

Mad River reflects owner's love

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In 2006, Chris Teskey, a resident of Redding, harnessed his years of experience in the music business to launch a record label of his own -- Mad River Records.

Whether it's been his work as a broadcaster -- he's hosted a bluegrass show on WPKN since he was 18 -- or an 18-year career with Green Linnet Records, a current gig as managing director for Playhouse on the Green in Bridgeport, teaching guitar or playing onstage as a member of the southern Connecticut-based bluegrass band Hoe, for most of his adult life, Teskey, 55, has been able combine a passion for music with his career.

Mad River Records is home to Celtic, Scottish, Irish, world, folk and contemporary sounds from around the globe.

"I started with the release of a single CD," said Teskey, "and we'll be releasing our 19th next month."

Teskey went into the venture at a time when new technology was fueling yet another format change in the music industry.

"I knew that digital downloads would be key to the success of the label," he said. "I mean, I can remember when cassettes were the next big thing and everyone said they'd put us out of business.

"I've found a niche within a niche," Teskey said. "We cater to a very unique and targeted audience. But, in some ways, the convenience of downloading tracks from a website has expanded the market. People can explore a bit more, check out a track from an artist before buying a whole album."

Visitors to the Mad River Records website, www.madriverrecords.com, can purchase single tracks for 99 cents each or an entire CD for \$10. Music lovers who use Macintosh computers can download Mad River Records music through iTunes.

Mad River Records showcases a diverse roster of 12 solo artists and bands from all over the world: artists such as Malinky from Scotland; La Musagna of Spain; accordion player Dave Munelley; Brian McNeill, founder of Scotland's The Battlefield Band; and American Irish music ensemble Bua.

Independent music publicist Judith Joiner of [Judith Joiner Publicity](#) said she believes that Mad River provides a valuable service for musicians.

"It's a very unique label," Joiner said. "With all of the changes happening in the music business, labels merging or disappearing altogether, Mad River came onto the scene at a really good time. It's offered an option for traditional music artists that might not be available otherwise. Chris cares about the music and the artists on his label."

