



PHOTO BY JAMES CARBONE

# For Benatar, a heartbreaker

After Sandy hits, rocker and hubby give it their best shot to help her hometown

BY GLENN GAMBOA  
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**L**ove is a battlefield, sure. But when Pat Benatar saw that her beloved Lindenhurst was looking like one in the aftermath of superstorm Sandy, she knew she had to do something.

"It was just insanity," says Benatar, calling from her California home. "I have family there, and they had 8 feet of water in their basement. They sent me these pictures, and it's just heartbreaking to see all this stuff piled up in the street. It's just a nightmare. . . . When I saw what happened to the shore, I almost fainted."

For Benatar and husband/longtime guitarist and collaborator Neil Giraldo, the need to help out has intensified as they have watched national concern about those hurt by the storm start to fade. "I don't know that it's anyone's fault, but is everything so ephemeral?" Benatar says. "Is everything just today's news and then buh-bye, and that's the end of it? It's like nobody cares unless you're

actually in it."

Nevertheless, Benatar chooses to focus on the positive. "I want to do what I can in my small way," she says. And that is what led her and Giraldo to do a benefit at the NYCB Theater at Westbury Friday night, with proceeds going to Habitat for Humanity, the Lindenhurst Fire Department and the Village of Lindenhurst Relief Fund.

"I wanted to keep it local," she adds. "The beauty of being in this business for so long is that I've done things like this several times. There are advantages to

keeping it small."

Giraldo says he was eager to help out the Lindenhurst area specifically because it embraced him so warmly once he started dating Benatar. "It was the kind of town I would have wanted to grow up in — the real 'Happy Days,'" Giraldo says. "Seeing all this devastation was so sad because I know all these people have such good hearts. They don't deserve this."

Both Benatar and Giraldo say their concert really won't change much Friday because Benatar's music has always been built around themes of standing strong and fighting back.

"There's no need for much tweaking," she says, laughing. "'Invincible.' 'All Fired Up.'

Yeah, we're set."

Throw in the chorus to "Shadows of the Night," a little "Hit Me With Your Best Shot" and suddenly you've got as pointed a rallying cry as anyone would need. "It's going to be a really casual thing," Benatar says. "We're having a party, and we're the house band. We want people to just come and enjoy themselves for a while, forget about it for a night or don't. If people want to talk about it, we're here."

However, Benatar and Giraldo may not be around this summer like they usually are. Because they spent much of last year playing arenas with Journey and Loverboy — a tour that was set to play Brooklyn's Barclays Center the night Sandy slammed

**WHO** Pat Benatar and Neil Giraldo  
**WHEN | WHERE** 8 p.m. Friday, NYCB Theatre at Westbury, 960 Brush Hollow Rd., Westbury  
**INFO** \$49.50; 800-745-3000, livenation.com

**Flooding on Wellwood Avenue in Lindenhurst a week after superstorm Sandy hit**

into the area — Benatar says they may take the summer off to record their next album.

"I really want to get Patricia into the studio," Giraldo says. "We're very different, even though both of our lives are about creating. My creating never stops, and she has ability to just shut that part down."

Giraldo is working on a Christmas album featuring all-new holiday songs, as well as a solo album. And following Benatar's successful memoir, "Between a Heart and a Rock Place," in 2010, Giraldo is working on his own book, about going from trying to avoid gangs in Cleveland to stardom with the love of his life.

"I'm not doing a book to create some sort of narcissistic journey," he says. "I want to give people hope."

Benatar says she also wants to give Long Islanders some hope with the benefit. "I know it takes some time, when you can't really wrap your head around what has happened," she says. "But this area is filled with survivors, a really amazing lot of people who know how to do what's gotta be done. And they will."



For the latest music news and views, follow music critic Glenn Gamboa on Twitter @ndmusic

## MORE SANDY HELP

**W**hile it seems much of the rest of the country has moved on to other causes, plenty of artists are still looking to support area victims of superstorm Sandy. Here are some upcoming ways to help:

**THE ROCKERS IN RECOVERY ALL-STAR BAND** The band — with musical director Ricky Byrd, from Joan Jett's band, Liberty DeVitto, Mark Stein and others — will team up with a string of special guests, including Gary U.S. Bonds, Ian Hunter, Michael Des Barres and Handsome Dick Manitoba. Proceeds from the show Friday

at The Cutting Room in Manhattan will go to The Graybeards from Rockaway Beach, the West Hamilton Beach Volunteer Fire Department and the Broad Channel Volunteer Fire Department.

**'12-12-12: THE CONCERT FOR SANDY RELIEF'** The physical album compiled from performances by Paul McCartney, Bruce Springsteen, Billy Joel, the Rolling Stones and more at the Madison Square Garden concert in December arrives in stores on Tuesday, with proceeds going to the Robin Hood Foundation Relief Fund. For more information, go to 121212concert.org.

**'SONGS AFTER SANDY'** Stars including

Ringo Starr, Joe Walsh, Jeff Lynne and Joseph Arthur have offered previously unreleased material to the "Songs After Sandy" compilation, which will benefit Restore Red Hook, Red Hook Initiative and Occupy Sandy. Paul McCartney has donated a version of "I've Got a Feeling" to the recently released second compilation. For more, go to songsaftersandy.com.

**'THE STORM IS PASSING OVER'** Mason Jar Music has released an indie-folk compilation — featuring new music from Rosanne Cash, Tift Merritt, Béla Fleck and more — to raise money for the Occupy Sandy charities. For more information, go to thestormispassingover.com.

— GLENN GAMBOA

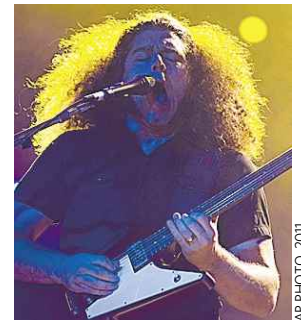


PHOTO BY BETH HERZAFIT

Pat Benatar and husband Neil Giraldo will perform in Westbury Friday.

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AP PHOTO, 2011

**Claudio Sanchez of Coheed & Cambria**

**WHO** Coheed & Cambria  
**WHEN | WHERE** "Conan" (11 p.m. Monday, TBS)  
**WHY** The prog rockers are still riding high from last year's album, "The Afterman: Ascension."



PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER POLK

**WHO** LeAnn Rimes  
**WHEN | WHERE** "Kimmel" (Tuesday night, 11:35 p.m., ABC/7)  
**WHY** Wow. Let's hope Jimmy will just have her sing and not bring up the latest Eddie Cibrian rumors.

**WHO** Kenny Loggins and the Blue Sky Riders  
**WHEN | WHERE** "Leno" (11:35 p.m. Thursday, NBC/4)  
**WHY** Take a listen to Loggins' new country debut, "Finally Home," comes out Jan. 29.

— KEVIN AMORIM

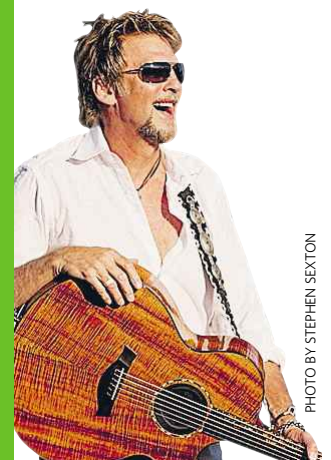


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