

Latest 10,000 Maniacs

By TIA SWANSON

Jamestown's 10,000 Maniacs are golden.

Sometime between Monday and Tuesday, the band's latest album, *In My Tribe*, sold its 500,000th copy in this country.

In music lingo, that makes it gold.

"It is gold — either today or tomorrow," the band's manager Peter Leak said late Monday morning.

Unfortunately, the 10,000 Maniacs won't be here to celebrate.

The group leaves today for a brief European tour. The tour includes two concerts near Brussels in Belgium. Those will be big-time rock fests, and Leak said the band will be performing with the likes of Sting, INXS, and Bryan Adams.

After a concert on the morning of July 3 in Brussels, the band will hop aboard a plane for a quick trip to Denmark and an evening concert outside Copenhagen. That will make two concerts in one day, Leak said. "It's going to be fun."

The band is due back in this country on July 6, and will perform July 16 at

Darien Lake.

That will just about mark the one-year anniversary of their album, which debuted July 22. The album started off slowly, gaining attention and critical acclaim as the months have progressed.

"I don't think anyone would have expected it to do this well," Leak said. When the album first appeared, vocalist Natalie Merchant told *The Post-Journal* she would be happy if the album sold twice as well as the first one did. That first album sold 70,000 copies.

But Leak said the band has taken its swift rise well. "They worked so long for it ... That's what you always aim at," he said.

Leak attributed the band's success to its members' talent. But he also commended the record company that signed them. "Electra has really committed on a long-term basis. ... They knew that the band (members) were really special," he said.

When radio stations refused to play cuts from the album, Leak said, "Electra just kept going back saying 'You've

got to hear it.'"

Fans will hear more of it by next January or February, Leak said. The band is due back in the studio for its third major-label recording session in September.

Leak said he expects the new album to be in the same mold of the first two.

"The Maniacs sound pretty original," he said. "I think they're definitely part of a new movement. ... It's not all about high power. ... It's about, well about human kinds of things. It's very human, very real."

The Maniacs follow in a movement which includes others who have found fame recently: REM, Suzanne Vega, Tracy Chapman, Leak said. But they are also apart.

"I think that the way that they grew up — away from the main stream" accounts for some of it, he said. "You soak up a sort of a country influence."

And he said the ease and accident of their formation also owes something to their surroundings. There wasn't a lot of good music happening around them, he said.

"That's what threw them all to-

Album Turns To Gold

gether," Leak said, adding that he thinks the band members just wanted to play good music and had little intention of becoming rock stars. "I don't think it started like that. They weren't obviously main-stream."

But now, he said, they are

They've been on *The David Letterman Show*, *The Johnny Carson Show*, *Saturday Night Live*. They've been in *People Magazine* and in *Newsweek*.

And now the band has turned down an offer to be interviewed by the *Rolling Stone*, the ultimate rock magazine.

"*Rolling Stone* wanted to do a piece on the band now," Leak said. But the band didn't like the timing. "They'd taken so long to getting around to doing a piece."

So the band told *Rolling Stone* to wait for the new album. "They'll probably give us good coverage," Leak said.

Until then, the Maniacs seem to be doing well without them.