

“Love is the Movement: A Philanthropic Study”

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Introduction

Anyone that knows my personality likely realizes that I am passionate about the music industry to the point of basically being obsessed. I am constantly listening to new music, promoting bands, going to concerts, and writing about bands. Another favorite activity of mine is networking in the music industry. I have contact information for numerous popular bands in the country and discuss music with them regularly.

When I am not devoting my time to talking about music, promoting music, listening to music, or reading about music, I'm spending my time designing graphics on the computer and taking digital photographs.

Something that has always irked me, and my friends who love music as much as I do, is that the city of Bemidji rarely schedules quality concerts. Sure, we get well-known jazz musicians, pianists, and choirs, but for people like me who enjoy independent pop-rock, there are very few venues in the region. It seems as if Northern Minnesota is always forgotten when bands are arranging concerts. As someone who is so passionate about music, I find it very unfortunate that many people from the Bemidji area have probably never had the opportunity to see awesome bands in concert, simply because it usually requires a special trip to the Twin Cities or further to catch a quality show.

One day in the Spring Semester of 2008 I was talking with fellow Bemidji State students Dev Sarkar and Bob Stein. We were frustrated and bemoaning the fact that our favorite bands rarely ever schedule shows in Bemidji. One thing led to another and we came upon the idea of setting up a concert ourselves. None of us were in it to make a profit in any way off of the concert, so immediately we thought it would be wonderful to have the event take the form of a benefit concert. With all of our contacts in the music industry, we knew we were perfectly capable of arranging this concert and showing the Bemidji area a good time, while also helping out a non-profit organization or two.

After we had decided upon arranging a concert, the next thing we needed to decide was whom exactly we wanted the concert to benefit. For most people this would be a very difficult decision. Rightfully so, as there are so many worthy groups and organizations that we could assist with the funds raised from the event. For us, however, it was not too difficult to select a primary organization, as Dev Sarkar and I are both supporters of a non-profit organization called To Write Love on Her Arms, or simply "TWLOHA" for short. Bob Stein was not as familiar with this organization, but was all for helping out a worthy cause, and thus willingly agreed. Another factor that made our decision that much easier, was that there was actually a different fundraiser on campus a year earlier that benefitted To Write Love On Her Arms. This would mean that the Bemidji State community would likely be at least a little bit familiar with our favorite non-profit.

To Write Love on Her Arms

To Write Love on Her Arms is a huge organization that we fully support, but we also thought it would be nice to have the concert benefit a smaller, more localized organization as well. In the past there have been events on campus that have collected non-perishables for the Bemidji Food Shelf. The three of us all found this to be a worthy organization, so we decided to have the concert benefit the Bemidji Food Shelf as well as TWLOHA.

So what exactly is To Write Love on Her Arms and what is the motivation behind this philanthropic organization? The website for this organization (To Write Love on Her Arms, 2009) explains its purpose as: "A non-profit movement dedicated to presenting hope and finding help for those struggling with depression, addiction, self-injury and suicide. TWLOHA exists to encourage, inform, inspire, and also to invest directly into treatment and recovery."

To Write Love on Her Arms had a humble beginning in Orlando, Florida, originally as a very poetically written story (See Appendix D) about a nineteen-year-old woman, Renee, who was

desperately seeking guidance in her life. In addition to drug addiction Renee also suffered from depression, self-injury, and even attempted suicide. The story was written in February of 2006 by a close friend of Renee's named Jamie Tworowski, and describes Renee's battle with depression and the story of hope during five days spent with her in her quest for treatment.

To Write Love on Her Arms, the story, would eventually expand into To Write Love on Her Arms, the organization. A web page was created for the organization on the popular social networking web site, Myspace, and t-shirts were sold originally as a means to pay for Renee's treatment. In October of 2006 the organization would be officially established as a non-profit organization under the umbrella of Fireproof Ministries (To Write Love on Her Arms).

As the organization started to become more and more publicized it also became less about a single individual, Renee, and more about hope and love for all; especially those suffering from self-abuse and depression. The t-shirts, which present messages of hope such as "Love is the Movement," "Rescue is Possible," and "Stop the Bleeding" (To Write Love on Her Arms Official Store) would go on to become very prolific in the music industry.

Highly renowned rock bands such as Switchfoot, Anberlin, Paramore, Copeland, The Rocket Summer, and Underoath (See Appendix E) would unite as supporters of the organization, wearing TWLOHA shirts at many of their performances. Countless other bands would follow their lead by wearing the shirts during performances, at photo shoots, and even participating in benefit concerts for the organization, which would only strengthen the bond between TWLOHA and the music industry even further.

While TWLOHA has become one of the most prominent non-profit organizations associated with the music industry, and more specifically the modern indie-punk music scene, it is not even close to being the only instance of our music "scene" practicing philanthropy.

Admittedly TWLOHA was easily a top choice of non-profit organizations to support with this benefit concert, but there have been many other organizations that the music industry has chosen to support, that would have also been welcome candidates for us to donate our time, talents, and funds to.

Messages the Music Industry Sends

Unfortunately, I have always felt like musicians are often stereotyped as being solely about superficial things, as made famous by the “sex, drugs, and rock & roll” motto. There may be some musicians who fall in line with this stereotype, but when it comes down to it musicians are people just like everyone else, and most of them have really good intentions. A major difference between people who work in the music industry and people who work in an office job, for instance, is that the music industry has a huge fan base along with avenues to present messages to massive amounts of people.

Some musicians use the stage and the surrounding merchandise booths to increase their popularity and fame, make money, and pronounce messages of negativity such as “throw up your devil signs!” to the crowd. Many bands on stage even have clothing and gear sponsorship. Critics could make the argument that these kinds of bands are selling themselves to advertisers in exchange for monetary rewards. Once again, this is all because bands and advertisers realize that the music industry is a perfect way to present messages.

This inspires a number of questions. “Why are so many of the messages presented in the music industry negative?” “Why do bands show their support to energy drink companies, clothing companies, and guitar manufacturers on stage but not to organizations that truly are making a difference in the world?” “Why do merchandise booths have to be solely about getting a quick sale?” The fact of the matter is it doesn’t have to be this way and many people in the music industry have been realizing exactly that.

The Vans Warped Tour

A perfect example of the changing attitudes of the music industry is the Vans Warped Tour. The touring music and extreme sports festival has been taking place every summer since 1995 (Warped Tour) and is held in massive venues such as parking lots or fields upon which stages are erected. The venues are huge, and bring about equally massive crowds. The highly profitable event is the highlight of many teenagers' summers. Although the event is sponsored by a number of large corporate companies such as Vans, Trojan, and AT&T, (Sponsors) many may be surprised to learn that The Vans Warped Tour also puts forth effort to have a positive impact on society whenever possible.

One of the ways in which the Vans Warped Tour has been trying to help out the world is by something called the "Warped Eco Initiative" (WEI), which was created in 2006 (Warped Tour, n.d.). The environmentally friendly initiative has inspired a number of changes in the tour, including the switch to tour buses being run off of Biodiesel fuel, reducing the amount of petroleum used by thirty percent. According to Wikipedia's Warped Tour wiki, "The tour also has a solar stage that is run solely from solar power that hosts eight to ten performers per show. The catering has switched to use washable dishes, and silverware. They use compostable corn and potato-starch take out boxes. The tour also gives out free prizes to kids who volunteer to help recycle."

In addition to encouraging concertgoers to "go green" through their eco-initiative, the Warped Tour also encourages attendees to take action for the betterment of society. One of the ways in which the tour accomplishes this is by presenting information about non-profit organizations in a very accessible manner.

In many ways non-profit organizations are treated almost like rock stars themselves on the Warped Tour. During the course of The Vans Warped Tour bands are profiled and promoted on the official website to get people excited about attending the tour. Once the tour actually begins, the bands

travel from state to state performing, meeting and greeting people at their merchandise booths, and encouraging attendees to buy their goods.

In much the same way, non-profit organizations are also profiled on the official Warped Tour website. Once the tour actually begins, representatives from these non-profit organizations travel from state to state with booths where people can learn more about the non-profits, donate to the causes, and socialize with the representatives. Just a few of the non-profit organizations that have made the Warped Tour trek include: Action for Animals, Feed Our Children Now, Music Saves Lives, and TWLOHA (See Appendix B). During the 2008 tour, TWLOHA alone made over one-hundred thousand dollars through donations and the sale of t-shirts (Take Action, n.d.).

While on the Warped Tour non-profit organizations tend to be a bit of a side-attraction. However, there are many other examples where non-profit organizations play roles that are highlighted as much as the bands themselves, if not even more prominent. This is a more fitting description of benefit concerts in the typical sense, and is more accurate to how we were hoping our TWLOHA benefit would turn out. Rather than making the music the primary means of promotion, benefit concerts instead showcase the organizations or individuals that are being assisted through the concert and the music is simply the venue for bringing people together.

