

Merchant Bids Maniacs Farewell



NATALIE MERCHANT

Natalie Merchant, lead singer of the rock-band 10,000 Maniacs, is leaving the band, according to manager Peter Leak's office in New York City.

Leak was unavailable for comment Friday evening. However, an office staff person did verify a report in Friday's USA Today that Merchant was leaving the band.

Reports about an impending split began circulating a week prior to the band's July 16 concert at Chautauqua Institution.

On July 9 a local radio station and sources at Chautauqua Institution said the band would break up following the Institution show.

Those rumors were dispelled by Leak in The Post-Journal on July 10, where he said the 10,000 Maniacs, who are all Jamestown natives, would remain together.

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Bass player Steve Gustafson told reporter with The Post-Journal on July 16, the band planned to take a hiatus after the last show, but he, too, dispelled any rumors of a break-up.

"You can't believe anyone but us. When we decide to stop we might not tell anyone," Gustafson was quoted as saying in the story.

He did say, however, "we are not going to last forever. It's going to end sometime, but we don't know when. We are going to shift into a different gear."

The band's last performance was a benefit concert at New York City's Madison Square Garden July 26.

The Maniacs had been on a coast-to-coast tour since November 1992, and the official end of that tour came with the Chautauqua Institution show.