



Melissa Molyneux

AND THEY CAN SING, TOO: Catch Amy Ward, Lisa Vitello and Delilah Tollinchi heat-treating Nardi's this Friday night.

Amy Ward's Cool Guys, Hot Women

The Amy Ward Band puts the "sex" into "s sextet."

If Charlie's Angels had a band, they'd be The Amy Ward Band. We're talking three beautiful female vocalists backed up by three equally talented, good-looking guys. Hubba hubba.

"Sex is our middle name," jokes Amy Ward. She doesn't let the band's name go to her head. "It's just a name," she avers. All of the band's members are talented artists in their own right, all with side projects. They settled on the name Amy Ward Band because "nobody else wanted to pay taxes."

"We're a dance band," Ward says. A recent gig at the Sea Shell showcased their sexy style. They started the set with Dusty Springfield's hit "Son of a Preacher Man." In the middle of the song, guitarist Anthony G inserted a riff from the Allman Brother's "Jessica." It was unexpected and incongruous but effective, and put you on notice that this wasn't just another cover band. The next song was Stevie Won-

Together They Add Up to One Steamy Act

der's "Superstition," followed by Pink's "Get This Party Started." As if to underscore Ward's egalitarian approach, Lisa Vitello did lead vocals on No Doubt's "Hey Baby," followed by Delilah Tollinchi leading on "Car Wash."

It's an eclectic crew. Ward is from South Bend, Ind. Vitello and bassist John Miles are from Boston, drummer Kevin Bregande is from Syracuse, N.Y., and Anthony G is from Wilmington, Del. Tollinchi, a Rosie Perez type, hails proudly from the Bronx. All but Tollinchi went to the Berklee School of Music in Boston.

Ward came east to attend Berklee, from which she graduated in 1997. She worked in a number of "sucky" wedding bands and opened for A Flock of Seagulls in Orlando in 1995 before forming the band three years ago. In addition to fronting the band, she teaches music part

time in Bernardsville, N.J. Bregande and Anthony G teach music in Lyndhurst, N.J.

The three guys in the band, along with a guitarist named Mike Nappi, have another act named Soul Alone. Influenced heavily by Sting, Steely Dan and the Doobie Brothers, they'll be playing Mondays in July at the Bitter End in New York City.

Vitello, who "grew up as a dancer," is writing songs, as is Tollinchi, who has performed with Patti Labelle and Billy Preston.

The first question many starstruck fans ask during breaks is whether any of the band members are couples. They don't date each other.

"It's like the Brady Bunch," said Bregande. "We don't actually like each other," he added with a wink.

The group's frank, sexual energy sometimes gets fans a little overheated. "I have a lot of stalkers," said Vitello. One guy who came to

every show even approached her to give her flowers but he got so flustered he just left and hasn't been seen since.

Some fans have less direct tactics. Male fans approach the guys and ask them about the girls. Or they will go up to Vitello or Tollinchi and ask, "Are you Amy?" even though they know exactly which one of the trio is Amy.

Ward, too, is a songwriter. In March she signed with Heavy Hitters Productions. Five of her songs have been heard on the CBS soap opera "The Young and the Restless." A sixth tune, "Miracle," will be on the show later this summer.

Although the band plays New York City and as far north as The Loft in South Norwalk, Conn., it plays lots of Jersey Shore dates. Your next chance to see them will be at Nardi's on Friday. If you like cool guys and hot women who have the musical talent to match their looks, you should definitely catch The Amy Ward Band.

—Tom Wrona