Traditional Benefit Concerts/Reasons for Benefit Concerts

Often times, traditional benefit concerts are a single-day event, rather than a full tour. An example of this is "Bands that JAM for Africa," which is a non-profit humanitarian relief concert that gained national attention through MSNBC television and benefitted starving children in Africa (Bands that JAM for Africa, 2009). Another example of a traditional benefit concert that was held locally is "Rage Against Abuse," which was a benefit concert in Central Minnesota that supported organizations that promote non-violence (Rage Against Abuse).

Type “benefit concert” into the search engine Google and it will literally retrieve thousands of hits. With just a little bit of research, one begins to realize that benefit concerts are all around us. One of the reasons why benefit concerts can be so valuable to non-profit organizations is in addition to being a public event to showcase a message, the musicians will often times agree to perform free of charge, as a way of showing their support for the organization. This allows most all of the profits from the event to go to the organization in need, however, depending on the equipment, venue rented for the night, and other factors, some additional overhead costs may first need to be paid off.

Benefit concerts help out non-profit organizations by promoting their messages as well as raising funds. These concerts assist bands by giving them a place to perform, attract new fans, as well as a place to sell their merchandise. Lastly, fans in attendance are able to take in a night of fun music. The inexpensive nature of benefit concerts, combined with the fact that they truly are a positive event all-around, helps to explain the popularity of this format of fundraising.

The “Take Action!” Tour

One organization that has really brought the benefit concert concept to the next level is “Take Action!” which was started by the well-known independent record label, Hopeless Records, and its non-profit branch, Sub City. Every year, for the last eight years, the organization has sponsored an annual nationwide charity tour that raises funds and promotes the message of various not-for-profit organizations. According to the Take Action! web site (Sub City, 2009), the organization “has raised over \$1.5 million dollars for over 50 non-profit organizations.” A different branch of the web site goes on to explain that:

Each Take Action! tour stop is a unique experience where fans are exposed to a great show along with encouragement and information from the bands, charity partners, and sponsors about how they can get involved with causes that are important to them. In addition to the

good time and inspiration, 10% of the ticket price from each ticket sold is donated to DoSomething.org, which makes each fan in attendance an active participant in financially supporting non-profit action (Sub City, 2009).

In addition to the Take Action! tour itself, Hopeless/Sub City also releases low-cost, compilation albums featuring the bands that have played the tour, as well as a number of other popular artists. To date there have been eight volumes (Take Action! (compilation album), n.d.) of the album released. In much the same format as the concerts, a portion of all the sales from the CDs goes to benefit non-profit organizations. Also, mixed in along with the music tracks are public service announcements from bands on the compilation, that help to spread the positive messages that the tour works so hard to promote.

Organizing Our Benefit Concert

With all of this information in mind from previous charitable events in the music industry, there were a lot of things that needed to be considered when putting our own benefit concert together. The most obvious factors the three of us would need to break down were the five “W’s” – “Who?”, “What?”, “When”, “Where?”, and “Why?” Some of these areas required more thought than others.

The “Who?” part of the question can be broken down into multiple sub-parts. First of all, who did we want this concert to benefit and who did we want to attend the concert? We had already decided right off the bat to have the concert benefit TWLOHA and the Bemidji Food Shelf, so that was an effortless decision. Also, as it is a charitable event, the answer to the next part of the question was pretty simple – we wanted anyone and everyone to attend, as the more people that would attend would mean more money raised for TWLOHA and the Food Shelf.

More specifically, however, we were hoping to attract indie music fans at Bemidji State and the surrounding community. What makes benefit concerts such an effective medium, is that there are always going to be people who come only for the music and don’t care at all about the cause, but simply

by attending, the money raised from their ticket goes directly to charity. We figured a lot of the area high school kids would probably fall into this category, whereas people in the community would probably be more willing to attend because of the cause.

The last part of the “Who?” question would prove to be the most difficult. This part of the question being, “who exactly did we want to perform at the benefit concert?” Since there were three of us organizing the concert together, we would have to try our best to pick bands that all three of us at least somewhat enjoyed. We also wanted to choose bands that would attract people from the community to attend the event and we wanted to choose bands that could feasibly travel to Bemidji for the concert. We also preferred not to give bands money for anything other than gas, as the point of a benefit concert is to donate as much money as possible, so we would have to find bands that would be willing to play without being paid, or for very little money. We would need to also select enough bands to make the benefit concert worth everyone’s time, but not so many that the event becomes an all-night affair. We agreed that maybe inviting five or so bands would be a reasonable amount. There were definitely a lot of factors to consider in this category.

The next question we needed to consider is “what” we planned on doing? On the surface this is an easy answer, as obviously we knew we wanted to hold a benefit concert for TWLOHA and the Bemidji Food Shelf. But digging a little deeper into the question, we needed to figure out *what* exactly the night would consist of. Would it just be a couple bands performing quick sets? Did we want this event to take up an entire evening? In what ways would we inform concert-goers about To Write Love on Her Arms? What should we charge as admission for the event? What kind of music did we want to have? Would it be better to try and attract nationally touring bands or would we get a better turnout if we had local bands perform?

Perhaps the most crucial question we needed to ask ourselves is “when” did we want this event to occur? It would be important to find a date when area students did not have school the next morning.

We also needed to find a date when the Beaux Arts Ballroom or Memorial Hall 100 (the two best areas on campus to hold a small concert) weren't already booked. Also, we needed to consider the time of day that we wanted the concert to be held. If we held the concert too early in the day then people would likely be busy with other things, yet too late at night and curfews would be a factor for any Junior High or High School Students attending. We needed to factor in the three of our schedules to find a date in late spring that we would all be able to devote the entire day to.

The "where" question was something we already had in mind. As previously stated, we knew we wanted to hold the concert on campus at either the Beaux Arts Ballroom or Memorial Hall 100. The only loophole with that, however, is that in order to use these rooms for free on campus, the event needs to be sponsored by an organization on campus. In the past, Lutheran Campus Ministry (LCM) was always more than willing to assist with events, so I suggested we contact them. After getting their permission we needed to go to the Hobson Union and reserve the space.

We needed to ask ourselves "why" we wanted to hold a benefit concert on campus for TWLOHA. Why should we put forth all of this effort to organize this concert ourselves? The answer to these questions was simple. We wanted to spread awareness and raise funds for TWLOHA. We wanted to collect food for those in need in the Bemidji area. Then last, but not least, we wanted to simply put on a fun concert for the Bemidji community.

The final question we needed to consider before actually assembling the event was "how" would we set up this concert? Would it be better for the three of us to work out all the details for the evening and then simply ask Lutheran Campus Ministry to volunteer the actual night of the event? Or would it be better to get them involved right away and work with them during every step of the organization process? How would the three of us split up the organizational duties? How would we contact the bands that we'd like to perform at the concert?

Another very important thing we needed to figure out was how would we get the concert physically set up? After all, we would need lighting equipment, a stage, tables for bands to sell merchandise, a sound system and sound board, etc. Of the three of us, no one owned sound or lighting equipment so we would have to find a low-cost way to rent equipment for the night of the event. Then we also needed to figure out *how* we would get the word out about the event, because ultimately our good intentions would fail if no one showed up to attend the event.

With so many questions we were asking ourselves and so much that seemingly needed to be accomplished by the night of our event, we needed to figure out a system to divide up the different responsibilities to make sure that everything was accomplished. What we ultimately ended up doing was meeting one afternoon to develop a check-list of all the things each of us would need to do (See Appendix B).

Settling Into Our Individual Roles

When figuring out what tasks needed to be accomplished for the concert to be successful, the three of us tried to keep in mind our individual strengths and to a lesser degree, our weaknesses. By weighing our strengths and weaknesses we would be able to find roles for ourselves in the concert organizing that we would be most appropriate. For instance, Bob Stein does not necessarily know a ton about the music industry, but he is great at interacting with people. For this reason, when developing the checklist, we gave him most of the public relations duties.

He agreed to check into the possibility of a promotional interview with radio stations in town. He also said he would discuss the concert with the Bemidji Food Shelf to get the go-ahead with the fundraising, as well as talk with other places in town, such as the Bemidji Pioneer, to look into the possibility of additional promotion. Bob said that the night of the event he'd be willing to be the emcee,

watch over the attendees to make sure everyone is keeping in line, and read informative pieces about depression, self-harm, and TWLOHA to the audience.

