

## Local artists explore new possibilities for their band

Written by Becca Brandt

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Breaking out of the garage band stage is often a difficult and tedious task, as local band Dawn of Exploration has discovered.

Dawn of Exploration is composed of four members. Current Holyoke High School senior Jacob Vasa plays rhythm guitar and Holyoke alumni Payin Becerra, Cody Fricke and Ben Martinez cover vocals, drums and lead guitar, respectively.

Starting in 2010, covering popular punk songs and dabbling in songwriting, the group has remained in the background for the past few years.

Now Dawn of Exploration has decided to transition from the garage to the stage. "It's been three years. It's worth a shot to show people what we can do," stated Fricke who is in charge of booking all the band's shows.

With two shows scheduled at the Seventh Circle Music Collective in Denver on Thursday, July 4 and Wednesday, July 17, the band's goal is to have two gigs a month, mostly in the Denver area.



**Dawn of Exploration formed in 2010 with the current members, from left, Cody Fricke, Ben Martinez, Payin Becerra and Jacob Vasa.**

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In addition to taking the stage, the band has created a four-track EP entitled “Dear in the Headlights.” The release date of the EP is unscheduled, but the band is shooting for mid-July. The four songs included are “Dear in the Headlights,” “Problems,” “There’s Always Hope (But it’s Good to be Realistic)” and “Wake Up.”

The EP was created at Adams State University in Alamosa and is produced by Ben Paden.

Dawn of Exploration falls into the pop punk genre, but the new EP is a little on the punk side, noted Martinez.

Over time, Dawn of Exploration has evolved into a band filled with musicians versatile enough to play songs from a variety of styles ranging from pop punk to alternative to metal.

The group has written about 15 songs during their career and have scrapped some and improved others based on what they like and don’t like.

Musically, Dawn of Exploration has matured over the last three years. Fricke readily admitted, “We were terrible when we first started, but we write better stuff now.”

Writing for the band is a collaborative effort. Vasa usually works in the early development of the songs with chord progressions that are then utilized by Martinez to create the melody. Vasa and Martinez focus on writing the guitar riffs, while Becerra specializes in lyrics and Fricke covers drums.

With practice three to four times a week, Dawn of Exploration is revising their image as a more professional band. The goal with the new EP is that people can hear their music and support the group. They work to gain a larger following in hopes that venues will take note and more readily book them.

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