

Rip_Chord

Men's a cappella group becomes more complex, plans for second CD

Ashley Barnas
Senior Reporter

Midnight Meals, a generally routine event for Rip_Chord, showcased three new songs, a touching moment for an alumnus and an exciting announcement for Elon's all-male a cappella group: plans are in the works for a second CD.

The group came out with its first CD, "Resisting A_Rest," last spring, but since then the group has continued working toward musical growth.

"I think the group's come a long way in the musical sense," sophomore and Rip_Chord president Chris Kilgore said. "Now we're not just a random group of guys singing 'Stacey's Mom' and 'Hey Juliet.' I think we're a legitimate a cappella group, and a force to be reckoned with."

When sophomore Dave Kerman approached the microphone to sing the first few haunting notes of a new song, "Danny Boy," the usual noisy ambiance of Irazu fell dead as silence stole over the audience.

A music education major, Kerman was in jazz choir in high school. He said "Danny Boy" is the only professionally arranged song the group has right now. Though it's much slower than Rip_Chord's usual song choices, it's a contemporary arrangement. Arrangements have gotten more complex in general.

"All of our arrangements used to be four parts and now it's five or six parts," senior Patrick Lane said. "It seems minor but it's a big difference."

Freshman Connor Stirland added that since there are fewer people singing each part, every individual in the group has to hold his own. Everyone is trying harder because of it, he said. And each member knows multiple parts to one song.

Stirland has been singing his entire life and was in an a cappella group during his junior and senior years of high school. He wanted to be in a band in college, but ended up arranging one a cappella song senior year and loved it. Stirland saw Rip_Chord on a visit to campus during pre-orientation weekend.

"It was somewhere in between 'Chasing Cars' and 'Disney Medley' and I was like, 'I want to be part of this group,'" Stirland said. He talked to some of the

guys who have now graduated and "decided there were some sweet bros in the group."

Stirland is a music technology and business double major. Kilgore is also a business major who plays guitar and said he would love to do something with music for the rest of his life.

Kilgore was in a men's a cappella group as a high school senior but did not sing before then. He heard about Rip_Chord when he came to orientation and met now-senior Chris Beeson, the music director at the time.

"Basically, I wanted to be a part of a group of guys that can have a lot of fun and sing," Kilgore said.

The difference between the group now and the group that founded Rip_Chord three-and-a-half years ago is "a lot of young blood, young talent that hit the ground running," junior Greg Flis said.

The group still goofs around a lot, they said, but that never stops them from getting their job done. At the beginning of this year, they were learning five new songs, three of which debuted at Midnight Meals March 18.

"Chasing Cars" made a comeback as a spur of the moment encore. Tom Boyd, who graduated in 2009, rode in on his motorcycle to see the group's Midnight Meals performance. He had no idea he would be invited on stage for the encore song.

"There's just something in my eyes," he said when he was called up to the microphone. "I'm not crying."

The lyrics "I don't quite know how to say how I feel" could not have been more appropriate for how Boyd was feeling. He said his legs were shaking as he experienced stage fright all over again.

"These days will never change for us at all," Boyd sang.

"Words cannot express," Boyd said after the performance. "I can't even say anything."

With a concert coming up April 10, and the promise of a new CD, Rip_Chord is looking to help the five seniors go out with a bang.

"This is the last of the founding members in the group, so we're really trying to put on a good spring show," Kilgore said. "This whole semester we've been working toward that to kind of honor them."



Senior Dan Rickershauser and junior Greg Flis sing a new version of "Real Men of Genius" involving the railroad tunnel underpass.



Freshman Aaron Summers sings Bon Jovi's "It's My Life."



Senior Chris Beeson sings "Runaway" by Love and Theft as part of a trio.

PHOTOS BY ASHLEY BARNAS | Photographer



Congratulations to Elon University's Phi Beta Kappa 2010 Inductees

Phi Beta Kappa Society, founded in 1776, is the nation's oldest & most prestigious academic honor society, and has for more than two centuries fostered the principles of freedom of inquiry & liberty of thought & expression. The letters ΦΒΚ represent the Greek initials of the society's motto, "Love of learning is the guide of life." Elon University is honored to shelter the Eta Chapter, to be established on April 13, 2010.

Carly Erin Altizer
Jennifer Leigh Batchelor
Alexandra Megan Bauernschub
Ryan Matthew Bleam
Amanda Kathryn Brown
Devon Nicole Brown
James Dorsey Burns
Margeaux Rose Corby
Parker Conrad Cramer
Kelsey Christine Davis
Ashley Morrow Day
Lorelle Marie Dennis
Danielle Nicole Dufour
Kimberly Brooke Duggins
Katrina Jane Folsom
Alexandra Laine Ford

Sarah Catherine Foushee
Jordan Leigh Frederick
Melissa Katherine Gaisser
Sabine Martina Gempel
Cynthia Anne Goodson
Benjamin Carey Goodwin
Roberta Jo Hawthorne
Grace Anna Helms
Eva Christine Jorgensen-Graham
Amanda Danielle Kennison
Elisabeth Paige Kensrue
Carolyn Marie Kurtz
Jonathan Smith Mahlandt
Katherine Leigh Meyer
Kelsey Anne Miller
Paul Stephen Mirek

Mariana McLean Rohrbach Poole
Monica Deshay Poteat
Nichole Marie Rawlings
Julia Elinor Roberts
Patricia Michele Serdy
Daniel Marshall Sharpe Jr.
Kristine Elizabeth Silvestri
Joseph Allen Simmons
Martha McNeill Smart
Heather Nicole Smith
Avra Weisberg Stackpole
Amanda Rose Stampilis
Jenna Danielle Stout
Hannah Elizabeth Williams
Amanda Brittany Wilson

Foundation Members:
Dr. Leo Lambert
Dr. Steven House

Only 10% of arts & sciences graduates at 10% of US colleges & universities are selected for Phi Beta Kappa. Members exemplify intellectual integrity, tolerance, & a broad range of academic interests and include 17 US Presidents & 38 US Supreme Court Justices.