Lastly, Bob knew of a friend that ran a sound and lighting company in town called NorthernLightFX. Ultimately Bob was able to convince this friend, Ben Stowe, into lending equipment for the evening free of charge, in exchange for us promoting his business at the show by handing out NorthernLightFX stickers and putting up the company banner behind the stage. This was perhaps the most crucial part of the concert organizing process, because no sound, stage, or lights, would mean no concert. For Ben's assistance, all three of us were very thankful.

Dev Sarkar isn't necessarily as outspoken or convincing as Bob, but he is very knowledgeable about the local music scene and the types of bands that kids from the area typically get excited about seeing in concert. For this reason, it seemed logical for him, along with myself, to figure out what bands we wanted to perform at the benefit concert. The two of us developed a list of bands that we wanted to contact about the possibility of playing at our concert.

Selecting Bands to Perform

Having fairly similar musical tastes, it was not much of a struggle to find bands that we agreed upon. Our primary means of contacting the bands was through Myspace and e-mail. Although we contacted dozens of bands, there were a number of bands that were intrigued by the concert but were either unavailable to perform on the date we had selected (April 19th), or simply did not have the funds to make it up to Bemidji without being reimbursed.

In the end, the bands that agreed to come on board were: From the Flames (a local band that often plays area bars), Halls Guide Service (another local band consisting of Bemidji State students), Patience of the Hero (a local band consisting of Bemidji High School students), The Voice of Sleep (a local band consisting of Bemidji State students), Venia (a heavy metal band from the Twin Cities that has

played a number of large music festivals), Gloria (a well-known, signed, punk band from the Twin Cities), and Camera Can't Lie (a well-known pop-rock group from the Twin Cities that has since signed to Atlantic Records).

Something that is almost a catch-22, of sorts, when organizing a concert is that what on paper might be the "best band" or "most popular band" may not always be the band that brings the most people into the venue. For instance, for me personally, Camera Can't Lie would be the clear headliner for the event. They are a band that has attracted a ton of buzz nationwide in the music industry and in my opinion their music is simply beautiful. They are a band that plays national tours and thus would seem to be an awesome group to perform at the benefit concert. However, I am also deeply involved in the music industry and have been following Camera Can't Lie's progress for quite some time. Would the average person in the Bemidji community who probably doesn't keep up with the music industry know or care about Camera Can't Lie? Probably not.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, bands like From the Flames, Patience of the Hero, and Halls Guide Service do not even get statewide attention, much less national attention. These are bands that are still developing, only have a handful of songs recorded, and are striving to just make their band known. Even though these artists may never get signed and their musical credibility is not as strong as bands like Gloria and Camera Can't Lie, they possess something that the aforementioned groups do not – friends and fans in the Bemidji community.

From the Flames is a hobby band that has played all sorts of shows around the Bemidji and Cass Lake areas, particularly in the Cass Lake bars. The members of From the Flames are older than college age, and thus seemed like a logical group to invite, because they would more likely attract the middle-aged crowd.

Halls Guide Service consist of Bemidji State students and thus have a large BSU following. The band has played a number of shows on the Bemidji State campus and students are very familiar with the

band. This was important to us as concert organizers, because presumably they would convince their Bemidji State friends to come to the concert and watch them and all of the other bands perform.

Lastly, Patience of the Hero's members are all still in High School. More specifically, all of the members attend Bemidji High School, and thus would presumably attract the high school crowd to our concert. It is my belief as well that high school-aged people tend to get out to concerts more so than other age groups, so it would be very important to hit up this target market.

It would have been tempting to have a show consisting of all local bands, all pop-rock bands, or all nationally-known bands, but the fact of the matter is that having a balance of musical genres, fan bases, and musical experience ultimately leads to the best turnout and most successful line-up.

Design Choices and Promoting

In addition to helping Dev figure out the band list and assisting him with contacting bands, I also agreed to commit my time to another aspect of the concert organizing. As mentioned earlier, in addition to being passionate about the music industry I also love graphic design, photography, and promoting. For this reason, I volunteered to take charge with the design and promotion for the concert.

For the event to be successful we would need to put up promotional posters, hand out flyers, spread the word online, and come up with an "identity" of sorts for the concert. I also wanted the event to be documented through photographs, but that would not come into play until the night of the event. In the meantime I set to work designing promotional pieces for the "Love is the Movement" (the title we had given to the event, which also is one of TWLOHA's slogans) concert.

Before getting started on the actual design, I needed to consider what purpose my promotional designs would serve and in what ways they would be used. For starters, I knew that I wanted to eventually create a Facebook "event page" for the benefit concert (See Appendix G). Therefore I would need to create at least one promotional image to appear on the Facebook page. This same image could

also be used as a Facebook profile image for anyone who wanted to promote the event directly on their profile. This same image could also be used elsewhere on the internet, such as on Myspace. In general this all meant that I would need to design at least one image that would be suitable for viewing on the web.

In addition to promoting online, I knew that we would be doing plenty of promoting in print format. We were hoping to, and ultimately were able to, put an advertisement for the concert into the Northern Student newspaper. We wanted to be able to hang up the promotional images and use them almost like posters, as well as hand out flyers to people.

Factoring all of these things into consideration, I realized that what I would need to design is either a series of different images to satisfy all of these needs, or I could create a single promotional image that could be adjusted to satisfy all of these uses. Partially due to my busy schedule and also because I wanted consistency among all of pieces, I decided to go with the latter option.

I soon realized that I would fall victim to the same problem that many graphic designers face. This struggle being, that there was too much information to include in too little of a space. I wanted to get all of the important messages across answering the “who,” “what,” “when,” “where,” “why,” and “how” questions that people looking at the image would probably have regarding the concert. I also wanted to include band logos from all of the bands that would be performing, so that people could know exactly who will be performing and get excited about the concert.

The problem with this, however, is that with seven logos on a page that gets to be a cluttered design as it is. I also wanted to include the To Write Love on Her Arms “Love is the Movement” logo, as it represents both the organization and the name of our benefit concert. Sure, I could always just increase the canvas size and make my flyers, posters, and electronic images bigger, but there would still be just as many things cluttering up the message I was trying to get across.

After experimenting with a few different design ideas I realized that it would not be possible to do any real elaborate design, as it would make the page too cluttered. Instead what I opted to do was include as much information as possible about the concert, while keeping the physical design aspects very minimalistic. I also wanted a design that would work in full color as well as being printed in grayscale.

In the end the design I came up with focused less on the *design* as it did on the *information* that I wanted to present. For the headlines I selected a font called "Copperplate" and for the sub-headlines I selected a font named "Lithos Pro Bold." I chose these fonts because they are both very strong and firm and easy to read. I didn't want to select a font that was too playful, because the purpose of the concert is to raise funds for people in need of food, and people struggling with depression and thoughts of suicide. These are all very serious topics, thus I decided to use very strong fonts for the promotional image.

At the top of the flyer, as well as on the right side, I included a couple different logos from TWLOHA. I made sure to place the "Love is the Movement" logo very big and bold at the top of the page, as it acts both as a headline for the concert itself, as well as a message of hope for the organization that is being aided by this benefit concert. I included the TWLOHA logo as well, for anyone who was unsure about the meaning of the "Love is the Movement" logo, as it directly signifies what organization the concert is benefitting. I opted to leave out the logo for the Bemidji Food Shelf, as there was not a quality logo readily available, and because I did not want to add even more disorder to the page. Instead, I decided to include in the text that stated tickets for the event would be discounted one dollar to anyone who brought in a non-perishable canned food item.

In addition to the large amount of text describing such things as the date and time, the part that was most difficult for me when designing this piece was figuring out how to list all of the band names without making the flyer look too ugly or overwhelming. I had toyed around with the idea of just

including the event's "headliners" (see Appendix G) but after talking with Dev and Bob we came to the realization that if we didn't include all of the band names on the poster, we might be missing our opportunity to attract the people who would only be interested in seeing the local bands. This again ties in with the concept discussed earlier that what is a "headliner" to one person may not hold true for a different concert attendee.

With this in mind, I ended up including all of the band names, but had them grouped together at the bottom of the page so that they would not get in the way of all of the other information on the flyer. I also decided to make all of the logos the same color (white) to unify the bands.

With all of the information on the poster, I needed to find some way to further unify the poster and make it more pleasing to look at. The solution I came up with was to make the image look almost like a roll of film. I did this by including a dashed line around the border of the image to make it more pleasing to look at. I decided to take the light blue color out of the TWLOHA logo and use that blue as the color for the image's border. I also decided to use this blue color in some of the text on the page, to further unify the image, and also because it would fulfill the "rule of thirds" (GoMediaZine, 2007) that is often used in successful design pieces.

