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Release the Captives bring Rory Tyler Band to GWU, raise money to fight child labor



Photo courtesy of rorytyerband.com.

By: Mallory Turner

Chicago-based Rory Tyler Band, performed in Dover Theater on Wednesday, Nov. 18 to help raise money for an organization devoted to help rescuing children from child labor conditions in Ghana. Release the Captives, a Gardner-Webb club that focuses on raising awareness for modern day slavery and human trafficking, hosted and planned for the band to come to Boiling Springs as part of Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.

Rory Tyler Band performed a 12 song set list for students and community members. The band consisted of Danny Olmeda on bass, Dave Verlee on guitar, Brian Herman on the cello, Dave Bedell on drums and Rory Tyler as singer. The five musicians kept the crowd entertained throughout the concert with their energetic dancing and a demanding stage presence, causing some audience members to get out of their seats and dance. With crowd coaxing, they finished off the night with a cover of Bruno Mars's hit song, "Uptown Funk."

A local preacher named Matt Orth, who Tyler introduced as a mentor and very good friend, also made an appearance on Wednesday and talked about Release the Captives and their work. He said he is glad to see student "moving from awareness to action."

All the proceeds earned from ticket sales went to an organization based in Ghana called Challenging Heights.

This organization, started by a victim of child slavery who went on to get an education, rescues children who are in child labor situations and gives them safety, rehabilitation and an education.

Chris Coffey, who attended the concert, described the band as very talented, with “lots of energy and stage presence.” Sarah Moxely said that she thought they did a great job and sounded even better live. Rory Tyler Band’s performance also made an impression on Michael Nunn, who decided to buy one of the band’s albums from their merchandise table after the concert.



Photo courtesy of rorytyerband.com

Verlee, the lead guitarist, said that the venue was one of the greatest the band has played in. He said that by raising money for an important cause, Release the Captives was fulfilling “the Lord’s work.”

“Unfortunately, people don’t want to come to an event like this unless it’s flashy and awesome. I guess we’re in that position to provide that flash as the band,” said Tyler, lead singer and former Boiling Springs resident. “I’m grateful. I love music and I love working on behalf of causes that are so important.”