

*Local vocalist Taunia Soderquist*

## **All about All About Buford**

By TARRYN GUARINO



WILMINGTON - When Taunia Soderquist graduated from Wilmington High School in 1990, she knew she was destined for a career in the music industry. What she probably couldn't imagine, however, was that 12 years later her vocal a cappella group All About Buford would be performing on stage with a famous comedian in front of a sold-out crowd.

"Amazing" is the best word to describe Soderquist's encounter with Wayne Brady, an actor and comedian well known for his work on the TV show "Whose Line Is It, Anyway?" When the members of All About Buford put together a video paying homage to Brady's parody of boy bands, the actor was impressed. So impressed, in fact, that he invited the group to his show at the North Shore Music Theater.

"We thought we were just going to go and maybe get a chance to talk with him," Soderquist explains with a laugh. "But halfway through the show he calls us up on stage and has us perform the whole act in front of 1,900 people. It was wild."

And while this is one of Soderquist's more recent success stories, it is by no means the only one. After graduating from University of Massachusetts at Lowell and Berkley School of Music in Boston, she joined the local a cappella group Deadline Poet and met friend and fellow musician Amy Malkoff. In 2000, the two women formed their own group, All About Buford, which includes other vocal members Adeel Pandith and Shah Salmi.

"The group is all vocal, no instruments at all," Soderquist says. "We've been described as having a really big sound for a group with just four members. In terms of style, our music is very diverse - a mixture of jazz, world, pop and funk. We perform original compositions and covers, and we've been integrating some comedy into the act."

All About Buford performs more than any other local group and has been quite successful in the a cappella music scene. This year, the group placed runner-up in the highly selective Boston Regional Harmony Sweepstakes. This past February, the group released its latest CD, Supercar, a project that was more than six months in the making. Soderquist has also released her own CD, and has been featured on several other albums. When she's not performing with All About Buford, she lends her vocals as an independent jazz singer and also teaches voice and beginner piano.

Between gigs, Soderquist is also employed on the staff of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and has performed with them during past seasons. Recently, however, her plate has been full with a new project - producing a new vocal festival called the Big Fat Vocal Feast.

"There are really only two big a cappella events during the year - the East Coast Summit and the Boston Regional Harmony Sweepstakes," says Soderquist. "Both events are pretty competitive and selective, but in between them there really isn't

any other showcase for a cappella groups. We're hoping the Big Fat Vocal Feast will become an annual event, and a great chance for groups to perform in a non-competitive forum."

The Big Fat Vocal Feast will be held at the Stoneham Theater on Main Street in Stoneham on Friday, August 23 at 8 p.m. The event will feature All About Buford and three other local a cappella groups. Tickets are \$20. Those seeking more information on the event can check out the website at [www.bigfatvocalfeast.com](http://www.bigfatvocalfeast.com).

So, what's ahead for Soderquist and All About Buford? Well, for one thing, Wayne Brady has them in his rolodex.

"Wayne's going to have his own talk show, so he took all our contact information," Soderquist says. "It would be great to work with him again."

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