

# What's On

Your entertainment guide for the week of April 27 and beyond

## the **CRANBERRIES** come to Breslin

not just another Irish band



**dolores o'riordan**

**dolores o'riordan's hometown**

### 6/Movies

'Stuart' may save family, but not movie.

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Suzanne Westenhoefer from a funny family.

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Children's Ballet Theatre show more than a story.

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Island Records

**The Cranberries:** The Irish band from Limerick begins and ends with singer and songwriter Dolores O'Riordan (front), who gets more than capable help from bassist Mike Hogan (left), drummer Fergal Lawler and guitarist Noel Hogan (right). The band plays the Breslin Center on Friday.

# Cranberries follow their taste

Shunning pop tags and Irish stereotypes, Limerick band soars

By Ricardo Cooney  
Lansing State Journal

A cranberry is a firm, sour, edible red fruit.

The Cranberries are a musical group led by the powerful vocals of diminutive songstress Dolores O'Riordan.

The similarities may not jump out at you. But the quartet's music has stood firm in the pop music wars, consists of bittersweet stories and has been tasted all over the world.

Drummer Fergal Lawler, bassist Mike Hogan and his guitarist brother Noel Hogan round out a lineup whose 1993 debut, "Everybody Else is Doing It, So Why Can't We," reached double-platinum status.

"No Need To Argue," the four-some's sophomore effort, has sold more than 5 million copies and spawned a tour that has stopped in Europe, Japan, Australia and the United States and earned them an "MTV Unplugged" spot.

Their most recognizable songs are "Linger," an I'm-in-love-with-

you-but-you-don't-notice-me plea; "Dreams," a trip into a fantasy of happiness; the war-torn, guitar-wrenching "Zombie"; and the touching recollection of childhood, "Ode To My Family."

A warning to anyone drawing Sinead O'Connor or U2 comparisons, just because they're all from Ireland: The Cranberries' music is not bogged down in the effects of a dour religious upbringing, nor is it solely rooted in the political unrest that used to ravage their homeland.

"It's pretty much going with what comes to mind and because it's so honest, it's different," Lawler said. "There are a lot of bands out there that are not really believers in what they're doing. We basically don't do anything we don't want to do."

Religion, politics and social unrest do play a role in the Cranberries' music; you can't escape your roots no matter how far you dig down to try to pull them out. But just as the band openly defies those comparisons, they are just as likely to refuse the tag of pop band.

Case in point: The Cranberries recorded an unconventional version of the Carpenters' "(They Long To Be) Close To You," for a tribute album entitled "If I Were a Carpenter."

