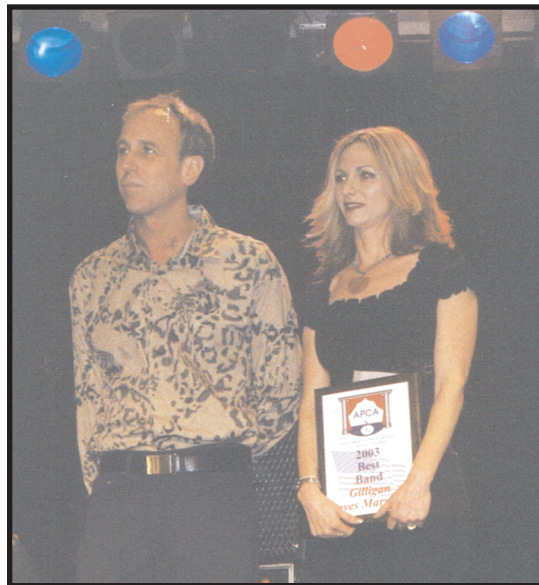


LOCAL SCENE RESCUED - GILLIGAN LOVES MARYANN FINDING SUCCESS

MATT MOORE BUSINESS EDITOR

It was supposed to be a quick trip to line up some gigs later in the year, maybe even share some music with other musicians. What a surprise it turned out for Panama City Beach based duo Gilligan Loves MaryAnn. Turned out the husband-and-wife team of Amy and Walt Fletcher (GILLIGAN LOVES MARYANN) were the undoubted darlings of the Association for Promotion of Campus Activities, and walked away with Best Band of the year honors for 1998. "We didn't even know we were nominated until we got to Atlanta," said Walt Fletcher. "We were totally taken off guard, but what a surprise!" Even more satisfying was that the award was given in the band category because, Amy said, most people think of Gilligan Loves MaryAnn as an acoustic duo that plays quietly. "We're not," she said. It was a surprise, but one the duo embraced wholeheartedly. The APCA is an organization that links programs and events with more than 200 universities and colleges across the United States. Each year, the group polls its member schools and comes up with the BEST BAND, BEST SOLO ARTIST, and BEST UNSIGNED ACT. Clearly, said Amy Fletcher, it's an honor to hold on to. But awards are like confetti. They can be forgotten and left on dusty shelves. To combat that, Gilligan Loves MaryAnn is taking it's act on the road and playing shows in a variety of cities and towns "It's been a good summer and we've been enjoying a real creative vibe, said Amy. "We've been spending some quality time in the studio coming up with some wild sounds, and jamming with musician friends is definitely good for the soul. The evidence is ample. In concert, the duo spins a healthy mix of original songs with some of the covers being what Amy calls "girl artists", including Edie Brickell, Jewel, and

Joni Mitchell. "We try to choose covers that you don't hear very often." "I haven't heard very many girls singing Edie Brickell," said Amy. The originals the band has recorded thus far are ranging, soaring works boasting Walt's melodic and counter-harmonic styles of songwriting. Amy, who's also his wife, likened some of the songs to the sounds created by a young Californian named Brian Wilson, who went on to lead the Beach Boys into Groundbreaking musical territory. A few originals are testaments to Bay County.



One song, "Grace Avenue," is an ode to falling in and out of love with downtown Panama City. "Where is the girl that I once knew?/And why won't she appear here?/A worn out letter crumbled in my hand/I know you know she's hiding now, and I can't wait to hold her/I told her that I'd find her when she called," Walt sings, with a layered level of sound steadily rising. The songwriting process is a dual effort with Walt writing a lot of the music and Amy coming up with lyrics. The rest is spit and polish with the two helping each other smooth out the rough edges. "He's got the Beach Boys influence, which is not a bad thing to have," Amy said. Up next for the group is a compilation of originals, something both Amy and Walt concede is a process that must be done right the first time. "We're working on it, but we want it to be good," she said. The band is also shopping around some of its originals to find a producer, someone who can blend the band's sound with topflight production

values. "We just want it to be effective," Amy said.

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