Having completed a design that I thought was effective and to my liking, I decided to go forth with preparing the image for output. For viewing on the web I left the image full color and decreased the image to a resolution of 72 dots per inch (dpi), as this is the standard for on screen viewing. I didn't worry about the physical size of the image for electronic delivery, as I realized that Facebook would proportionally resize the image anyways as soon as I uploaded it to my personal Facebook profile and the event page for the concert.

For the print pieces, it was important to make sure the image was saved at 300 dots per inch, which is the typical resolution for images that are printed. For the Northern Student advertisement I needed to convert the image to grayscale, as the newspaper does not print full color images. For the

posters/full size flyers (See Appendix G), I resized the image so that it would fit perfectly on an 8.5/11 inch standard sheet of paper. I decided to keep those images full color as the color would attract people to the poster.

Lastly, I also decided to make miniature “pocket sized” flyers (See Appendix G) that could be handed out to anyone Bob, Dev, or I happened to stumble across. For the pocket sized flyer, I scaled the image down so that four of these images would fit on an 8.5/11 sheet of paper. I also decided to convert these mini flyers into grayscale, because it would be more cost effective, and because it wouldn’t be looked at from afar, like the bigger sized flyers.

With all of the images designed and ready for output, it was just a matter of finding ways to distribute them. Dev had said he would be willing to print off and distribute the full color, full sized flyers around the High School, Bemidji State, and around town. I agreed to upload the electronic images and we all worked on distributing the small, pocket sized flyers.

In the weeks leading up the concert the three of us had our marketing plan in full force, we had Memorial Hall 100 booked for April 19th, we had the band list and set times finalized, and we had the sound and lighting equipment scheduled to arrive the day of the concert. It was just a matter of waiting for the big day to arrive and to continue to spread the word about the concert.

Setting up Equipment

The morning of Saturday, April 19th was a huge thrill for me, as I was excited to see all of the work we put into the concert come to fruition. There were times when the concert planning got overwhelming or stressful, but I knew it would all be worth it once we got to watch all of the hard work pay off.

Although the concert was not until 6 p.m. that evening, the three of us arrived at Bemidji State’s Memorial Hall 1000 at around 10:00 a.m. It was there that we met up with Ben Stowe from

NorthernLightFX and some of his assistants who had come to help set up the sound and lights. This did not mean Bob, Dev, and I would get off easy, however, as setting up the sound and lights requires a lot of physical labor and the three of us would need to help out.

Setting up the sound and lights was something that required much of the morning and early afternoon, as it was definitely a process. The stage needed to be assembled, the lights needed to be hung up and clamped in the appropriate positions, and the sound board needed to be set up, in addition to many other tasks. Also during this time the three of us worked at setting up chairs and tables where bands would sell their merchandise, a table at the entrance where canned food and money would be collected, and boundaries would need to be established where the general public could and could not cross. After all, we wanted to give the bands that would be performing some privacy.

Practicing Leadership

At about 4:30 p.m. the first of the bands started to arrive on campus. As Bob, Dev, and I were the organizers, it was our duty to be ambassadors to greet the bands, tell them where to park their vans, and assist with carrying their equipment into the gym. Although this sounds like additional work, I was actually quite elated to be able to socialize with some of my favorite bands. I had not had many opportunities in the past to have this kind of leadership role, so it was an awesome feeling to be able to direct the bands during the course of the evening.

As the time got nearer to 6:00 p.m., when the doors were to open, members of Lutheran Campus Ministry started to flow into the Memorial Hall to assist us with the event. The three of us delegated the members into various roles, such as collecting canned food, marking hands (to prove that the attendee had paid in case they needed to leave and re-enter), security, and collecting money. By having LCM assist with these tasks, the three of us were able to concentrate more on helping the bands

out with any problems that may arise, as well as making sure we stayed on our timetable for the evening.

Although we were approaching show time, there were still a couple notable bands, The Voice of Sleep and Camera Can't Lie, that had not yet arrived. Both of these bands had verified a few days earlier that they would still be able to make the concert, so we had no idea where they were. As we were trying to figure out what to do about this problem, a van showed up with a bunch of kids carrying equipment into the gym. When we asked this band who they were, they said "To Say The Least," a band consisting Junior High and High Schoolers from Bemidji. The band went on to further explain that The Voice of Sleep had cancelled and asked them to perform in their place. While the three of us were annoyed that The Voice of Sleep had cancelled without having the courtesy to notify us, we were at least glad that they found a band to take their place.

This left us with only one missing band, my favorite band, Camera Can't Lie. We knew that they were making a long drive from the Twin Cities and it was very possible that they could have been backed up in traffic during the drive, but we did not know for sure. I asked Dev if he had received their contact information so that we could try calling them and he said "No, I just have their e-mail address." Obviously, an e-mail address would not do us any good while they were on the road.

That was when the idea occurred to me that perhaps Gloria, who was also from the Twin Cities and have played shows with Camera Can't Lie, might have the phone number for someone in the band. Sure enough, one of the members of Gloria had the contact information that we needed and he volunteered to call the band. It turned out our initial premonition was correct and Camera Can't Lie were just a little backed up from traffic and the long drive, but they said they would be on campus within fifteen or twenty minutes. I breathed a sigh of relief, but was also regretting that none of us bothered to get phone numbers from the bands.

With that potential roadblock out of the way, it was pretty much smooth sailing from there. The only exception to this was that the crowd was much smaller than we were hoping. Yes, there were quite a few kids there who seemed excited to see the bands we had in store, but at the same time we were hoping for a much bigger turnout. We all felt like we had promoted the concert like crazy, and Memorial Hall holds a large number of people, so to see the gym largely empty was a little bit discouraging. But at the same time we all realized that every person that had come in meant money raised for TWLOHA, as well as food for people in the community who otherwise might be hungry. To be honest, because the concert was for charity and we wanted to raise an unbelievable amount of money for the worthy cause, I do not think any amount of people attending the concert would have made us feel one hundred percent satisfied.

“Love is the Movement”

The actual festivities began with Bob arriving on stage and performing his duties as emcee. He presented some initial announcements to the crowd and then explained the importance of TWLOHA by reading Renee’s story that inspired the organization, as well as some facts about depression and self-harm that we had printed off from the TWLOHA web site earlier.

The first band to take the stage was From the Flames. With everything going smoothly, I was finally able to just relax and enjoy the evening. As I love photography, and because I had made it my goal to document the night in pictures, I went ahead and photographed as many of the bands as I could (See Appendix F). I was not a huge fan of From the Flames’ performance, but I was grateful that they showed up as promised and were willing to perform at our concert. It also looked like they had brought a group of friends and family along to watch them perform, which I was also happy about.

The next band to perform was To Say the Least, filling in for The Voice of Sleep. All of the members seemed so young and inexperienced, because they were, but at the same time I thought they

were pretty impressive for their young ages. This band has since broken up, which is a shame because I thought if they kept at it they had some potential.

After them was Halls Guide Service. I had watched them perform a few other times in Bemidji, so I pretty much knew what to expect. They are a really quirky, funky band and they definitely brought the funk that evening. The band invited anyone from the crowd who wanted to come on stage and dance with them during their songs to go ahead and do so. This made for a little bit of chaos, but I could tell that the crowd was really getting into the music and having a good time dancing, so none of us minded.

Up next, we originally had scheduled Patience of the Hero to perform. As a bit of a last minute lineup change, however, we decided to request that they perform last in the evening. We wanted the high school students that were there to stick around till the very end and were afraid that if all of the younger bands performed too soon, that the high schoolers would leave before the bands from the Twin Cities even took the stage. We also wanted to give the bands that drove from further away the opportunity to hit the road a little earlier in the evening if they so chose. So instead of having the local band perform, we had Gloria take the stage. They performed a very high quality punk rock set, and made it obvious why they were signed to a well-known record label.

After Gloria finished up their set, it was time for my favorite band of the bunch to take the stage – Camera Can't Lie. I had been listening to the band non-stop the weeks leading up to the benefit concert and was pumped to finally witness their live show. The performance was awesome and I think I sang along louder than anyone there.

Next in the set list, we had Venia take the stage. We had considered having them perform earlier in the evening, but they were the heaviest band we had scheduled for the evening. We were a little bit nervous that if we had a band that played heavy metal, with screaming vocals too early in the evening that it would turn off the people who were there to see the more pop-oriented bands. Dev was

the most excited out of all of us to see the band, but I enjoyed the performance and energy they brought to the stage as well.

Concluding the evening was Bemidji fan favorite's Patience of the Hero. I had seen them a number of times in the past and was never a huge fan, so I decided to use the time during their performance to socialize with some of the bands who had performed earlier in the evening and help them pack up their vans with their equipment. While talking with Camera Can't Lie, I learned that a few days prior they had signed with one of the biggest record labels in the United States, Atlantic Records. I was told to not leak the information to the press, however, because it would not be officially announced for a few more months. I could not be more excited about their signing, as well as the fact that they let me in on some top secret information. It was a very good evening.

