian Paige Blair performs at Studio G's Comedy Cellar, Dec. 5. ALEX NEWMAN/22ND CENTURY MEDIA

COVER STORY

POSTED TO HPLandmarkDaily.com 11 DAYS AGO

Comedy Cellar new home to HP stand up comedy

DOUG RAPP
Freelance Reporter

“This is the best comedy bargain in a town that doesn’t need a bargain,” said Larry Bloom.

He was introducing the first comedy show at the newly reopened Studio G’s Comedy Cellar on Thursday, Dec. 5. Produced by Bloom’s Funnier By The Lake with co-producer Ricky March, the show featured three Chicago comics and a national headliner for \$20, which included a drink.

The hour-plus show moved quickly as couples sipped drinks at tables facing the stage while couches along the wall completed the homey feel of the venue in Studio G’s bright, large basement decorated with classic rock memorabilia.

March hosted the show, introducing the comics and engaging in some crowd banter. Darius Kennedy did a self-consciously absurd bit about his favorite dinosaur, the thesaurus. Paige Blair talked about the recent popularity of genealogy tests, saying she knows how white she is because she still worries she wasn’t polite enough to an Uber driver from months ago. The uproariously loud Kevin Kellam wondered how anti-climactic Neil Armstrong’s life was after he returned from the moon.

Headliner Rob Christensen, who’s appeared on “Last Comic Standing” and Comedy Central, talked about toxic masculinity and balancing toughness without being obnoxious.

“You can’t protect your family if you’re the kind of



The show was the first event hosted by Studio G’s Comedy Cellar since its opening.

guy who says ‘okie-dokie,’” he said in an extended riff on manhood. Later, he said he was most afraid of men with misspelled tattoos—“you know they’re not afraid of making permanent mistakes.”

“It was a great time,” said Kennedy after the show. “I felt like I was performing in a really cool uncle’s basement. When I walked downstairs, I felt like I’d been here before. It made it really comfortable.”

Bloom said he thought the first show went “pretty well.”

“It’s a new show, new venue,” he said. “There’s always hurdles and you gotta grow.”

Bloom, who has produced comedy shows in Highland Park and surrounding communities, said he wants to do more shows in the Comedy Cellar, perhaps monthly.

“For the first few months we’re going to keep it kind of low-key,” he said.

Bloom said the next show isn’t planned yet, because he’s been “hyper-focused” on planning the premiere. He said bringing in diverse lineups are important to him and he tries to hit a 50/50 balance of male and female comics.

A comedian himself, Bloom said he also hopes to book some bigger-name comics for shows in the larger upstairs space.

Hal Emalfarb, who co-owns the Studio G building with his wife, Geri, said the site has a history of entertainment, once hosting shows by Frank Sinatra and others. He said they want to revitalize the location and make it an entertainment destination that can host concerts, private parties and other functions.

Geri Emalfarb said she enjoyed the show and hopes to bring in more fans for future comedy shows.

“It’s a really good space for it,” she said.



Comedian Kevin Kellam performs a standup set, Dec. 5, at Studio G’s Comedy Cellar in Highland Park. PHOTOS BY ALEX NEWMAN/22ND CENTURY MEDIA



Darius Kennedy performs a standup set.