

# weston

The news that Weston had broken up caught me totally off guard. I got the chance to meet up with my friend Dave Weston at the 25<sup>th</sup> Street Taco Bell in Easton PA, to chat about the break up and to reflect on the history of the legendary Lehigh Valley band, Weston.

**FOE** What was the date of the last Weston Show?

**DAVE** I don't remember. It was at the Pontiac Grille in Philly. Aprilish (2001).

**FOE** When did you know that was going to be the last gig?

**DAVE** We played in upstate New York and had a band meeting and decided that we would play Brownies in New York City and then the Pontiac in Philly. So probably about a week before our actual last show.

**FOE** Why now? I had just been checking some things out on the internet, right about the time of your break up, and you had stuff on the Rolling Stone and Spin websites, with video interviews... Things seemed like they were starting to cook. Or were you guys just cooked?

**DAVE** I think things were coming to a halt. Some people close to the band, like our management, knew things weren't happening. And I think we just needed a kick in the ass from them, you know, shit or get off the pot kind of thing. We are all still friends and all still love each other, which is something not a lot of bands can say.

**FOE** So it was more of a change of life goals rather than internal strife between band members that caused the demise?

**DAVE** Yeah, everyone is just into a different thing. We probably dragged on longer than we should have in a lot of ways. On the surface this may seem like a foolish time to call it a day, but you know, timing was never this band's thing.

**FOE** There are the core members, you (guitar, vocals), Jer (drums), Jimmy (guitar, vocals) and Jesse (bass, vocals). You recently added two new members. Did they come into play in the decision making process?

**DAVE** Jeff and Jason? They were on tour with us, but yeah, they weren't involved in the meeting.

**FOE** Three of the four core members are now married?

**DAVE** Yeah, Jesse is the only one not married.

**FOE** So, it is obvious that the priorities of the members have changed since the band's beginning in the summer of 1991.

**DAVE** Yes. Ten years.

**FOE** So. Is that it? There's not going to be a release of some album of unreleased tracks, no reunion tour in a few months, no box set with remastered tracks, no complete Wolf sessions?

**DAVE** Nah.

**FOE** Obviously there is a lot of talent in the band, which you can't just turn off. Are the members of the band planning any other projects at the moment?

**DAVE** I don't know. I definitely think that some of the members will be doing music. Some maybe to less of a degree than we were in Weston, but then again, maybe twice the amount.

**FOE** So it wasn't necessarily the fact that the band didn't want to do music full time, just not Weston.

**DAVE** I have a little saying, that music is like police work. It is in your blood. You go through ups and downs. I think every musician gets to a point where they hate touring or going in to the studio. But it always comes back. It's the same with you rock journalists, you leave for a few years and then come back. I am sure Jimmy and Jesse are going to do something. Maybe even Jer might do something. Where I am at, I don't know what I am going to do. Right now is just a crazy time for me. The band broke up, I got married, I have a dog, I moved to Brooklyn, the craziest city in the world. It's the first time I have moved out of my parent's house, so what do I do. I move to the craziest ass city in the world. I got some cool offers to do some music scoring for independent films. I don't know, we'll see what happens.

**FOE** I hear you ran off to Las Vegas to get married.

**DAVE** Yeah, you know, you can either have the fat Elvis or the skinny Elvis marry you, but we kind of had the bitter Elvis. He played DJ after marrying us and we were asking him to play songs we liked, but he just wanted to play the "Macarana" and "Mambo #5". But it was cool to see my mom

dance to Generation X.

**FOE** When did you meet the Jodes (Dave's bride)? You guys have been going out for years.

**DAVE** Remember when you and I went to see Entombed? I met her...

**FOE** You met her at that Entombed show? What a great story...

**DAVE** No, no, I met her the day after you and I went to see Entombed.

**FOE** Oh. What was the high point of Weston? Personally and as a band.

**DAVE** I guess the first thing that comes to my mind is just making tunes. Making our own music and recording it. I could sit here and pick out shows or bands that we played with that were high points, but to me, it was just the process of making music. You know when we used to sit around at the Mammyhouse (legendary Weston house in South Bethlehem at the beginning of their career), sitting around on a day just like this, all hot, just playing acoustic guitar and making up songs. Like everyone was just throwing in ideas. That time sticks out the most,



because it was that whole, naïve innocence that you never get back. And of course then finally getting to play those songs out of town.

**FOE** Is there anything you regret not doing with the Weston?

**DAVE** No. I mean sure, it would have been great to make a gazillion dollars. But when there were a lot of labels interested in us, we weren't ready for that. I wouldn't change anything. The band ran its course.

**FOE** Is there a moment you would like to take back?

**DAVE** Maybe on the last tour. I was a little messed up. I played some shows really wasted. Some kid pays 8 or 10 bucks to see you and...

**FOE** Doing the whole VH1 Behind the Music routine...

**DAVE** Yeah. There are certain things on that tour, both on and off stage that I probably would have done differently. I am not trying to blame it on anything, it just could have been handled differently.

**FOE** As long as you learn from it.

**DAVE** Yeah, I did. I am glad I got out of there unscathed.

**FOE** Sometimes when you are on those paths, you just need to dead end the path.

**DAVE** That's the thing. Sometimes the inspiration comes a week later, sometimes a year later. I think we were forcing things. I think the audience was smarter than the band. They know. They knew that we weren't comfortable playing anymore. But again, I am glad we are all still friends. If I ever did another record, I know I would call all those guys to get in on the action. Not that I am going to do a solo album, that is kind of weird. Maybe like a vaudeville kind of thing.

