

Local comedians laugh it up on new streaming show

BY IAN MCCABE
Special to The Herald

The virus outbreak may have shut down the comedy clubs, but it hasn't silenced two local stand-up comedians.

Cory Michaelis and Andrew Rivers are telling jokes on their new live streaming show, aptly named "Inside Jokes."

"Inside Jokes" streams on Facebook and YouTube every Friday at 7 p.m. The comics open each episode with a comedy spin on current events, in the style of late-night TV shows. Then they perform material that they've written together that week. The first episode streamed March 20.

"We needed something to keep the juices flowing," said Michaelis, 39. "We had been writing jokes together and just riffing off each other, like friends do. Andrew had the idea of turning that into an internet show. We came up with a name and a format, and a few days later we were streaming. It was a natural lead-in from what we were doing."

The duo also brings on a guest comedian, such as Gabriel Rutledge and Kermet Apio, to be interviewed and do a 30-minute set. Viewers can interact with the hosts, leaving feedback and making requests via the live chat.

"It's been a great experience and helped us market ourselves," said Rivers, 35. "It lets us receive feedback and build up an online presence. Plus, it's something to do to pass the time right now."

Michaelis and Rivers have both been doing stand-up comedy for 11 years. They've sold-out shows at the Historic Everett Theatre, Maltby Pizza & Pasta in Snohomish and At Large Brewing & Taproom in Everett. They've toured not just America, but also the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany and Denmark.

They each have recorded a Dry Bar comedy special, which have garnered 55 million views on Facebook and YouTube between them.

Comedy is how they met and became good friends.

"It was at a show at a barbecue joint in south Everett, when we



HOLLY BEAUPRE

Comedians Andrew Rivers and Cory Michaelis are the hosts of the "Inside Jokes" live streaming comedy show.

If you stream

Comedians Andrew Rivers and Cory Michaelis host "Inside Jokes" every Friday at 7 p.m. on Facebook and YouTube. Watch the show at www.youtube.com/andrewjivers and www.facebook.com/corymichaeliscomedy. If you'd like to donate to the show, send funds via PayPal to insidejokescomedy@gmail.com or via Venmo at @andrewjivers and @corymichaelis.

were both starting out," Michaelis said. "There were probably 10 comedians. We each did a few minutes, and it just went from there. We became best friends."

Michaelis, of Everett, hosts the Everett Comedy Night at Emory's on Silver Lake on second Sundays. He also teaches a comedy class at Shawn O'Donnell's restaurant in

Everett twice a year.

Rivers, of Seattle, is a frequent guest on "The Bob Rivers Show," a podcast presented by the former Seattle radio DJ of the same name, who also happens to be his dad.

Rivers always knew he was funny — he can still picture his dad's proud face after he gave a hilarious speech at his brother's

wedding. But it wasn't until he was laid off from his marketing job at PBJS in 2009 that he decided to pursue a career in comedy.

"I wasn't making much at first," Rivers said. "Every few months, I drove around the country doing shows and lived out of my car. It helped me make a lot of connections, and when I was able, I was asked to headline."

"I now make a good middle-class income from it, but it took 11 years to get there."

Michaelis was a teacher and a coach at Cascade High School in Everett for 12 years before becoming a comedian. He treated stand-up like a hobby. Then he quit his job at Cascade in 2016 to do it full time.

"I was good at teaching, so it wasn't easy to give up," Michaelis said. "But I had a sense that my life would be better, and I was supposed to be doing comedy."

"Inside Jokes" has allowed the two friends to entertain their fans — even during a quarantine. Each episode gets hundreds of views, and their followers make donations to help keep the show running.

"We have awesome local headliners, and some of their fans watch, too," Michaelis said. "They're our friends, too, and we're piggybacking on each other's followings. If we're not doing live shows and making money, then we can help each other this way."