

DROPKICK MURPHYS' WICKED GOOD ALBUM

BOSTON Herald

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Coming Monday

(BAY) STATE OF MATRIMONY

Showtime airs a 90-minute documentary that explores same-sex marriages in Massachusetts. Is it worth your time?

'REVELATIONS'

Mark Oliver Everett, frontman of the Eels, talks about his new 33-song, two-CD set 'Blinking Lights and Other Revelations.'

GETTING THEIR KICKS

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the edge

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Feel the marimba

Fluttr Effect, right, Count Zero, the Cautions and Humanwine play upstairs at the Middle East, 472 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge. 9 p.m. \$9. 18-plus. 617-864-EAST.

Rock is a battlefield

Pat Benatar and Neil Giraldo play the Bank of America Pavilion, 290 Northern Ave., Boston. 7:30 p.m. \$28.50-\$38.50. www.bankofamericapavilion.com



Murphys law

Hub's Dropkick rockers out to prove nice guys finish first

Don't let the high-decibel barroom anthems and neck tattoos fool you. The Dropkick Murphys are, as one of their new songs puts it, a "Wicked Sensitive Crew."

The boys in the band celebrated the release of their sensational new album "The Warrior's Code" with a party at Game On! at Fenway Park recently. There, they let slip what their Boston fans have known all along: Beneath their rough-and-tumble punk exteriors lie sweet and humble hearts.

"We're comfortable in the fact that we are sensitive dudes and if we were going to start a gang, it would be one where you shared your feelings," singer-bassist Ken Casey said.

"And do each other's nails," guitarist-mandolinist Tim Brennan added with a laugh.

Inspired by out-of-town incidents when the bandmates were perceived as thugs,

"W.S.C." jokes about crying at "Rocky II."

"You have all these bands out there that are selling millions of records that would

kill for street cred and for people to think they're tough, and you've got a band like us that sometimes gets mistaken as tough guys when we're really just regular guys, family guys and pacifist completely," Casey said.

That regular-guy sensibility pervades "The Warrior's Code," which features a winning blend of humor, pathos and punk rock firepower from Casey, Brennan, singer Al Barr, piper Scruffy Wallace, guitarists Marc Orell and James Lynch and drummer Matt Kelly.

While the septet's previous releases have

hardly been throwaways, "Code" is its most touching and weighty to date.

From the cover photo of Lowell-born boxing champ "Irish" Mickey Ward to the songs for fallen friends and heroes to the jubilant Red Sox anthem "Tessie," "Code" encapsulates the Murphys' ethos of fellowship, devotion to principle and the mighty catharsis of a well-placed shout.

Of the Ward photo, Casey said, "It just seemed like a really powerful, motivational image."

There are many audio equivalents on the record. The beautifully weary Eric Bogle ballad "Green Fields of France" examines the cost of war. And furious yet heart-wrenching rocker "Last Letter Home" excerpts actual letters exchanged between a local soldier and his family.

Balancing the darker numbers are a raft

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**Sarah
RODMAN**



STAFF PHOTOS BY MATTHEW WEST

TOUCHY-FEELY: The Dropkick Murphys, top, fete their new CD with fans Justin Welch, top left, Marisa Fumicello and Brooke Barbier. Singer Al Barr, above, signs a copy for Nicole Boudrow.

Dropkick Murphys: 'Wicked' nice guys

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of soon-to-be singalongs about bawdy babes and blue-collar guys pulling up their bootstraps.

"Our records just try to encompass what normal life is like," Casey said. "Hopefully there's more happy times than sad times, but inevitably you're going to get some bad times and if you're a guy that has nothing but bad times and you listen to the band, maybe we can help you with a lighthearted song."