

# The Berkshire Eagle

## Sarah Rayner named artist of the month in Folk Talk magazine

Pittsfield High School graduate gains national attention

*By Derek Gentile*

[dgentile@berkshireeagle.com](mailto:dgentile@berkshireeagle.com) @DerekGentile on Twitter

POSTED: 02/12/2015 12:31:33 PM EST

UPDATED: 02/12/2015 12:31:33 PM EST

**PITTSFIELD** >> *Singer/songwriter Sarah Rayner admitted she was "over the moon" at being named the artist of the month for February by Folk Talk magazine.*

*"It's exciting," said Rayner, a 2013 Pittsfield High School graduate. "It's an honor. The recognition is great."*

*Folk Talk is a national folk music magazine that follows national folk groups and artists. Every month, the magazine features an up-and-coming artist.*

*Many people in the Berkshires remember Rayner as one of the county's great high school softball pitchers over a few years ago. She pitched for PHS and was The Eagle's county co-MVP in 2012.*

*Rayner doesn't play softball anymore, in part because her muse is music now and in part because she just doesn't have a lot of time.*

*"In high school, softball kind of defined me, but it wasn't really what I was about," she said. "I just played so much softball by my senior year. Just before that year, I was playing in, like, five summer leagues. I had a game almost every night. It was really exhausting."*

*Rayner is quick to emphasize that she still has fond memories of the bonds she forged with some of her softball teammates.*

*"But music was becoming an emerging part of me," she said.*

*After some introspection, Rayner decided she would prefer to concentrate on music, rather than softball in college.*

*"And if people had a problem with it, well that was fine," she said.*

*The Westfield State sophomore is a double major in psychology and communications and carries a 3.3 GPA. In addition, she plays gigs throughout the Westfield area. But not just music shows. She also does stand up comedy. And she writes her own songs, more than 1,000 since she started more than decade ago by her own count.*

*Some of those songs are slated for her latest album, which she hopes will be mixed and mastered at Monk Music Studios in Long island.*

*"That's all preliminary, right now," she said, adding that she is presently seeking funding for that project.*

*Rayner has been writing songs for more than 10 years, but she actually started performing live when she was 14. She plays the violin, viola, piano, ukulele and guitar. One of the more intriguing aspects of recording in a professional studio, she said, is the prospect of possibly working with other musicians to back her up.*

*"That will depend on how much money I can raise," she said. "But it's something I'm exciting about if I can make it happen."*

*Contact Derek Gentile at 413-496-6251.*