Take Down

With all of the performances complete and the bands and attendees on their way home, the only thing left to do was disassemble the sound and lighting, take down the tables, stage, and chairs, and clean up the place. Lutheran Campus Ministry members were still there and were willing to help with deconstructing and cleaning up, which was very helpful. With so many hands there to help out, take down was much less of a process and took far less time than we had predicted. After thanking Ben Stowe, his helpers, and all of Lutheran Campus Ministry many times over I was able to head home with the satisfaction that Bob, Dev, and I had successfully organized a benefit concert. After paying out money to the bands for travel expenses we had raised around \$500 for To Write Love on Her Arms and collected close to fifty food shelf items for the Bemidji Food Shelf.

Artist's Statement/Reflections

A year has passed since the "Love is the Movement" benefit concert was held. Looking back, there are times when I literally can't believe that what started out as some kind of pipe dream fantasy, literally evolved into a successful benefit concert that was actually held on our very own campus.

Last year at this time I was just an ordinary Bemidji State student with a passion for music and good concerts, but not much experience in terms of interacting with bands. In the time since then I've been hired as an album reviewer, news poster, and band interviewer for a music website (www.thedailychorus.com) that gets thousands of hits a day. I've also worked with its sister-site (www.smartpunk.com), doing band interviews for them as well. At the current time, neither of these jobs are paid, but it has been great for gaining experience in the music industry. My e-mail inbox and mailbox are always packed with bands trying to get my feedback on their music.

What does this have to do with last Spring's benefit concert? Well, I think co-organizing the concert opened started the wheels turning and opened up a lot of doors for me. It gave me an opportunity to practice leadership in the music industry, interact with bands, and follow my passions. It also made me realize that the music industry is all about who you know, and using those connections to your advantage. In the case of the benefit concert, by having these connections we were able to raise hundreds of dollars for a worthy organization. Networking and showing leadership in the music industry is something I now do on a daily basis, and hope I hope to use these skills in the future if I land my dream job as a graphic designer in the music industry.

Although organizing this benefit concert was one of the greatest experiences of my college career, there are still some things that I wish would have went differently. For instance, I really wish more people would have attended the event. This is an event that the three of us poured our hearts into and promoted like crazy. I feel like if we had held this event on any other campus, or in any other city, our turnout would have been much better.

To put two and two together, I think that perhaps one of the reason why Bemidji never schedules any quality concerts is because people in Bemidji either do not care about pop-rock music, or else they just do not choose to go out and attend concerts. If people do not show up to attend concerts, what is the reason for people to organize them in the first place?

There really is not any way to change people's attitudes or force them to attend a concert, but there likely would have been ways to increase the turnout. Perhaps we should have found more creative ways to promote the concert. I do not necessarily know what alternative methods of promotion would be, but I'm sure they are out there. Maybe we should have set up a booth in the student union to promote the event? Perhaps we should have held some kind of contest on campus where people could win items from the bands that would be performing at the concert? Maybe we would have had a better turnout if we had figured out a way to sell TWLOHA merchandise at our concert.

Looking back I also wish we would have corresponded with the bands even more than we did and requested contact information from each and every member. This contact information would have come in handy when we were afraid that some of the bands might not show up on time. It would also be good to have now, in case I ever need to get ahold of these bands for any other reason.

Overall, however, I am very satisfied with how the benefit concert turned out. There were few setbacks that we experienced and things really went quite smoothly. I know it is an experience that I will look back on when I am old and smile to myself about. The leadership skills I obtained, the design experience I gained from doing the promotion for the concert, along with the satisfaction that we helped out those in need, are all invaluable things that I wouldn't trade for anything. The benefit concert may be over with, but I never plan to stop practicing philanthropy. After all, giving back to charity doesn't always have to involve the typical actions, such as bringing in the homeless to your house or working at a soup kitchen. Sometimes all it takes is teamwork and a passion for music.

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INFORMATION ON OTHER WELL-KNOWN CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS THAT USE THE MUSIC INDUSTRY AS ITS PRIMARY MEDIUM

Shirts for a Cure

(www.shirtsforacure.com)

"The Syrentha J. Savio Endowment (SSE) was established by punk-rock photographer Mark Beemer in 2002. SSE provides financial assistance to underprivileged women who cannot afford expensive breast cancer medicine and therapy. The Shirts For A Cure Project (SFAC) was launched by SSE to give voice to the social concerns of punk bands and their many fans as well as to raise awareness about breast cancer prevention.

When a band donates a shirt design to SFAC, the design becomes exclusive to SSE. We sell the shirt and use the proceeds to help women fighting breast cancer. If you would like to support our cause please take a moment to peruse the more than 150 shirts we offer. All shirts are printed on 100% pre-shrunk cotton unless otherwise stated. For a donation of \$12 (plus shipping and handling) you will be helping someone who is in need as well as receiving an exclusive shirt from your favorite band."

Music Saves Lives

(www.musicsaveslives.com)

"Music Saves Lives is the conduit between music, entertainment and important life-saving causes. Since beginning in 2005, the Music Saves Lives community has grown to be a trusted source for young individuals that care and want to learn about life-saving issues. Our community has found that Music Saves Lives offers an easy way to give back in the cities they live in and travel to along with connecting to the entertainment they love. MSL has focused its main efforts on blood donation and the bone marrow registry, reaching out by sharing facts, educating and creating life saving events.

We want to help educate young people about the importance of simple life saving actions they can participate in that identifies them as part of the community.

We are currently applying for our Non-Profit status and looking worldwide to have one focus, saving lives. We have grown from Southern California to Nationwide and we are looking outside our borders to spread the MSL goal. A simple plan of saving lives. "Saving Lives Has Never Sounded So Good!"

Our Mission is:

Community:

To create opportunities for people to save lives with simple contributions and to teach the facts about the affects of what they contribute to. We then bridge their efforts to something special related to music, musical artists and general entertainment.

Industry:

To give the music industry and related industries the opportunity for a targeted direction in saving lives and giving back to the community.

Organizations:

To work with life-saving organizations by giving them the opportunity to advance their goals as we reach out to college and high school markets. We are educating thousands of students that will be the life saving factor in the future."

Take Action!

(www.takeactiontour.com)

"In 1999 Hopeless Records formally started supporting non-profit organizations under the Sub City name with charitable albums, tours, and events. Now itself a registered 501c3 non profit organization, Sub City continues this mission of raising funds and awareness for worthy causes and to date has raised over \$1.5 million dollars for over 50 non-profit organizations.

Hopeless Records, in connection with their non profit organization Sub City is pleased to once again organize and present the Take Action! Tour. The 2009 lineup will feature headliner CUTE IS WHAT WE AIM FOR, along with MEG & DIA, BREATHE CAROLINA, EVERY AVENUE, and ANARBOR. The annual nationwide charity tour, now in its eighth year, raises funds and awareness for youth involvement in charitable action, and for the second straight year Take Action has chosen not-for-profit organization DoSomething.org to benefit from the funds raised and to help spread the message of action to young people across the country.

Each Take Action tour stop is a unique experience where fans are exposed to a great show along with encouragement and information from the bands, charity partners, and sponsors about how they can get involved with causes that are important to them. In addition to the good time and inspiration, 10% of the ticket price from each ticket sold is donated to DoSomething.org, which makes each fan in attendance an active participant in financially supporting non profit action. To date Sub City, with the help of hundreds of thousands of young people, has raised over \$550,000 through the Take Action initiative."

11:11 A.M.

(www.takeactiontour.com)

"About 11:11 A.M.

With Andrew being diagnosed with Acute Lymphatic Leukemia, we have created the orange bracelet "11:11 A.M." 11:11 is a rather cliché'd excerpt taken from the Something Corporate song, *Konstantine*. The lyrics read, "*I always catch the clock, it's 11:11...*" 11:11 is believed to be the time to make a wish, as all the numbers are 1's. Some say it only works in the morning, because in 24 hour mode 11 PM is actually 23:00. Although we are making out wishes at 11:11 A.M, A.M. stands for Andrew McMahon, in this case.

ALL profits will go to Andrew's choice charity, the Pediatric Cancer Research Foundation. The cost of each bracelet is \$4. We are also accepting donations to keep this charity running smoothly. You will receive a free bracelet with donations of \$10 or more."

Bands that JAM for Africa

(www.myspace.com/bandsthatjamforafrica)

"Bands that JAM (www.jamint.com) for Africa (featured on MSNBC) is a non-profit humanitarian relief show showcasing the musicians of tomorrow and feeding the starving children of Africa today!