**FOE** What was your favorite song that you wrote?

**DAVE** Geez I don't know. I guess, "Heartbreak Sandwich". Because it was a lot different than the other songs. It was personal. Just different for me... As a band, one of my favorites is "Just Like You" off of "Got Beat Up". That was one of our biggest collaboration songs. I like working like a band. It is very rewarding to do that.

**FOE** Obviously when you add a new member, that has an impact on the band and on songwriting.

**DAVE** That is one of the best parts of being in a band or even in life. You might think one thing and then you'll talk to somebody about it and then they'll tell you something from a completely different perspective. That's been like the theme of the band. We were in this self-destructive bubble but we needed somebody from the outside looking in to kind of really kick us and tell us... Like in song writing, I come up with a riff and then Jimmy would say why not try this, and I would have never thought of that, and then Jeremiah, this is going to sound like a diss but it's not, it's a compliment... he has this whack ass drum style, that fit the band perfectly. I listen to some of the old songs and I can't imagine anyone else playing drums for those songs.

**FOE** Are you and Jeremiah the only members who played from the beginning?

**DAVE** Yeah.

**FOE** Then there was Mark Kale, Chris, Chuck...

**DAVE** The thing with Chuck was that he really only wanted to play for a little bit, until we found someone full time. He ended up being part time for like 6 years. He held on for as long as he could. That was great to be in a band with him. I would say locally, Robosphere (band Chuck

was in before Weston) was a big influence.

**FOE** That influence is very obvious on your first 7". Wasn't Mark and Chuck in Robosphere?

**DAVE** Yes.

**FOE** So who else was in Weston?

**DAVE** This guy Ryan. He actually lives in Brooklyn too. I actually saw him on the train, but it was one of those deals like, it's been so long, what do I say, how do I approach that. There was this guy Jason Williams on bass.

**FOE** What was the biggest gig you played, attendance wise?

**DAVE** Probably the Green Day gig up at Lehigh University was one of the biggest. When we played Europe there were a couple of places where there were thousands. We played some shows where there were thousands of people but they weren't necessarily watching us. We played this radio thing, kind of like Ozzfest, there was a small stage and a main stage, so like Beck was playing on the main stage. It was kind of like playing to a JC Dobbs sized crowd (about 100-150). Same like the Warped tour shows. They weren't watching us, they were all at the NOFX shirt stand or merch booth.

**FOE** Did you see the Brandon Cruz thing on VH1 where he was wearing a Weston t-shirt? Did you know him or...

**DAVE** I actually gave him that shirt personally. I met him in LA. He was really cool. The actor guy.

**FOE** What was your favorite Country to play?

**DAVE** Either Sweden or Germany. I speak a little German.

**FOE** To the kids, what advice would you give to the kids starting out in bands, from your 10 years of experience? What can they learn from the Weston legacy?

**DAVE** If you are going out on tour, make sure one of the guys or girls knows something about van maintenance or repair and have a Triple A membership. Can't stress that enough. Keep an open mind. Never sign anything unless you have an

attorney look it over.

**FOE** Did you ever sign anything you didn't have an attorney look at?

**DAVE** Are you kidding!?!? I think every band has.

**FOE** That would fall into the regret category wouldn't it?

**DAVE** I would also say, do everything that you can on your own before hiring a manager. If you do hire a manager, make sure they understand what you want to do and where you are coming from. Someone who is even into the same music you are in to. Kind of like if you are a porn star, it's good to do a movie with a director who was once a porn star, one who knows how porn stars get treated.

**FOE** Is that your next career?

**DAVE** If I can clear it with the wife. Yeah sure man. Although New York isn't the porn capital anymore. NY used to be big with the raincoat crowd. But now it's all Van Nuys. Also, I would suggest that you know how to change strings.



**FOE** Did you know how to change strings when you first started?

**DAVE** No. Chuck used to change my strings in the beginning. But then one day he's like dude, you gotta learn how to do this... And buy a tuner.

**FOE** How did Mojo Records take the news of the band's breakup?

**DAVE** I don't know. (pause) I should probably call them up.

**FOE** They think you're out on tour...

**DAVE** Playing Ozzfest.

**FOE** So what kind of music are you listening to these days?

**DAVE** I am more of a "fan" now than I have been. I bought that Nuggets box set. All that garage rock. I've been listening to the Carpenters. And when it gets warm like this, I always pull out the old punk rock. And I have been listening to the Cro Mags. Where I live, the people all listen to that Modest Mouse thing.

**FOE** In Brooklyn? That's not tough music. What about Biohazard?

**DAVE** Not where I live. It's not tough anymore. They all listen to all that electronic music with one-syllable names like Shoe or Hat.

**FOE** I don't know any of that stuff.

**DAVE** Me either. I listen to Cro Mags, garage rock, the Carpenters, "Killed By Death" comps.

**FOE** Anything you need to unload off of your chest to wrap this up?

**DAVE** I'm glad we could get some closure with this. Maybe we can still be friends after this. I dunno, if anyone is reading this, who was friends of the band or saw the band, I guess a big thank you. Like Dolly Parton once said, "thanks for the mammaries".



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