

## From the Pueblo Chieftain By Jon Pompia

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### **A nationally famous physician and health guru with local ties has added a new title to his resume: singer-songwriter.**

Dr. Phil Maffetone, best known for his books on fitness and nutrition, has readied for release his first record: "We All Need," an earthy collection of pop- and folk-based music.

Maffetone is a business associate of Chieftain editor Hal Walters, who has edited much of Maffetone's work, including his monthly newsletter.

True to his philosophy on living, the music Maffetone creates is best characterized as soothing, therapeutic and transcendental.

"Over 5,000 years ago, Chinese Medicine included music as a therapy, along with other remedies," said Maffetone "Today, we know more about why music can heal. I've measured brain waves to see just how certain types of music can influence our health.

"When we're relaxed, creative, meditating and happy, our brain produces large amounts of alpha waves. In this alpha state, our stress hormones are reduced, our brain functions well, and overall health improves – in minutes! We can use music to trigger alpha waves just by listening."

Not surprisingly, Maffetone's songs have been designed to trigger these very types of "healthy" waves.

Take, for example, the song "Karolina." Breathly harmonies, acoustic strumming and shimmering electric chords combine to form a tasty serving of late-60ish dreamy pop, not unlike the "White Album" era Beatles.

And lest you think "We All Need" is merely the vanity project of a doctor/author with rock star pipe dreams, one look at the legends behind the record might just convince you otherwise.

Offering his expertise and advice was none other than Rick Rubin, perhaps the most sought-after record maker of the past 25 years. Rubin, who has produced classic records by the Beastie Boys, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Slayer and Johnny Cash, became a friend after the producer sought out Maffetone's input via an e-mail.

"Rick has been a major influence on my musical work, serving as a literal sounding board for many of the songs, and helping me to choose the best of my efforts," explained Maffetone.

"Rick wanted help with his health, so we took turns helping each other — me giving health advice and he helping with my songwriting."

The record itself was recorded in Los Angeles and Nashville studios, with such luminaries as the Chili Pepper's John Frusciante (guitar), Audioslave's Brad Wilk (drums) and vocalist Jonny Polonsky. Maffetone takes to the microphone himself on the song "Red Wine Cork" and shares it with Polonsky on "Younger Than Ever," "Marianna" and "Taste My Dream of You."

Maffetone definitely didn't approach "We All Need" from the standpoint of generating hit singles. Rather, he sees songwriting as "one of the most powerful of all my life's wonderful experiences. It starts with a fleeting feeling and then translates into words and music on the guitar, and sometimes the piano. These songs are the essence of life, no more, no less."

In the music world, Maffetone is still a "newbie" when it comes to crafting music. Having started seriously writing songs a mere five years ago, Maffetone has made incredible strides in what many consider to be an extremely demanding venture.

"I realized the music playing in my head all my life was original, and it became a wonderful challenge to get that out," Maffetone explained.

So what's more difficult, making and keeping people healthy or getting an idea from inside his head onto wax?

"That's a great question. The brain uses very different areas for each. Keeping someone healthy involves both art and science, and songwriting is virtually all art. So there is an overlap in the output of each.

"Listening to the 'right' music — the input — can be therapeutic because of the effect on those some areas of the brain. So which is easier? I could write all the time, not so working with patients."

"We All Need" is set for a Dec. 1, 2006 release. Interested parties may visit [www.philmaffetone.com](http://www.philmaffetone.com) to learn more about the record and to hear samples of it.