Bands that JAM for Africa was founded by Morgan Fisher at the age of 14

JAM started in 1984 after its founder, Peter Pretorius, was stranded in an area called Pambarra in Mozambique. Peter was at a food distribution center for 10 days without food or a change of clothes. There was no food at the center, only 34 000 starving people. Every day more than 30 people died and he helped bury them in shallow trench graves. Broken by the reality of this suffering, Peter was filled with a resolve to feed and help as many people as possible. Now, more than two decades later, Joint Aid Management is making a difference to hundreds of thousands of lives in 5 African countries: Angola, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa and Sudan.

A child dies every 8 seconds, What are you doing?"

Rage Against Abuse

(www.rageagainstabuse.com)

"The whole concept behind "Rage Against Abuse" is to have youth create and carry the message of hope and change to other youth. Yeah, some may say it sounds insane! But it'll work! Youth have a powerful voice. They cannot be stopped! We also want youth to know...They can STOP the cycle of violence. Right here, right now!!

How will this Revolution happen?

Two Ways this will happen. Number One, We will be working with youth groups and teens to recognize and understand what child abuse is and what role this abuse plays in a young persons life. We will work with them on how to help a peer or a friend. How to bring that person to the guidance or support they need. We want abused youth to know that there are peers out there that they can talk to. So many times though a person will "promise" not to tell if someone shares an abusive situation. The only thing this does is creates two people that know about the abuse. We want young people to learn how to not keep a secret, but how to encourage and support that friend as they get help. We will call this piece our "Peer Advocate Program".

The second piece will happen by using the most powerful tool there is. MUSIC! Here's the deal, Rage Against Abuse will be having musicians from Minnesota write songs about child abuse, perform at shows put on by Rage Against Abuse, we will even have their song professionally recorded and put on compilation cd's. (We already have one done). Rage Against Abuse will have music events throughout Minnesota. We want to get our mission and the music in front of a ZILLION or so Raging music freaks and with that the Rage

Against Abuse mission is underway... It gets bigger and bigger as it moves forward, total Anarchy! Rage on!"

Punk Junk

(<http://www.myspace.com/punkjunkdonations2008>)

"Mission Statement: Help combat homelessness and hunger this summer at the Vans Warped Tour. Bring any item that could be used by another person and we'll donate it to your local homeless organization. In return you get special items for this year's Warped Tour, along with tickets for your chance to win some **autographed and limited edition** merchandise from your favorite Warped Tour bands or Sponsor!!!

All Donations will be accepted before 2pm outside the main gates at each participating Warped Tour stop."

(RED) Wire

(<http://www.joinred.com/>)

"(RED)WIRE is a digital music magazine that makes a difference. It gives you exclusive music from the world's greatest artists every week and gets people living with HIV in Africa the medicine they need to stay alive.

How it works:

Every Wednesday, you'll receive your new music via the (RED)WIRE player – which also places each song automatically in your iTunes. You get an exclusive song from a major artist. A song by an artist we want to showcase. A fun or inspiring piece that's not music – a short video of someone telling a story, a slideshow of great photography, someone reading something they love. And frequent updates from Africa – a window into the culture of the people getting the medicine.

All your (RED) WIRE music is yours to keep – they are unprotected digital files. Play them on your iPod, burn them to a CD and enjoy.

And you get it all for \$5 per month – and half your membership fee goes to buy medicine to keep people living with HIV in Africa alive. Great music saves lives."

Vans Warped Tour Non-Profit Summer Summary – The Numbers (2008)

(<http://www.warpedtour.com/warpedtour/takeaction.asp>)

“With your help Vans Warped Tour helped raise over 350,000 dollars for various charities nationwide! And that is before you consider the money raised through charitable auctions hosted at www.unitetheunited.org, or other private donations made as a result of the tour.

Please take a moment to consider the following numbers. See exactly how and who you've been helping all summer!

11:11 AM

raised \$11,000 dollars

registered over 400 verified emails

Amnesty Int.

6421 voter signatures for petitions

Action for Animals

\$35,000 raised for future outreach

26,500 biodegradable bags with

22,000 vegan recipies and

8,000 promotional dvds distributed

Boarding for Breast Cancer

\$4,115 raised

4,075 breast exam shower cards

were taken and

3,200 health surveys completed

Declare Yourself

3,500 first time voters registered

Invisible Children

raised \$45,000 dollars

2,300 people registered for email list

Music Saves Lives

45,000 blood donations nationwide

5814 bone marrow donors registered

2835 bone marrow donors at shows

TWLOHA

\$110,000 raised for general fund

1,000 surveys for research

30,000 myspace friends added

Lokahi

3000 signatures for petitions

supporting oxfam, ONE, and

FACE Aids

Obama Campaign

registered 6300 voters

Unite the United

5001 unique emails gathered

7,000+ pictures taken

over 125,000 raised via ticket

sales for Hollywood Heart

Warped Eco Initiative

40,000 lbs of recyclables collected

solar averaged 1.2 kwh to sustain nonprofit area

Rock for Health

5,250 registrations / signatures

raised over \$5,000 dollars

Punk Junk

23,695 dollars donated to local shelters

roughly 4 tons of food collected"

To Write Love On Her Arms “To Do” List

Dev Sarkar:

- Create a Myspace
- Printing/Distribution of BSU/BHS/Food Shelf Flyers
(Color Printing vs Black and White?) (Will LCM sponsor printing?)
- Meet with Bemidji’s Pepsi distributor to see if they will donate drinks.

Matt Nistler:

- Create a Facebook “Event Page” for the concert. (To be put up in Early April)
- Design an animated “blinking” Myspace/Web Banner (as colorful as possible)
(BAND PIC, BAND PIC, List of other bands playing, TWLOHA image, Event Details)
- Northern Student Promotion: Write an article on the event and/or house ad design)
- Create a flyer design that will be distributed (By Dev) at around the BSU campus/Bemidji High School/at the Bemidji food shelf and/or downtown.
- Ad should be colorful and use the TWHLOA logo as centerpiece.
Headline: “Love is the Movement” (2nd Annual Foodstock/LifeRocks! Event)
- If have time try making a promotional website that will be supplementary to the Myspace that Dev creates.
- Supply Bob with information on To Write Love On Her Arms for the PSA.

Bob Stein:

- Check into the possibility of a promotional radio interview.
- Get in contact with Northern Sound and Light FX about if they will donate time/equipment to the event.
- Discuss the event with the Bemidji Food Shelf and get their “OK.”
- Contact Bemidji Pioneer about promo.
- Talk to Pepsi (along with Dev).
- Emcee duties and present a PSA the day of the event.

Everyone:

- Maintain contact with bands to make sure everything is still good to go.
- Once flyers are designed and printed, distribute them to friends and the BSU community.
- Take April 19th off of work so that we have the entire day to set-up.
- Create a big promo sign to hang up outside of Memorial the day of the event.

Already Completed:

- Lakeland Promo is good to go.
- Band list is confirmed (see below).
- Memorial Hall 100 is reserved for the entire day, April 19th.

Tentative Band Line-Up:

Set-Up (Noon or when Ben is ready for us)

6:00 Start Time

Bob PSA (6:00-6:05)

From the Flames (Ready to Go at 6:05- 6:20)

Set Change 6:20-6:40

Halls Guide Service (6:40 – 7:05)

Set change (7 05 – 7 20)

Patience of the Hero (7 :20 – 7:40)

Set change (7 40 – 8 00...Bob Speaks)

The Voice of Sleep (8:00 – 8:20)

Set change (8 20 – 8:40)

Venia (8:40 – 9:10)

Set change (9 10 – 9:30)

Gloria (9:30 – 9:55)

Set change (9 50 – 10:10...Bob Speaks to crowd)

Camera Can't Lie (10:10 – 10:50)

Take Down (11 p.m. – 12:30 a.m.)

Background Information on “To Write Love on Her Arms” – The Story

<http://www.twloha.com/page.php?id=6>

This began as an attempt to tell a story and a way to help a friend in Spring 2006. The story and the life it represented were both things of contrast – pain and hope, addiction and sobriety, regret and the possibility of freedom. The story’s title “To Write Love on Her Arms” was also a goal, believing that a better life was possible. We started selling t-shirts as a way to pay for our friend’s treatment, and we made a MySpace page to give the whole thing a home. Our friends in Switchfoot and Anberlin were among the first to wear these shirts. In the days that followed, we learned quickly that the story we were telling represented people everywhere. We began to hear from people in need of help, and others asking what they could do to help their friends. We heard from people who had lost loved ones to suicide. Many said that these were questions they had never asked and parts of their story that they had never shared. Others were honest in a different way, confessing these were issues they knew little or nothing about. It seemed we had stumbled upon a bigger story, and a conversation that needed to be had.

