

# The Spectator

Volume 83, Issue 2

Concordia University Chicago - River Forest, Illinois

September 14, 2007

## Strive concert promotes global awareness

by Ruth Pranschke

Strive, a Christian rock band based in Chicago, performed on Concordia's campus for the third year in a row last Friday. This time the format was different. In past years, Strive has been known for their presentation of the "Rock Gospel of Jesus Christ." This year they set aside that particular production to try something new: the Coffee and Conversations Tour. Caribou provided the coffee while the conversation was constructed around awareness and action regarding the AIDS epidemic in Africa and other social concerns.

The evening began with the musical offerings of Tiffany Thompson, who incidentally is also sister to the lead singer of Strive. Her set was followed by Shuree, an act influenced by soul, modern rock, and social justice. Strive took the stage following these two performances and engaged the crowd with their brand of progressive rock music, as well as a collage of images and lyrics projected on a screen behind their setup. Derick Thompson, the band's lead singer, described their new format as the "prequel" to the Rock Gospel. Strive is in the process of doing a trilogy, and last Friday's show demonstrated the period of time before the fall of man into sin through artistic and musical means.

"We felt that with the Rock Gospel we were reaching a lot of Christians, but we want to hit a different demographic," explained Thompson. "Christians have the ability to change culture by living out." Their hope with the new Coffee and Conversations format is to do just this.

Attendees of the event were encouraged to bring their laptops and other wireless devices so they could register on a site called Razoo, which is similar to Myspace. Unlike Myspace, however, Razoo promotes taking action in social causes and world issues instead of acting as a forum for individuals to promote themselves. Those with laptops were urged to join Strive's Razoo network and build up a community for Concordia in



The Christian rock band Strive stopped at Concordia on their "Coffee and Conversations" Tour to play a concert in the Cougar Den to encourage social action. It also featured a photo exhibit titled "girl" by Jimi Allen. (Photo courtesy of Elliot Small)

support of the Friends of Mercy, a cause CUC will be supporting all year.

Friends of Mercy is an LC-MS organization that operates in Kenya and works with two main groups: children who are suffering from the consequences of the AIDS epidemic and women who have been the victims of female genital mutilation. Friends of Mercy has partnered with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Kenya and sets up orphanages and provides food and education.

You can also check out the organizations that Strive supports on the band's Razoo. Strive operates Rock Gospel Ministries, which is a non-profit organization dedicated to communicating Christ through the arts, and eventually doing mission work in Africa. Another organization that Strive promotes through Razoo is Tom's Shoes.

The basic premise is that whenever you buy a pair of shoes from this group, they will donate the exact same pair of shoes to a person who has never owned shoes before in his or her entire life.

In the back of the Cougar Den, a picture gallery was set up, simply entitled "girl." The pictures were taken by Jimi Allen and they portray several women from Thailand. The purpose of the gallery is to raise awareness of the sex trade in that part of the world. For many women, the only way to make money is to sell their body. The photographs capture the beauty of women, and also emphasize the higher standards by which they should be treated and should treat themselves.

Jenna Bremer and Benjamin Parviz, both members of Concordia's Spiritual Life team, were instrumental in the

creation of this event.

"It is important to hold things like this on campus because it's easy to get caught up in our own little Concordia bubble and not realize what's going on in the outside world," explained Bremer. "I really liked the setting and the atmosphere. Next year we could focus on one thing a little more, but I am really happy with the way it turned out."

Sarah Steiner, student at Concordia, attended the concert and was also pleased with the concert:

"I thought the music was really great, and I liked the siblings singing together. I also liked how it was down in the Cougar Den this year."

Visit [\[www.friendsofmercy.org\]](http://www.friendsofmercy.org) and [\[www.razoo.com/strive\]](http://www.razoo.com/strive) for more information and to find out how to get involved. ♦

### Sneak-a-peek of this issue

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Has Barry Bonds and steroid use corrupted Major League Baseball? A CUC student gives his opinions on this controversy and corruption in sports.

An update on Concordia's men's soccer team and its new head coach. Also, see how the Cross Country team did at their first home meet.

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There is a new art teacher on campus. Find out who she is and why she came here.

## Spiritual Life offers several mission trips this school year

by Michelle Brauer

This year Concordia is offering numerous mission opportunities in the US and around the world. Chances to work with kids at Vacation Bible School, help build houses, volunteer in a soup kitchen, or care for people in a health clinic are all being offered by Ministry to the World for this 2007-2008 school year.

The first trip this year is the Beautiful Feet Mission Conference. This annual meeting of students will take place this year at Concordia University Portland from November 1-4. The cost of

attendance is \$350 at most, including transportation, meals, and housing. As an attendee of this conference, you can sign up for other mission trips, meet other students from around the country, take advantage of workshops, and listen to speakers.

Students interested will also have the opportunity to spend New Years Eve on a Mexican beach. Pastor Pedro Lopez of Wisconsin is organizing a trip to Puerto Vallarta from December 26 to January 11 at a cost of around \$850. In Mexico, students will help families build houses

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