

Bridgewater native hits the right notes

By ALICE GALLAGHER
Home News staff writer

Bridgewater native Jed Levy began playing the saxophone at age 10 and has managed to make a comfortable living at it since about age 15.

Now, the 30-year-old New York resident has released an album, and he expects the future to be even brighter.

"So far I've been lucky and it seems to be getting better and better," Levy said in a telephone interview.

The album, by the Jed Levy Quartet, is titled "Good People." It is available on Reservoir Records. Levy explained that the quartet was formed about two years ago, but that individual members (except him) frequently change, which is common in jazz groups.

Levy became interested in the saxophone while attending fifth grade in the Bridgewater-Rantau school system.

"I liked the way the instrument sounded and looked," he said. "Once I heard what could be done on the saxophone, then I was hooked."

Levy, along with his quartet, returned to Bridgewater last month for a benefit concert for the band at his alma mater, Bridgewater-Rantau High School East.

After his graduation in 1976, Levy



Daniel C. Hultshizer/The Home News

Jed Levy of Bridgewater, who took up the saxophone at age 10, has released an album of jazz music titled "Good People."

studied saxophone at the New England Conservatory of Music of Boston and earned a bachelor's degree. He then worked professionally in Boston for about a year and moved to New York City in 1981.

Some of the musicians he has play-

ed with include piano player Jaki Byard and organist Jack McDuff.

In addition to the saxophone, Levy also dabbles in piano, flute and guitar. He had played in local rock 'n' roll bands during his younger years.

Now, Levy performs on the New

York scene and tours frequently. His travels have taken him across the United States, as well as to Canada and Mexico.

Levy noted that his only brother, Todd, who is three years younger than him, is also a musician. Levy said the brother's parents are baffled — they don't know where the musical interest came from. Dad is a dentist and mom is an artist; they still reside in Bridgewater.

"It must be something in the water in Bridgewater," Levy said. "There really seems to be no good explanation for it."

Todd Levy plays classical clarinet for the New World Symphony in Florida.

As for future goals, Jed Levy's are modest.

"I want to keep playing this kind of music and keep recording as much as I can," Levy said, "and I'd like to continue making a decent living."

He conceded there are some sacrifices to being a working musician — such as the lack of a "three-car family garage" — but the rewards outweigh them.

"There are very few people who get to do what they like and make a living at it," Levy said. "It's all worth it when I get up on the stage."

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Making music in N.Y.

Bridgewater native Jed Levy leads a quartet into Birdland, a new Upper West Side jazz club at Broadway and 105th Street, New York City tonight from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Reedman Levy recently was featured on a Reservoir recording, "Good People." His quartet includes Peter Madsen on piano, John Riley on drums and Dean Johnson on bass.