Over the last two and a half years, we’ve responded to 80,000 messages from people in 40 different countries. We’ve had the opportunity to bring this conversation, and a message of hope and help, to concerts, universities, festivals and churches. We’ve learned that these are not American issues, not white issues or “emo” issues. These are issues of humanity, problems of pain that affect millions of people around the world.

We’ve learned that two out of three people who struggle with depression never seek help, and that untreated depression is the leading cause of suicide. In America alone, it’s estimated that 19 million people live with depression, and suicide is the third-leading cause of death among those 18-24 years old.

The good news is that depression is very treatable, that a very real hope exists in the face of these issues. We’ve met people who are getting the help they need, sitting across from a counselor for the first time, stepping into treatment, or reaching out to a suicide hotline in a desperate moment.

To Write Love On Her Arms – The Story

(<http://www.twloha.com/page.php?id=6>)

Pedro the Lion is loud in the speakers, and the city waits just outside our open windows. She sits and sings, legs crossed in the passenger seat, her pretty voice hiding in the volume. Music is a safe place and Pedro is her favorite. It hits me that she won't see this skyline for several weeks, and we will be without her. I lean forward, knowing this will be written, and I ask what she'd say if her story had an audience. She smiles. "Tell them to look up. Tell them to remember the stars."

I would rather write her a song, because songs don't wait to resolve, and because songs mean so much to her. Stories wait for endings, but songs are brave things bold enough to sing when all they know is darkness. These words, like most words, will be written next to midnight, between hurricane and harbor, as both claim to save her.

Renee is 19. When I meet her, cocaine is fresh in her system. She hasn't slept in 36 hours and she won't for another 24. It is a familiar blur of coke, pot, pills and alcohol. She has agreed to meet us, to listen and to let us pray. We ask Renee to come with us, to leave this broken night. She says she'll go to rehab tomorrow, but she isn't ready now. It is too great a change. We pray and say goodbye and it is hard to leave without her.

She has known such great pain; haunted dreams as a child, the near-constant presence of evil ever since. She has felt the touch of awful naked men, battled depression and addiction, and attempted suicide. Her arms remember razor blades, fifty scars that speak of self-inflicted wounds. Six hours after I meet her, she is feeling trapped, two groups of "friends" offering opposite ideas. Everyone is asleep. The sun is rising. She drinks long from a bottle of liquor, takes a razor blade from the table and locks herself in the bathroom. She cuts herself, using the blade to write "FUCK UP" large across her left forearm.

The nurse at the treatment center finds the wound several hours later. The center has no detox, names her too great a risk, and does not accept her. For the next five days, she is ours to love. We become her hospital and the possibility of healing fills our living room with life. It is unspoken and there are only a few of us, but we will be her church, the body of Christ coming alive to meet her needs, to write love on her arms.

She is full of contrast, more alive and closer to death than anyone I've known, like a Johnny Cash song or some theatre star. She owns attitude and humor beyond her 19 years, and when she tells me her story, she is humble and quiet and kind, shaped by the pain of a hundred lifetimes. I sit privileged but breaking as she shares. Her life has been so dark yet there is some soft hope in her words, and on consecutive evenings, I watch the prettiest girls in the room tell her that she's beautiful. I think it's God reminding her.

I've never walked this road, but I decide that if we're going to run a five-day rehab, it is going to be the coolest in the country. It is going to be rock and roll. We start with the basics; lots of fun, too much Starbucks and way too many cigarettes

Thursday night she is in the balcony for Band Marino, Orlando's finest. They are indie-folk-fabulous, a movement disguised as a circus. She loves them and she smiles when I point out the A&R man from Atlantic Europe, in town from London just to catch this show.

She is in good seats when the Magic beat the Sonics the next night, screaming like a lifelong fan with every Dwight Howard dunk. On the way home, we stop for more coffee and books, Blue Like Jazz and (Anne Lamott's) Travelling Mercies.

On Saturday, the Taste of Chaos tour is in town and I'm not even sure we can get in, but doors do open and minutes after parking, we are on stage for Thrice, one of her favorite bands. She stands ten feet from the drummer, smiling constantly. It is a bright moment there in the music, as light and rain collide above the stage. It feels like healing. It is certainly hope.

Sunday night is church and many gather after the service to pray for Renee, this her last night before entering rehab. Some are strangers but all are friends tonight. The prayers move from broken to bold, all encouraging. We're talking to God but I think as much, we're talking to her, telling her she's loved, saying she does not go alone. One among us knows her best. Ryan sits in the corner strumming an acoustic guitar, singing songs she's inspired.

After church our house fills with friends, there for a few more moments before goodbye. Everyone has some gift for her, some note or hug or piece of encouragement. She pulls me aside and tells me she would like to give me something. I smile surprised, wondering what it could be. We walk through the crowded living room, to the garage and her stuff.

She hands me her last razor blade, tells me it is the one she used to cut her arm and her last lines of cocaine five nights before. She's had it with her ever since, shares that tonight will be the hardest night and she shouldn't have it. I hold it carefully, thank her and know instantly that this moment, this gift, will stay with me. It hits me to wonder if this great feeling is what Christ knows when we surrender our broken hearts, when we trade death for life.

As we arrive at the treatment center, she finishes: "The stars are always there but we miss them in the dirt and clouds. We miss them in the storms. Tell them to remember hope. We have hope."

I have watched life come back to her, and it has been a privilege. When our time with her began, someone suggested shifts but that is the language of business. Love is something better. I have been challenged and changed, reminded that love is that simple answer to so many of our hardest questions. Don Miller says we're called to hold our hands against the wounds of a

broken world, to stop the bleeding. I agree so greatly.

We often ask God to show up. We pray prayers of rescue. Perhaps God would ask us to be that rescue, to be His body, to move for things that matter. He is not invisible when we come alive. I might be simple but more and more, I believe God works in love, speaks in love, is revealed in our love. I have seen that this week and honestly, it has been simple: Take a broken girl, treat her like a famous princess, give her the best seats in the house. Buy her coffee and cigarettes for the coming down, books and bathroom things for the days ahead. Tell her something true when all she's known are lies. Tell her God loves her. Tell her about forgiveness, the possibility of freedom, tell her she was made to dance in white dresses. All these things are true.

We are only asked to love, to offer hope to the many hopeless. We don't get to choose all the endings, but we are asked to play the rescuers. We won't solve all mysteries and our hearts will certainly break in such a vulnerable life, but it is the best way. We were made to be lovers bold in broken places, pouring ourselves out again and again until we're called home.

I have learned so much in one week with one brave girl. She is alive now, in the patience and safety of rehab, covered in marks of madness but choosing to believe that God makes things new, that He meant hope and healing in the stars. She would ask you to remember.

“To Write Love on Her Arms” (TWLOHA) and the music industry have shared a strong connection ever since the organization first began. In addition to showing support in the form of benefit concerts, musicians can often be seen wearing TWLOHA shirts on stage and in photo shoots.



