

Author lives out his own rock and roll fantasy

BY RAFER GUZMÁN

RAFER.GUZMAN@NEWSDAY.COM

If you've ever had a friend who moonlights in a local band, he might resemble a guy named Mark Deluxe.

Deluxe is 39, happily married, gainfully employed, mostly settled in life, except for a nagging dream that refuses to fade away. It's the dream of being a rock star, and it causes Deluxe to do some silly things, such as play guitar in a band called Artificial Pickle and drop a bundle of dough on a rock music "fantasy camp" in the hopes of getting friendly with famous musicians.

As it happens, Deluxe is a fictional character in the book "Opportunity Rocking," but you can meet his creator, John Sullivan, when he reads from his self-published novel at 8 tonight at Book Revue in Huntington.

Sullivan, 44, of Garden City, works as marketing director for a Manhattan financial firm by day but sings and plays guitar in The John Sullivan Brigade at

night. He, too, knows the slim rewards of playing in small clubs, and it so happens he once spent a few thousand dollars on a fantasy camp in Manhattan to meet Roger Daltrey of The Who.

Sullivan's new book isn't a memoir, though it may be more autobiographical than his first effort (also self-published), "Rock and Roll Murder." And if the fantasy camp detail seems a bit close to home, well, Sullivan says he had to find some way for a well-known and unknown musician to meet. "So, hey, fantasy camp — there you go."

The new novel, about a wannabe, a once-was and a woman caught in the middle, was a labor of love, written over two years

WHEN&WHERE John Sullivan and his band will perform and read from Sullivan's novel, "Opportunity Rocking," at 8 tonight at Book Revue, 313 New York Ave., Huntington. Call 631-271-1442 or go to bookrevue.com.

during late nights while Sullivan's wife and two children slept or while commuting on the Long Island Rail Road. At the same time, the book gave Sullivan ideas for lyrics, which sometimes turned into songs for the Brigade.

"He's a Renaissance man," says bassist George Gelish, 52, of his band mate. "I think the future belongs to guys like us who can do it themselves and get themselves out there."

Sullivan doesn't necessarily want to be the next Nelson DeMille. His book is just one part of a broader plan to turn his classic-rock-inflected band — which includes Steve Glover on drums, Russ Rogers on guitar and Johnny Leone on saxophone — into a nationally-known act. To that end, Sullivan is making the Book Revue event a group effort: The five musicians will not only perform a song but act out a passage from the novel.

Sullivan has two more rock books in the works — a comedy and what he calls a "historical memoir" — plus plans for a Broadway-style musical.



NEWSDAY PHOTO / ANA P. GUTIERREZ

The John Sullivan Brigade, from left, Steve Glover, Russ Rogers, Johnny Leone, George Gelish and John Sullivan

"I don't sleep well at night because I'm always thinking of something," Sullivan says. "I go to bed at two o'clock in the

morning and then I pass out on the train in the morning on the way to work. But you know, you only go around once."