

Rip_Chord rocks campus with V-Day a cappella grams

Kit Arbuckle
Reporter

This is the third year that the boys of Rip_Chord set up a table in Moseley to sell Valentine's Day A Cappella Grams. For a fee of \$10, one of eight songs could be chosen to be performed for a friend, significant other, coworker or anyone else to whom they wished to spread some love. According to junior Rip_Chord president Chris Kilgore, they'll sing to "anyone, anywhere on campus."

This year, the songs for sale were "Hollywood," "I Want It That Way," "Lay 'Em Down," "Can You Feel the Love Tonight," "Good Old A Cappella," "Will You Be There," "Down" and "Teenage Dream."

People buy a cappella grams for their roommates, their suitemates, their boyfriends and girlfriends, Octagon workers and sometimes even for a member within Rip_Chord.

"They're popular with sorority girls for their Littles," sophomore Chase Pitman said.

Rip_Chord started delivering the grams in the spring of 2008 by popular demand.

"We are just continuing the tradition," Kilgore said.

Most of their grams are delivered to dorm rooms, but they began their rounds on Friday with two deliveries in Octagon.

Freshman Tyler Johnson led Rip_Chord with his solo in "Lay 'Em Down,"

"When (Brokaw) got down on one knee I almost died. I thought it was wonderful. It was the perfect song."

-Lauren King
Junior

sung to Octagon employee Lynne McGee. They met when McGee worked at Danieley Center earlier this year, and Johnson visited her frequently after she transferred to Octagon.

"He told me he had a surprise," McGee said, "but I had no idea what it was."

The second gram was delivered to junior Lauren King, a head staffer at New Student Orientation, from her fellow head staffers. Rip_Chord sang "I Want It That Way," with a solo by sophomore Bert Brokaw who, incidentally, lives across the hall from King.

"When (Brokaw) got down on one knee I almost died," said King. "I thought it was wonderful. It was the perfect song."

Both Octagon performances were met with enthusiastic applause from onlookers.

The money they make goes toward producing the group's new CD, travel expenses, new uniforms and other club expenses, but Kilgore said they don't do it for the money. According to him, the money's necessary, but the grams are a

unique way to connect with their fans on campus.

The 15 members of Rip_Chord deliver their grams during Valentine's weekend — this year, Friday, Feb. 11 and Saturday, Feb. 12 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

A few years ago, they sang "Milkshake" in Brown & Co., the predecessor of Town Table restaurant. "There were parents there," senior Greg Flis said. "It got awkward."

The person who buys the gram fills out a sign-up sheet with the name, time, date and location of their recipient. "If you buy an a cappella gram, you're responsible for where they're going to be," Kilgore said.

Rip_Chord's next Midnight Meals performance is scheduled for March 3, and their spring show for April 9. They also have an upcoming CD release that Kilgore said is the culmination of the last two years.

MORE ONLINE: STYLE

Video: Watch Rip_Chord deliver their special Valentine treats.
<http://bit.ly/TPOripchord>
Maddie Carlin and Katy Steele, Multimedia Contributors

FASHION COLUMN

Out and about: discoveries in the Burlington area



Alexandra Johnston
Fashion Columnist

One of the best things about fashion is having something that no one else has. But in our increasingly global world it is getting more

difficult to be original. Instead of hitting up the mall for something new, try looking to the past. Shopping secondhand is a great way to get unique items at a reasonable price.

It is no secret that Burlington, N.C., isn't really the fashion capital of the world, but it has many hidden treasures to offer. Take the time to get out of the 'bubble' and check out these great thrift, antique and consignment shops in the area.

NestIt might seem a bit out of place among the drab colors, but this bright blue house-turned-shop is a for the eclectic. Nest is a vintage revival boutique specializing in furniture and home goods, but it also has cute gifts. Located just past downtown Burlington, Nest is a great place to get already refurbished vintage items. Since the repairs have been made, the pricing can be higher than a thrift shop, but the quality of the items reflects that. Their sister store, The Cottage at Nest, sits right next door and houses a variety of small clothing items, jewelry and gifts. Both stores feel like a dream, with lights strung from the ceilings and the walls decked in light pinks and creams. (nestnc.blogspot.com).

Granddaddy's Antiques—Lauded as the largest antique mall in the Carolinas, Granddaddy's has everything from furniture to assorted novelties. But among the stalls of seemingly random items are shelves full of vintage and costume jewelry, scarves and accessories. Ranging in price, these pieces are great additions to any wardrobe. Vintage jewelry can bring new life to old outfits when paired with basics or used to enhance an evening ensemble. Colorful silk and cotton scarves are great as loosely tied headbands or as an adornment tied around a basic bag. (www.granddaddys.com).

Salvation Army Family Store—Not only does the Salvation Army Family Store benefit a good cause, but its racks are brimming with changing stock of men's and women's clothing. Since the clothing here is donation based, there isn't a fashion filter on what is good and what doesn't need to see the light of day again. But, if you feel up to it, some of the best finds can be had here. Try looking for shirts in larger sizes and cinching them with belts; just make sure that the fit in the shoulders is right. (260 W Davis St).

Secondhand shopping can be time-consuming and tedious. Since there is usually only one item of each, sizing can be difficult and less convenient than shopping at the mall. But the payoff of having a unique look is worth it every time someone praises it.

WSOE CD REVIEW

★★★★★

Decemberists revert to roots with new British-folk, alternative rock-based album

Hunter Ertel
Reviewer

It's the late '60's and the British folk revival is in full bloom. Troubadours are descending on the towns from the woodlands singing the sea shanties and labor songs of yesteryear; combining the messages of living simply and in harmony with ones fellow man with more decade specific messages like tune in, turn on, drop out or make love, not war.

Fast-forward 20 or so years and the future seeds of the alternative music movement were budding under the mask of college rock, with bands like R.E.M. and The Smiths getting airtime at college radio stations as a new generation was casting off the burden of their parents aesthetic tastes.

Both genres have been long-time influences for The Decemberists' front man and master wordsmith Colin Meloy, who displays strong affinity for both these traditions on his new album "The King Is Dead."

Those who follow The Decemberists will notice a strong connection between "The King is Dead" and their earlier works like "Castaways and Cutouts" or the five-song EP. After wandering through the dark forests of prog-rock and sprawling cities of pop, Meloy has returned to the romantic valley of folk.

Born in the rustic hills of Montana, Meloy can croon of a barony of ivy or an ancient riverbed so as to make the bones of the bucolic poets of old



The Decemberists new album "The King is Dead" is a mix of British folk and classic college rock influences and connects strongly with its previous releases.

rattle. The same sort of pastoral moaning is familiar in his pre-Decemberists band, Tarkio, which achieved some mild success on college radio stations across Montana.

Both the college-rock and British-folk-revival influences can be seen on the album's guest musicians. Appalachian and Bluegrass songstress Gillian Welch lends her voice to the single "Down by the Water," and Peter Buck, guitarist for R.E.M., strums his 12-string for three of "The King is Dead's" songs.

For such beautiful pastoral music, the theme of annihilation and terrible misfortune - a subject that runs deep in all The Decemberists' music - remains

strong. "Calamity Song" tells of two young people fighting in the war at the end of times as the world falls apart, and although it seems the Decemberists have taken a break from concept albums, this theme seems to be explored further in songs like "This is Why We Fight" and "Rox in the Box."

With such dark undertones, the melody of the album is mostly up-tempo, suggesting the old Sun-Tzu saying that it is the facing of annihilation that makes people strive for greatness, and the prospect of destruction that leads to success.

This album seems pretty optimistic about the end of all things.