

GLENVILLE POLITICIANS are already maneuvering for position in the fall election as a Republican Town Board member challenges the Democrat incumbent supervisor. **B2**

JOHNSTOWN

Film to focus on band for disabled

Lexington Center hopes documentary will bring exposure to musicians in Flame

BY JASON SUBIK
Gazette Reporter

Lexington Center has entered into an exclusive two-year agreement with Washington, D.C.-based Interface Media Group to make a documentary about Flame, the facility's rock band.

Flame features musicians who in some cases have severe mental and/or physical disabilities but also possess professional-level music skills.

The band has played concerts in Greece and throughout the United States.

Tim Fiori, Lexington Center's director of public relations and band manager for Flame, said Lexington Center and IMG came to an agreement May 13 after IMG studied the potential for a Flame film for three months.

He said if the documentary gets made it should result in increased public awareness for the band and

Lexington's program, and could mean money for both.

"Usually documentaries don't make money, usually they break even and try to pay back their investors, but if there are net profits Flame will receive a portion of them and Lexington will receive a portion of them," he said.

"This will help Flame receive national notoriety and this is one of the best vehicles we've found to show in depth what goes on with Flame and at Lexington. It's really to inspire people with disabilities."

IMG President Jeff Weingarten said IMG documentaries have been shown on HBO, PBS and the Discovery Network, as well as released into theater.

He said he recently worked as the executive producer for a documentary called War Child, a story about hip-hop star Emmanuel Jal,

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Flame: Band to be filmed for 3 months

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which won the Cadillac Audience Award at the Tribeca film festival. IMG takes on some projects on its own, he said, and hires itself out for others.

"This documentary about Flame would obviously be an original production of ours, so we're investing in it and raising money and doing all that, which is a little different from some of the other films," Weingarten said.

"I would say we pick about three or four projects a year that we really want to make our own. We've done the due diligence. We're very excited about it, and we're ready to start making this film."

Fiori said national exposure could result in greater sales of the cover albums Flame produces of popular rock music featuring lead singer and guitarist Michelle King.

Fiori said King can play guitar songs by ear and has exhibited "savant-like" musical abilities, despite mental impairments.

He said all Flame band members receive an hourly wage of varying levels for concerts they play and a percentage of album sales after roy-

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alties are paid to original artists.

He said some Flame members receive help from parents and Lexington Center officials on money issues, while others live independently.

Weingarten said one of the ideas his company is considering for the Flame documentary is an original Flame album written with the help of celebrity musicians.

"We have already reached out to a bunch of music producers, both in New York and L.A. That's where we're going with this," he said.

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