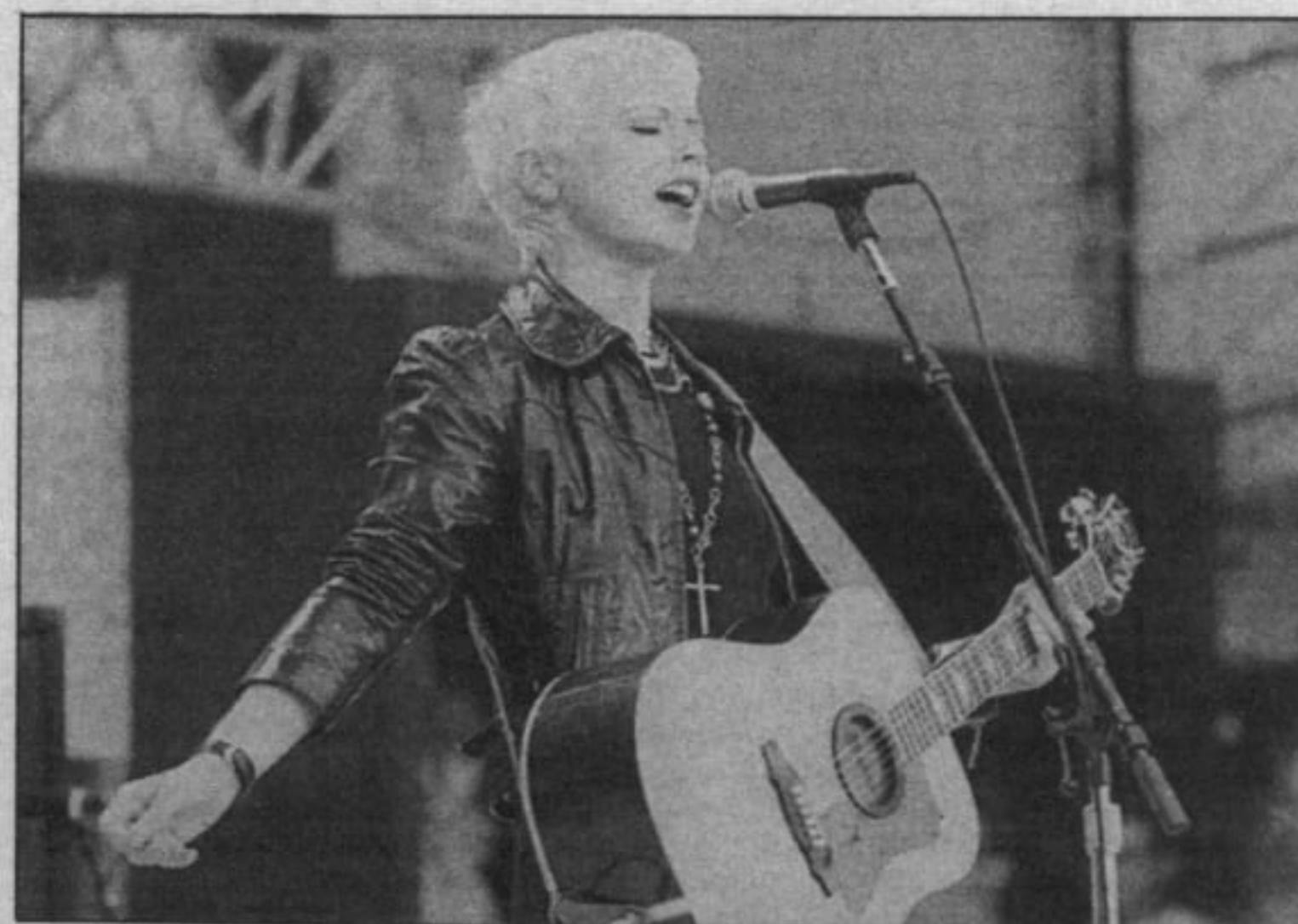
"It was kind of strange because we'd never done a cover version before," said Lawler, a former hairdresser. "On the other hand, it was kind of nice to do something that was so removed from what we were used to."

A band in search of lasting pop superstardom wouldn't plunge into the unconventional so early in a budding career. The Cranberries are just an import that happen to have collected the same baggage tags as their Irish predecessors.

Besides, they're from Limerick, not the hotbed of the Irish pop music culture. Dublin gets that honor. Lawler said it took them a while to accept the throngs of supportive fans. And whereas popularity may have had a negative effect on other small-town bands, their induction into the limelight was a positive one.

Except for the occasional invasion of privacy, the Cranberries enjoy the constant attention and adoring fans. They decided before they were signed by Island in 1992 that being in a band was better than being stuck in a town best known for its high unemployment rate.

"To be honest you don't really think about fame that much," Lawler said. "You don't really have time. You're on the road do-



ROBERT DEUTSCH/Gannett News Service

**In 'stock:** Dolores O'Riordan wails away during the Cranberries' appearance at Woodstock '94.

ing shows or doing interviews and then you're back home where people don't really know or care about who you are."

The Cranberries' attitude toward their rise may seem manufactured, but like their music, it's the only way they know how to be.

They didn't ask to be worldwide superstars. They just thought it would be nice to get together and sing about what they feel.

"It's pretty straightforward," Lawler said. "A lot of people look for ways to say things that are not really there. If it's there we say it."