

# Unauthorized Absence – Bio



## **Introduction**

Unauthorized Absence is continually pleasantly surprised by the audience reaction to our shows. We play music that we love and the music that has shaped our lives, and it turns out that loads of people feel the same way...I guess we're on to something here! As a classic rock cover band there's a lot of competition out there, but UA has forged our own brand by playing music often overlooked by other bands.

Perhaps the most affirming thing we've noticed is that every venue we play asks us to play again and again. Even when faced with audiences that are used to having quiet country bands playing for them (two things UA is certainly not is quiet and country) we've been able to win them over with our approach to classic rock music that evokes memories of days long gone.

## **UA History**

What the heck does Unauthorized Absence mean, and why did you choose that name? We get asked that all the time, and the answer simply goes back to the genesis of the band back in 2008 when the original four members of the band (Lee Nelson, Tapani Lanie, Jim Turba, and Steve Callahan) used to work for the same company in our day-jobs and we'd occasionally leave work early to go jam and learn new songs. When Jim and Steve left the company and moved out of the area, the band morphed into a five piece and the current lineup has been playing together for over a year and the hard work we've put in the rehearsal space has really paid off.

## **Meet the Band**

Lee Nelson is the frontman of UA and his baritone voice, guitar work, and stage presence guide the audience through his carefully crafted setlists on a new musical journey every night. Lee's affinity for performing Hootie & The Blowfish covers are a highlight of every UA performance.

Tanja Nelson brings a powerhouse female voice to the band with spotless harmonies and killer lead vocals that always have audiences begging for more. Her subtle proficiency on the keys adds just the right seasoning to make songs have that just-right touch.

Ken Gross (Kenny G) on the drums brings a steady pounding beat and his exceptionally strong tenor vocals allow UA to have the diversity to cover a broad range of artists without the audience tiring of hearing the same lead vocalist all night. Kenny's energy and audience interaction during songs like Mony Mony and Play That Funky Music ensure that the folks on the packed dance floor are having the time of their lives.

Tapani Laine on the lead guitars, keys, mandolin, and harmonica has the chops to give every UA cover song a nod to the original artist while also making it his own. Our resident musical utility knife, Tapani (one of the original members of UA) is originally from Finland but has lived in the states for the past 30+ years and his musical versatility is an inspiration to all of us.

Dennis Wells rounds out the band by providing the bottom end with rock-solid bass guitar and vocals. Dennis is an extremely gifted musician (guitarist, singer/songwriter) with a great wit and engaging personality that immediately connects with audiences and his audience banter always keeps the band and audience on their toes. The foundation that Dennis and Kenny lay down assures that each UA song is built upon very classic-rock solid ground, indeed.

### **Our Sound**

As a cover band, we remain true to the original song while making them our own. We're fortunate to have an amazing quality PA system and we've worked tirelessly on tweaking our sound to the point where we often have audience members telling us that we sound like we're just playing along to the radio (alas, no Milli Vanilli here folks!). Our professional-quality equipment delivers a rich and immersive audio experience regardless of the venue (indoors or out) and our full light show add the kind of touch that most bar bands simply can't bring to a venue. In short, a UA show is just that...a fully professional rock and roll show with killer sound, lights, music, personality, and most of all loads of fun!

### **Final Thoughts**

What it comes down to for us is that we really dig what we're doing and we know that we bring the audience something that they'll really dig, too. We're always adding songs to our setlist and with the formula we've developed, we know that folks that come to a UA show leave excited to come see us again. Once again, the proof lies in the face that every venue we play wants us back and we're looking to expand the list of places we play and play again.

