

## Arts and Entertainment

### Making the Band/ Part 1

# Going in a new direction: The Athletes

Jennifer Menster  
Pilot web editor

You've seen their flyers around campus. You've heard their name announced during Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) meetings. And, maybe, you've seen them perform at your church or youth rally.

But there is a lot you don't know about The Athletes.

The band is made up of four Gardner-Webb students: junior Josh Reich, seniors Dan McClellan and Nick Jaeger and graduate student Jason Blanton.

The group came together about two years ago when several of the guys were goofing around in the dorm playing blues music. For the last year and a half, The Athletes have led praise and worship at FCA meetings.

"We all love music, and we all are kind of learning the

#### What's to Come

March 22:  
The Athletes

April 5:  
Tell All Are One

April 19:  
Circle 475

May 3:  
Two Tattoos

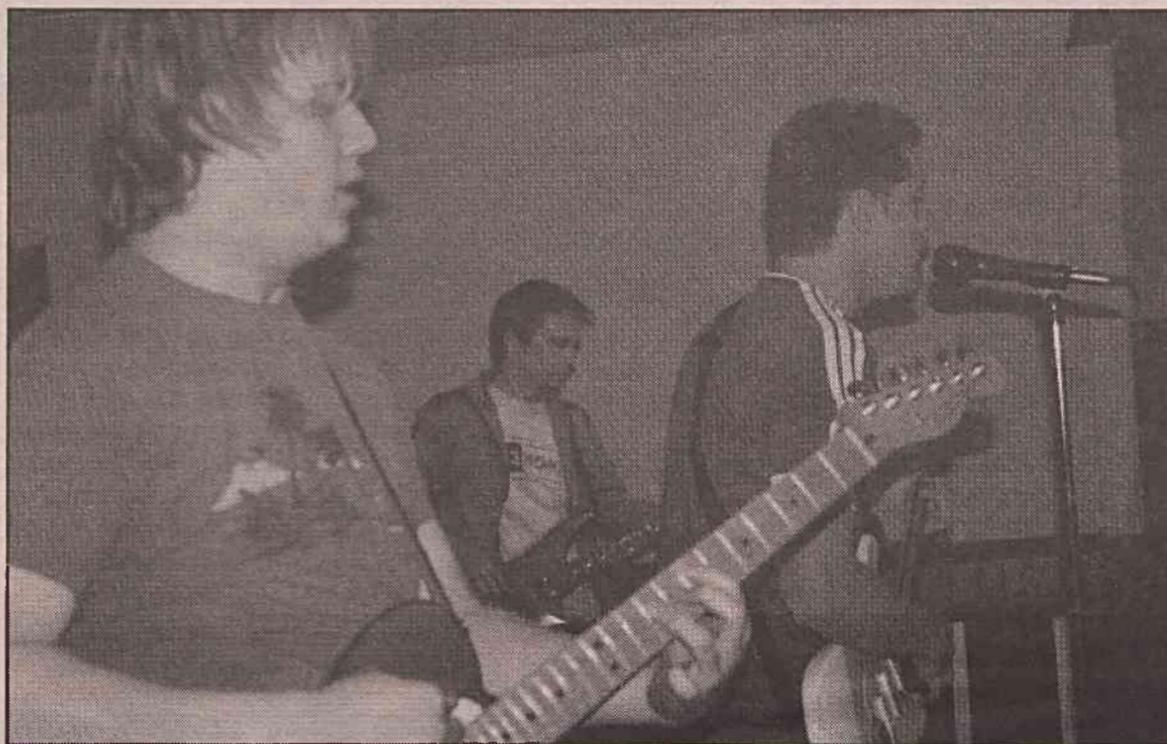


Photo by Katy Bellew

L-R-Nick Jaeger, Sr., Dan McClellan, Sr., Josh Reich, Jr. all practice music for FCA on Tuesday night at a local church.

music," said Reich.

Starting the band was not easy. Jaeger had previously been a member of a band. He had experience playing lead guitar. Reich and McClellan had a strong love for the music and desire to learn it. Reich, a self-taught guitarist, had experience singing at praise services, and McClellan wanted a chance to use his musical talent as a way of expression. But, the

band still needed a drummer.

"The main part of forming a band is networking," said Jaeger. "You need to know who plays what and who plays well."

That's when Blanton came into the picture. Blanton also had previous experience in a band. "We clicked," said Reich. "From there things just happened."

Once the four guys got

together, they had to decide upon a name. Since none of the four guys are athletes, but they were performing for FCA and had friends who are athletes, they decided to call themselves The Athletes.

Since then, The Athletes have played at youth rallies and other churches. They released one CD at a FCA meeting last year.

Now, however, the guys

are going in a different direction. While they are not abandoning The Athletes, the guys have come up with a new name for themselves—Direct LINE.

The music of Direct LINE will be mostly rock-n-roll. The songs will be both secular and spiritual and will be written as the group feels led to write.

"Our inspirations are bigger than being on campus," said McClellan, who along with Jaeger will graduate in May.

Future plans for Direct LINE include a concert in the Millennium Playhouse at the end of March. They will release a four-song CD entitled "In it up to here."

Direct LINE can be heard on the Gardner-Webb radio station, and in a month, Direct LINE will have a song on the radio station's compilation CD.

As for now, the guys will continue their praise and worship music as The Athletes during FCA meetings and concentrate hard on Direct LINE.

## Music group 'Truth' offers community concert

Emily Killian  
Pilot staff

About 150 attended a concert by the group Truth on Wednesday March 20 in the Dover Theater. SEA brought the band here as a part of their farewell tour after over 30 years of ministry.

The group formed in 1971. Since then, they have recorded 60 albums and have had numerous number one hits in the Christian music industry.

Members of the group have gone on to join other groups, such as Avalon.

Truth's members have been raising money for the American Leprosy Mission, an organization that has given medical care

to 72,000 children from around the world suffering from leprosy.

They hope to build a surgery center for kids in Africa called the Truth Hospital as a legacy to the group.

The band has gone through two generations of musicians in some cases. Singer Jackie Vandermaten's parents were group members in the 1970s, as she is today.

Truth has gained a solid following over the years, as was evidenced by the large community turnout for the concert. Several local church groups attended the event, as did students from North Greenville College and GWU.

"They're a well-known

group that gets a lot of publicity," said Brian Maiers, SEA Chair.

Campus Ministries Intern Catherine Helzin told about attending a Truth concert in the 90s.

"The last songs were my favorite part," she said of Wednesday's concert.

Despite the group's popularity, the GWU concert was the first time many students encountered the group's music.

"I had never heard of Truth before," said senior Sabrina Siegrist. "I was very impressed and I thought the concert did a great job informing people of who Truth is."

SGA Representative Jennie Jones, who started out the

evening with a knock-knock joke, introduced the band.

The group was around the campus for part of the day, and ate lunch in the cafeteria. "You all really took care of us today with the food and the facility," said Vandermaten. "Jennie Jones really helped out a lot today."

During the concert, the group sang songs from each generation of their ministry, as well as several unrecorded songs.

They showed videos of activities the group was involved in during each generation and highlighted Vandermaten's mother's fight with a brain tumor. Both of her parents shared their enthusiasm

about her becoming a member of the group.

Other band members shared personal testimonies about their experiences before joining the band and prayed with members of the audience.

"There was a lot of history," said Carrie Rogers, a student who attended the concert. "It was cool."

After the concert, the singers stayed around to talk with members of the audience and to sign autographs for fans.

After over 9,000 concerts, Truth will be playing their last on June 16 in Nashville, Tenn. Tickets can be purchased at [www.itickets.com](http://www.itickets.com)