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'The Fall Precaution' benefits from Courage

By **[Kevin C. Johnson](#)**

POST-DISPATCH POP MUSIC CRITIC

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You have to love a thoughtfully layered CD title like "The Fall Precaution," from new rock-pop band John Boy's Courage.

The band's must-listen CD, a local critical favorite, takes its name from the hospital bracelet drummer Kevin Geekie wore while recovering from brain surgery, indicating he was at-risk for tumbling out of bed. But the CD's title went deeper.

Singer-songwriter Todd Sarvies says "the title is mixed. Part of it was a tribute to him. But the title also said what I was trying to get across with the album. The album is a story about a time in my life when I was going down in the wrong direction. It broke me, and I had to get back up. So it's essentially about falling down and getting back up."

Anguish rarely gets as good as it does on "The Fall Precaution."

"I've learned from my experiences in life, and that's what I'm writing about," Sarvies says. "It was a breath of fresh air to get it down and out of my system. There's a lot of emotions that come back up but, for the most part, it was fun. I enjoyed the process."

Songs such as "Whisper," "Speechless" and "Puppets" reveal Sarvies' soul.

"'Puppets' is another big one that really sums it all up," he says. "It drives on the feeling of breaking free of obligation and setting out on a new path, and how exciting and scary that can be. I played it at Cicero's recently, and it was hard to play live. I didn't want to look like a wuss. There's so much emotion behind it."

Sarvies, influenced by acts such as Damien Rice, David Gray, Dashboard Confessional and Counting Crows, says "The Fall Precaution" is singer-songwriter driven, though it evolved into something else.

"It became more of a pop album, which is fine," says Sarvies, who was once part of local band Precho. "I'm not afraid of pop, and I like to think it's still singer-songwriter driven. That's where its root and heart are."

John Boy's Courage will perform at 9 p.m. Saturday at Off Broadway with Ashborne & the Upright Animals, and May 26 at Blueberry Hill's Duck Room. Get more information at www.johnboyscourage.com or at www.myspace.com/johnboyscouragemusic.