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Summer 2010

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DESTINATIONS

Open Secret

Is Secret Society the Hottest Band in Prince George's Or What?

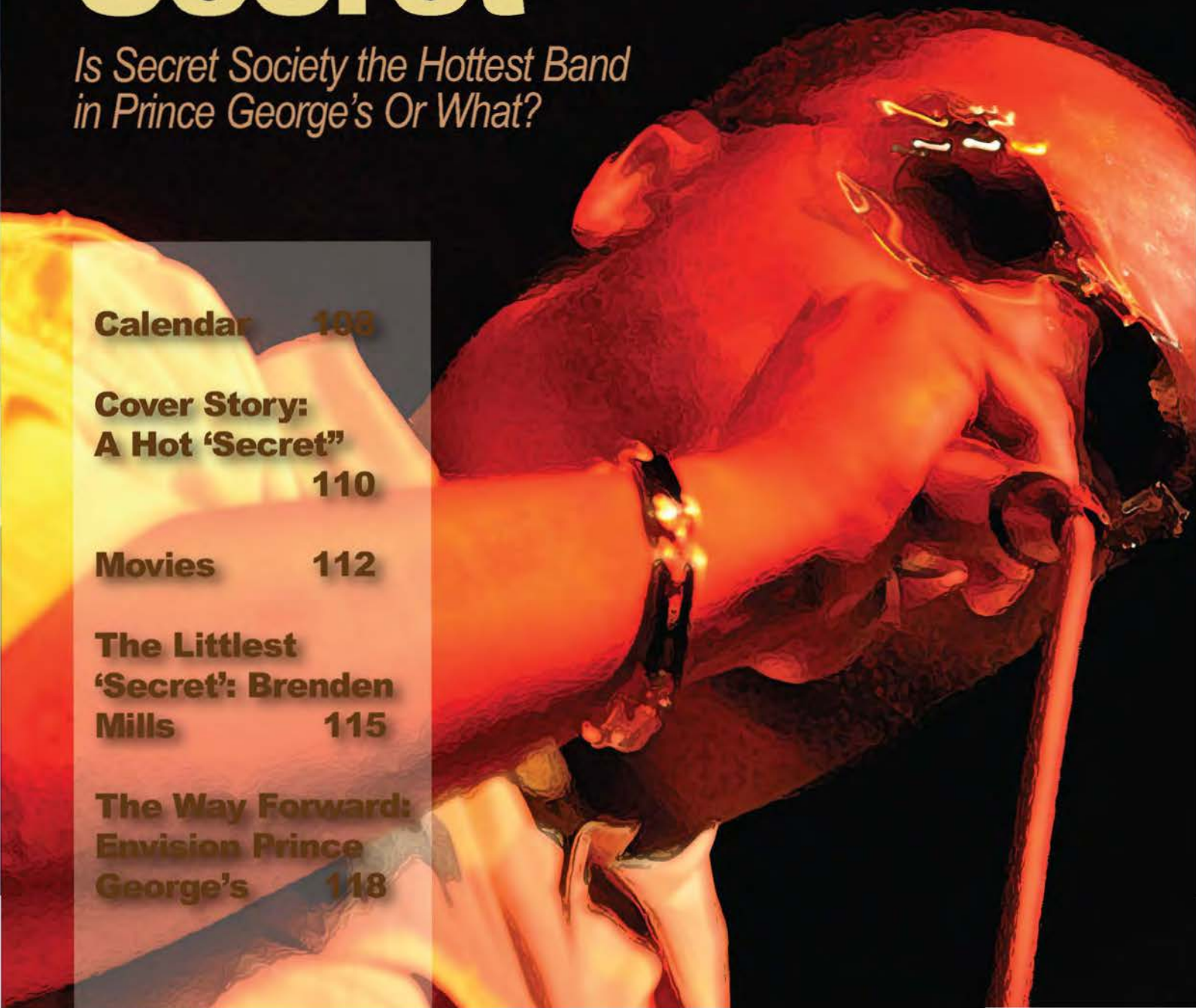
Calendar 108

**Cover Story:
A Hot 'Secret'**
110

Movies 112

**The Littlest
'Secret': Brenden
Mills** 115

**The Way Forward:
Envision Prince
George's** 118



Secret Society successfully combines raw talent and chemistry of traditional bands with sizzling renditions of pop and soul hits. Feel the heat.



Bryan Mills,
saxophonist



Robbie
McDonald,
lead guitarist



Wayne
Thomas,
drummer



Tommy
Tordsson,
bassist



Patrick
Cooper,
keyboardist



Mike Madison,
vocalist

A Hot Secret

When the intimate dance floor at the Half Note Lounge gets too packed, the choreography in the crowd doesn't stop. The party faithful fill the aisles or keep time in their seats. Much like the infectious joy in Sunday service, but at the Half Note, folks are sprung to action by the organic vibes of live soul music from Secret Society.

Led by saxophonist Bryan Mills, the six piece band routinely serves up radio-ready covers of classic and current grooves from the urban contemporary playlist with a deep repertoire of Michael Jackson, Stevie Wonder, Luther Vandross, Maxwell, and a little Doug E. Fresh.

Since April 2009, Secret Society's been a staple at Bowie's Half Note Lounge playing multiple dates throughout a given month.

Continued on Page 115

Everything you want in a band: Talent, energy and attitude make Secret Society one of the hottest groups in the region. Their playlist is a deep repertoire of Michael Jackson, Stevie Wonder, Luther Vandross, Maxwell, and a little Doug E. Fresh all successfully blended in for a wild ride at The Half Note.





"The Half Note really put us on the map," says Mills who spends his days teaching music at Gladys Noon Spellman Elementary in Cheverly. "The first time we played, they really liked us, and it was a wrap after that."

In any town you can find solid musicians who often languish in obscurity because no one's discovered how good they really are. In a short time, owner Derric E. Thomas has created a venue that gives bands like Secret Society a platform to build a fan base.

"It's a powerful thing, and I'm happy to be a part of that," Thomas says. "But Secret Society took matters into their own hands with their awareness and their approach to marketing and developing a following, which is a bigger part of their success."

The band's drawing power is its raw soul-filled sound that burns through in an era of auto-tune enhanced tracks. Patrons fill the Half Note to the brim and are willing to stand outside (even on chilly February nights) for a chance to get in.

While Secret Society's earned kudos for being a solid cover group, Mills isn't content to play other people's music. He says the group hoped to attract a following by playing familiar songs at a high level. "So when I get that fan base, which I'm starting to do, and people are coming to see us, the next project will be all originals, that way I will have a fan base that I can appeal to. We want to get people on our side," he continues. "Where they say, 'If it's a Secret Society CD, it must be good.'"

The band's studio project is in the works, but you can listen to the group's latest recording: Live at the Half Note Lounge, available at all Secret Society shows.



The Littlest 'Secret'

When you first see Brenden Mills and his drums, you might be tempted to call him a "little drummer boy." After all, Brenden's an 11-year-old, only child who loves his video games and playing basketball at school. He likes all sports, and according to his father, Bryan Mills, Brenden is an average kid.

Average, that is, until he gets behind a drum set. When that happens, Brenden Mills is all musician.

The Thomas Pullen Intermediate School student has been keeping rhythm since he was only two years old, and got his first real drum set at the age of four. His father says that early on, family members noticed that Brenden started out using all types of items, such as spoons and toys, to bang out sounds.

These days, this drummer has advanced far past his toys. His weekends are spent playing drums for two different church choirs – one on Saturday and one on Sunday. We will be watching this young man's future. It might include having his own band at the Half Note Lounge.

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