



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Lifetime of experience:

Songwriter delivers 'multi-task style' to local audiences

By Teresa A. Peters

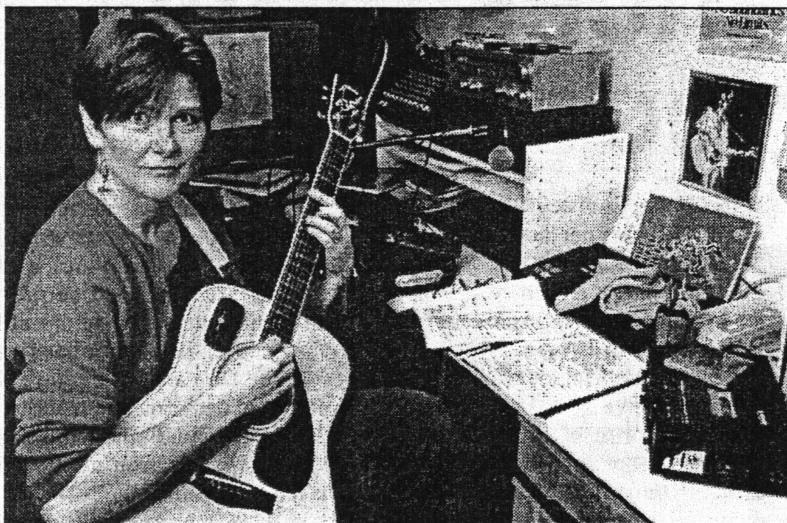
HERALD-NEWS

"I have about 100 tunes. Some are really bad — but you have to write the bad ones to get to the good ones."

West Seattle resident Leslie vanWinkle has found her good ones and passed them on to the public in her debut recording, "When You're Ready," parts of which can be heard in her recent performances in local venues, including the Morgan Junction Starbucks next month.

VanWinkle has been writing songs since high school, but her passion for music began long before the words hit paper.

"I've never not been singing —



Bruce Savadow/staff

Singer-songwriter Leslie vanWinkle in her in-home studio.

except when I got laryngitis," the whimsical artist explained.

The early part of vanWinkle's career was spent exploring several different venues. She left her Normandy Park home in the "Summer of Love" and began playing with several different bands in many different styles. It was

while exploring the music world that she met her husband Tom, a ragtime pianist. They returned to Seattle where both continued their musical careers. VanWinkle also returned to school, worked as a manager and disk jockey at KCMU, the University of Washing-

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Colorful life influences art sound

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ton's alternative radio station, and had daughter, Indianna. After graduating from college, vanWinkle continued writing music while exploring other careers. She works steadily as a church secretary and desktop publisher, writes television screenplays, produces her own cable program and owns her own business, publishing newsletters and delving into Web site development.

She's a jack-of-all-trades, and her free-spirited approach to life and work comes across in her music. A mixture of experiences — from "singing for her supper" on the California seashore as a youth to bluegrass fiddling in Hawaii to Celtic folk music in the 1980s — have formed vanWinkle's "multi-task style," as she calls it.

"I can't really tell people who I sound like," she interpreted. "It's not like Britney Spears; It's not like Smashmouth ... It's got beat, got good lyrics, got a hook — You can walk away for my show humming the lyrics."

VanWinkle's lyrics are her forte. She says she's a songwriter first, and singing so many types of music has "meshed" together her style too. But she concentrates on "crystallizing emotions."

"Songwriters allow people to articulate and empathize with things they may not experience themselves," vanWinkle said. "Making changes, resisting changes, getting past things that frighten us ... (My music) helps articulate things people may not be able to get a grasp on ... to get a 'handle on the moment.'"

You can see vanWinkle perform from 8-10 p.m. Feb. 26 at the Starbucks in the Morgan Junction. CDs of "When You're Ready" will be available at the performance or can be purchased by calling 935-2974.