

SUN-GAZETTE

Williamsport's Dave Heffner releases his fifth CD

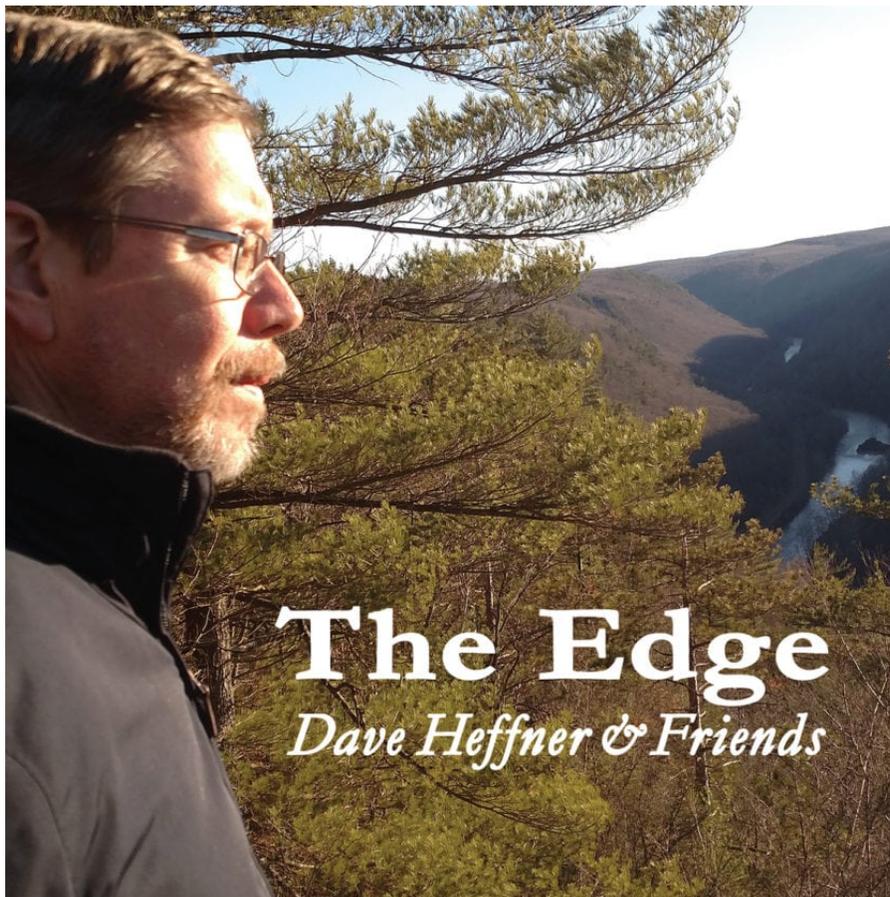


PHOTO PROVIDED Shown here is the cover of Dave Heffner's latest album "The Edge."

With the recent release of his fifth CD, "*The Edge*," Dave Heffner's creativity and passion for music is still alive and well in Williamsport, where he composes and produces in his home studio with the assistance of other local musicians.



When Heffner asked beatmaker and assistant engineer, Dudley Ulysse, how he would describe the music on this album, Ulysse replied, *“Edgier.”*

Heffner notes, *“I liked that description because many of the songs deal with getting older and have a double-meaning of finding ourselves closer to the edge.”*

After working at Lycoming College as Chief Information Officer for 20 years, Heffner is now living the dream from his youth of being a full-time musician.

Beginning piano lessons at the age of five and completing the standard course of private study by the age of 12, Heffner wondered what challenges would follow Beethoven’s sonatas. His musical ear and innate talent led him to begin experimenting with creative rhythms and jazz sequences that he heard in his head and felt in his body, opening the door to a life-long love and application of jazz and creativity, and the ceasing of further structured piano study.

Heffner’s wife, Janet, a retired teacher who works closely with her husband and is also a classically trained and creative musician, recalls that he often played original piano compositions for her during their courtship years and is thrilled that he continues to do so during their retirement years and 36th year of marriage.

“Dave’s an amazing musician. He has time now to continue to discover and develop talents and abilities that he did not realize he had within, such as composing lyrics and singing melody,” said Janet. “It is

fascinating to be part of such a wonderful collaboration, as we always hoped to be able to work together when we got married.

“Though we have had separate professional careers for the majority of our married years, we are now very much appreciating the opportunity to, once again, work closely together,” she added.

As a child, Dave was exposed to a variety of inspiring musicians.

Besides his piano teacher, his mother was also a highly-proficient pianist as well as a lyric soprano, who played the piano almost daily. Their home was also often filled with music from record and radio recordings by favorite composers and performers.

Dave reminisces about being very inspired by the music of *“Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass”* and eventually taking up the trombone in junior high band. He later followed through with the trombone and keyboard to play professionally with a small jazz band during his Penn State college years.

“It was great being able to earn money doing something that I loved so much,” said Heffner.

His new album features 14 original compositions, opening with the love ballad *“Four Seasons.”*

Local musician and Montoursville School District guidance counselor, Alice Weiler, is featured on vocals, along with Lycoming College German professor, Len Cagle on tenor saxophone, Dave on piano, and Dave and his wife, Janet, on backup vocals.

The song *“In Xanadu”* features Williamsport 8th grader; Marlow Jaques on violin; Colorado composer Bruce Klepper, with string arrangement; and 2018 Lycoming College music production graduate, Dudley Ulysse, adding a Caribbean-style drum beat, making for a rich blend of acoustic and electronic sounds.

Heffner notes that the song *“Together,”* which features his granddaughter, Arianna Rader, on vocals and Janet and Dave on backup vocals, was one of

the more emotional pieces to write. The song was composed during the time that he and his wife were in a decision-making process regarding a major move from Pennsylvania to Colorado to be near their daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren.

Lycoming College 2018 music major graduate, Chris Morgan, is featured on trumpet in the jazz tune *“Tappin’,”* with Len Cagle on tenor saxophone. Heffner smiles as he adds, *“This is a fun, snappy tune that I think everyone will enjoy.”*

“Singularity,” a song about the potential misuse of technology, features Lycoming College Physics Professor, Chris Kulp, on electric guitar, Dave’s daughter, Anna Rader, on chorus vocals and Ulysse adding backup vocals to Dave’s vocal lead.

A country folk tune, to which you may find yourself tapping your foot and singing along, is *“Change My Mind,”* as Jeremy dePrisco, Millville music studio owner, opens with an inviting acoustic guitar solo, followed by captivating violin runs performed by Marlowe Jacques, engaging vocal and piano performance by Dave, and harmonious backup vocals by Janet.

Lucy Henry, retired Williamsport Area School District music teacher, is featured on flute in the cascading and rhythmic tune *“Trapped”* with Jacques joining her on violin to perform this melodically captivating instrumental duet supported by a trap-style beat created by Ulysse.

With additional original compositions ranging in genres from jazz instrumental to classical electronic, Heffner concludes the album with the song *“Living on the Edge”* that sums up his feelings.

“This album is for me,” he said. *“I needed to create these songs because it was very important to express the feelings that I have as I grow older. You know that your time is limited and you want to make the most of it.”*

Heffner’s CD’s are available at Side’s Family Music Center, Mulberry St. He also has designed a very user-friendly website at daveheffner.com.