

Sherman man releases patriotic CD

By **Brian Saxton**
THE NEWS-TIMES

SHERMAN — With titles such as "Freedom," "I'll See You Again" and "Remember The Americans," the 12 songs written, sung and played by Matthew Fitzgibbons may have different words and sounds, but they all carry the same message.

"We must never forget the meaning of the Declaration of Independence or the Bill of Rights," Fitzgibbons, 39, of Sherman said this week. "I want my work to celebrate the principles of our constitution and the men and women who defend them."

To that end, Fitzgibbons has chosen today, Veterans' Day, to launch his latest CD, "Patriot 2 — A Celebration of Liberty."

"I believe that military veterans, especially combat veterans, understand the notion that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," said Fitzgibbons. "My goal is to encourage all people to rekindle their interest in America's



The News-Times/David W. Harple
Matt Fitzgibbons, of Sherman, is releasing "Patriot 2 — A Celebration of Liberty," today. The album stresses the foundations of America's government.

founding principles by rereading them and understanding what they mean."

Fitzgibbons, who made a CD called "Patriot" last year with a similar message, spent eight

months producing the second one. He was prompted to make the second CD by the number of letters received from troops, veterans and other people who had heard "Patriot," he said.

Fitzgibbons, a native of Meriden, began his musical career at the age of 5, when his father bought him a snare drum. By the time he was 16, he was an accomplished drummer and was composing songs on piano.

At age 18, he added guitar and vocals to his work and was writing short stories and poems inspired by his interest in philosophy.

After high school, Fitzgibbons went to Japan, where he taught English and played with Japanese bands. Later, with a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the University of Connecticut, Fitzgibbons returned to Japan and taught English to corporate executives.

"I think it was when I finally returned to the United States

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that I began to think deeply about what exactly defines Americans," said Fitzgibbons. "I found there was a mistrust of government among many people and a passion for personal liberty.

"That's why I want people to take another look at our founding principles to remind themselves who they are and what we have."

Outside his business as an online Web designer and marketer, music remains Fitzgibbons' lifelong passion. On his new CD, he plays all of the instruments, from piano to harmonica, except lead guitar, which is played by a friend, Jay Silverberg.

Silverberg, 52, a registered nurse who lives in New Fairfield, said Fitzgibbons inspired him to join the project.

"It was when Matt opened my mind to the Bill of Rights and the constitution that I realized there are soldiers fighting for my continued freedom, something I had taken for granted," Silverberg said. "I said then I have to play on this CD."

Fitzgibbons' wife, Bernadette, also joins him in some back-up

Patriotic tunes

"Patriot 2 — A Celebration of Liberty" is available online at PatrioticMusic.com

In one song Fitzgibbons included in the CD, he wrote:

"For two hundred years so many have died

So we could be free and remember with pride.

We've come a long way and the paper is old

But the meaning is clear to all who are told."

vocals and his mother, Rosalie, who lives in Litchfield, plays a violin solo. Ranging in musical styles from Billy Joel to Pink Floyd, the lyrics are combined with a dramatic mix of celestial soundscapes.

"My message is nonpolitical," said Fitzgibbons. "I just want people to understand and defend our country's founding principles without trusting anyone else's interpretation, including my own. So many people have forgotten just who we are."

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