

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2006 · STAR TRIBUNE · NORTH · N7

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WHAT TO DO THIS WEEKEND  
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Teens crowded into a Dunn Bros. in Anoka where Flaming Seamus has a running gig.



Eric Jochum of Flaming Seamus played a Celtic drum called the bodhran.

## MEAN, GREEN MUSIC MACHINE



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From left: Eric Jochum, Tony Comeau, David Sparrer and Eric Johnston are part of Flaming Seamus, a band of teenagers from Anoka that plays a blazingly fast blend of Irish folk music, ska and punk.

### IF YOU GO

Humorist, author and radio host Garrison Keillor will perform a monologue and encoze performances by Flaming Seamus, North Dakota comedian Dawn Thompson and jazz singer Dorothy Doring in a benefit for the Central Center for Family Resources. The show is 7 p.m. Oct. 25 at Anoka High School, 3939 7th Av. N., Anoka.

By DAVID GUSTAFSON  
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**T**ony Comeau would be an amazing fiddle player even if he hadn't just turned 16. He took up the violin four years ago, and already he can tear through Irish jigs and reels at blistering speed.

His fiddling is front-and-center of Flaming Seamus, a group of energetic and popular teenage musicians from Anoka. With fiddle, mandolin, guitar, bass and Irish drum,

the four-piece band sings tales of drinking, fighting and falling from grace with God, though it will be years before they can set foot in the sort of places where such songs belong.

For now, their regular gig is at a local Dunn Bros., which they pack with boisterous friends — who don't seem like they need the caffeine — and their much-more-mellow parents, who up until recently had to go to the shows because they drove the musicians.

"He's playing my music,

so that's OK with me. I love it," said Ann Costello-Junge, Tony's mom. She said she raised him listening to Irish-folk-rockers the Pogues.

Flaming Seamus alternates between fiddle tunes and rousing vocal numbers, most sung by guitarist Eric Johnston.

Johnston describes the band's musical influences as all things Irish with some punk and ska.

Punk and Irish folk might sound like odd bedfellows to these unfamiliar with them,

but in the right hands they go together like a pint of black-and-tan. Both thrive on energy, simple song structures and honest lyrics about struggle, vice and valor — all the themes that make you want to raise your beer or fist.

With acoustic instruments and a roster of traditional

songs, Flaming Seamus certainly leans toward the folk end of the spectrum, but they hit the chords hard enough and put enough growl into their youthful voices to justify their more fist-clenching albums in their music collections.

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