

VISIONS



Rock on: Young fans crowd the stage at last Wednesday's Battle of the Bands at Burlington's Memorial Auditorium. Photo by Chris Gee.

More Than A Chance to Dance

It wasn't so long ago that rock 'n' roll was banned from Memorial Auditorium. The city, because of some serious security problems, turned its back on the young rock audience of Burlington. The effect was to leave many young people—bored enough already—with even less to look forward to.

At its best, rock 'n' roll is almost synonymous with youth. Kids play it, kids listen to it, kids cherish it. Every ten years or so, rock needs a new infusion of young people. More than that, perhaps, the kids themselves need a new infusion of music by their contemporaries, by those who share their fears, frustrations and dilemmas.

We can think of few better avenues for the Mayor's Youth Office to pursue to reach out to Queen City youth than rock 'n' roll, and the third annual Battle of the Bands at Memorial Auditorium proved it's working.

The music at Wednesday night's four band contest may have been rough and unpolished. Somehow, though, it only seemed to heighten the excitement of the 800-strong audience, most of whom are closed out of local nightspots because of drinking laws.

For all it's worth, kids don't just play rock 'n' roll, they invent it. The further rock gets from young people, the more stale and predictable it becomes. The Boyz won Burlington's Battle of the Bands (over M-80, The Dissidents and the Blue Rock Band) but there was a lot of talent on the stage throughout the night. Any of those kids might have the creative talent and energy to go somewhere with their dreams. The kids who danced all night could sense this, and in doing so, reached closer to their own dreams as well.