

Thursday, March 27, 2008



Bethany Van Delft



Vicki Ferentinos



Michelle Buteau



Susan Alexander



Erin Judge

Courtesy photos

## '5 Funny Females' pushes boundaries of comedy

BY SONYA VARTABEDIAN  
STAFF WRITER

Gone are the days when a comedian's material was limited to PMS, menopause and the shortcomings of the men in their lives.

### IF YOU GO

- **What:** "5 Funny Females," an evening of stand-up comedy
- **When:** Tomorrow at 7 p.m.
- **Where:** Phoenix Room, 19 Inn St., Newburyport
- **How:** Tickets \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door. A portion of proceeds and a vacation raffle giveaway will benefit the YWCA of Greater Newburyport. Visit [www.drinkwaterproductions.com](http://www.drinkwaterproductions.com) or call 978-375-2252.

Two more benefit comedy shows are planned for the weekend. See Page 14.

ions to go around.

"To me, stand-up comedy is one of the last freedoms of expression," Alexander says.

Alexander — who draws inspiration from both

## COMEDY: Five women turn on the funny business

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male and female comedians, including George Carlin, Richard Pryor and Rodney Dangerfield as well as Roseanne Barr, Phyllis Diller, Margaret Cho, Paula Poundstone and Tina Fey — broke into stand-up a few years ago in San Francisco after a career in sales and entertainment marketing and advertising.

She launched the concept of a comedian showcase in 2004 and began touring it around the country the following year. Now, she has between 30 and 40 women — both up-and-coming comedians and seasoned performers from "Last Comic Standing" and Comedy Central — who she rotates in and out of the lineup.

There was a time, Alexander says, when a showcase of 15 comedians that featured more than two or three women would be dubbed "a women's show." People, she says, are more interested now in what comedians have to offer. And she believes there are more opportunities for women in comedy because there are fewer of them.

"I don't necessarily think it's easier or harder for female comedians," she says. "If you're funny, you're funny."

Alexander, who also created Singles Who Mingle, which pairs a mix of stand-up comedy and match-making services in one evening, focuses her routine on her life experiences, including family and relationships, mixed with a little bit of pop culture.

Joining her on the lineup are Erin Judge, whose focus is political humor and current events, which she'll showcase on Comedy Central's "Live at Gotham"; Bethany Van Delft, a former model who Alexander says has a "wacky" side; and Vicki Ferentinos, a New York comic with a sweet voice but shocking delivery who has appeared on Comedy Central.

Michelle Buteau, a seasoned comedian with Jamaican roots who competed last season on "Last Comic Standing" and has been on VH1's "Best Week Ever," will close out the show.

"There's a good range of comedians on the program," says Alexander, who is now based in New York. "You don't want them to all be the same. It's like a recipe for comedy."

Drinkwater Productions, which is promoting the show, approached the YWCA of Greater Newburyport with the idea for the benefit. Barbara Banks of the YWCA said it seemed like a perfect match. "We loved the idea of it being women comedians," Banks said.

Alexander says "5 Funny Females" tends to attract both women and men, and the roster of comedians tries to give both sexes something to laugh about.

"It's exciting, but it has its challenges," Alexander says of stand-up comedy. "You have to work through a lot of bad jobs to get to the good ones."

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