underoath



switchfoot



Jessica Bennett Photography
paramore



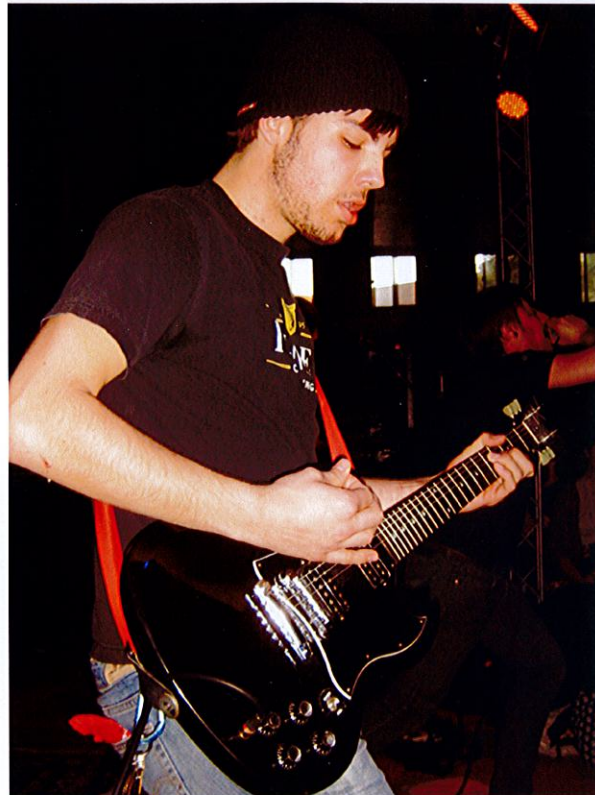
Jessica Bennett Photography
copeland



A selection of a few styles of shirts available for purchase

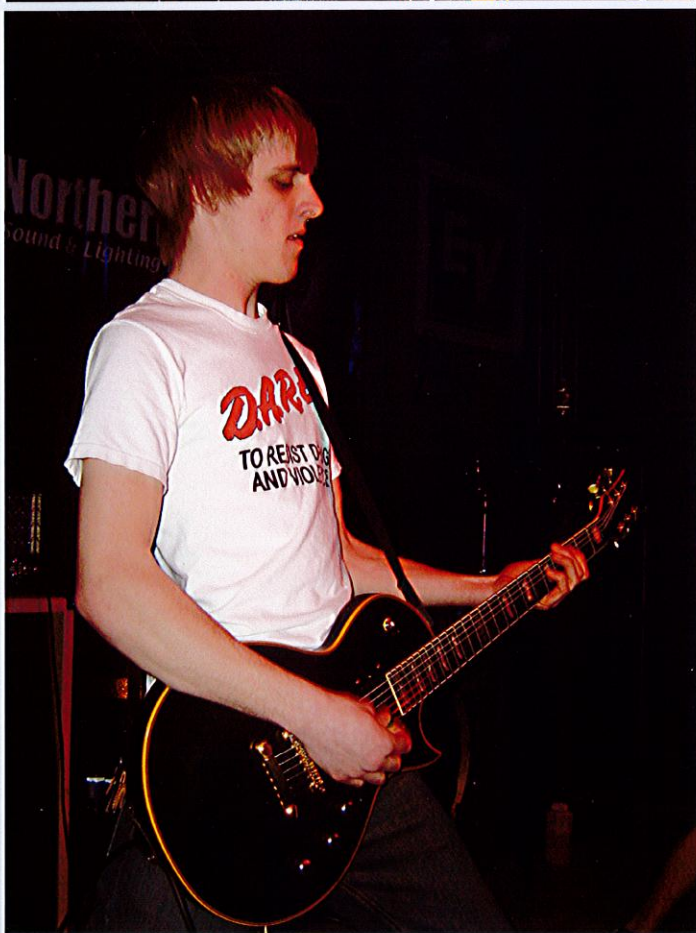
Gloria

All photos taken April 19, 2008 by Matt Nistler at Bemidji State University's Memorial Hall



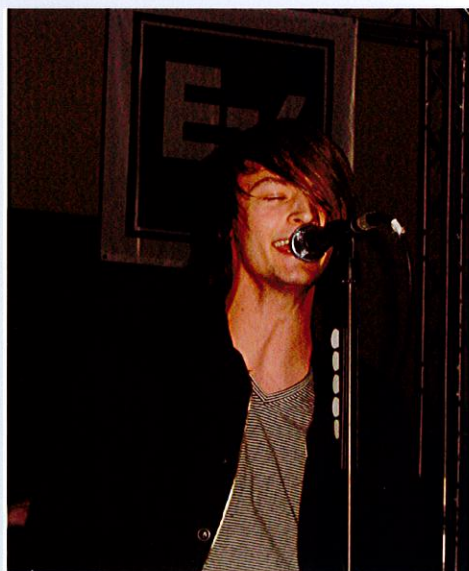
VERTIGO

All photos taken April 19, 2008 by Matt Nistler at Bemidji State University's Memorial Hall



CAMERA CAN'T LIE

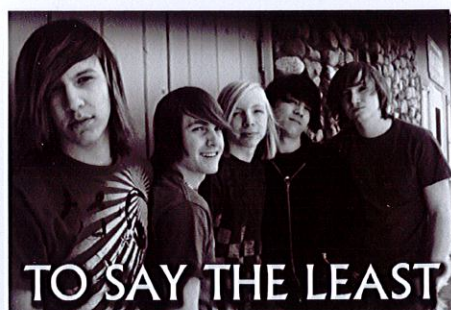
All photos taken April 19, 2008 by Matt Nistler at Bemidji State University's Memorial Hall





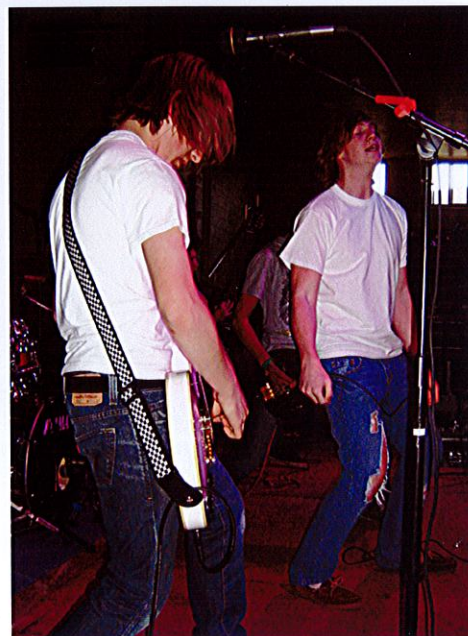
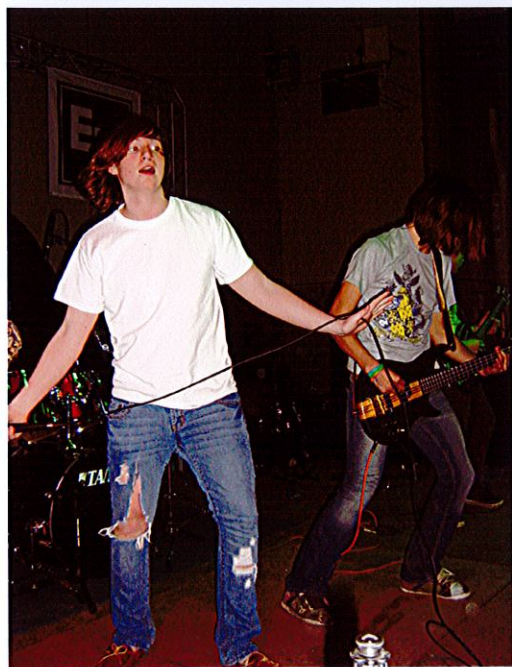
All photos taken April 19, 2008 by Matt Nistler at Bemidji State University's Memorial Hall





(Filling in for The Voice of Sleep who cancelled the day of the event)

All photos taken April 19, 2008 by Matt Nistler at Bemidji State University's Memorial Hall



LOVE IS THE MOVEMENT~7 Bands! 1 Night! 2 Causes!

Camera Can't Lie, Gloria, Venia, Patience of the Hero, Halls Guide Service, The Voice of Sleep, From the Flames

Host: LCM
Type: Music/Arts - Concert
Network: Bemidji State
Start Time: Saturday, April 19, 2008 at 6:00pm
End Time: Sunday, April 20, 2008 at 12:05am
Location: Memorial Hall 100 (The Old Gym), Bemidji State University
City/Town: Bemidji, MN
Email: matthew.nistler@st.bemidjistate.edu

Description

Last year's concert known as "Foodstock/LifeRocks!" raised hundreds of dollars for the non-profit organization To Write Love on Her Arms (twloha.com) while also collecting boxes full of canned food items for the Bemidji Food Shelf. We are back again this year with 7 quality bands set to perform (Camera Can't Lie, Gloria, Venia, Patience of the Hero, Halls Guide Service, The Voice of Sleep, From the Flames). The performances will start at around 6 p.m. at Bemidji State's Memorial Hall. Admission is \$7 or \$6 with a canned food item for the Bemidji Food Shelf.

"(Camera Can't Lie are) primed for a breakout. After spending 6 straight days at #1 on Purevolume with plays in December, this band has definitely started reaching new grounds. This might be a big surprise jump for visitors of the site. Believe me, I surprised myself for putting them this high. But, this band has it."
-Tim Townner, TheDailyChorus.com

Photos

Displaying 5 of 8 photos

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Videos

No one has uploaded any videos. [Add Videos](#).

Links

Displaying 2 of 9 links

[See All](#)

Post a link:

[Post](#)

Renee. Two Years.

Source: youtube.com



Renee celebrated 2 years of sobriety on February 24th.

Posted by You

To Write Love on Her Arms - INTRO.

Source: youtube.com



Stop the bleeding.
myspace.com/towriteloveonherarms
twloha.com

Posted by You

Confirmed Guests

This event has 80 confirmed guests

[See All](#)



Karisa Hayes



Sonja Clemenson



Carly Allen



Brittany Hegner



Cody Grimsley



Sara Brodeur



Kendra Washington

The Wall

Displaying all 3 wall posts

[See All](#)



Invite People to Come

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Your RSVP

- ☒ Attending
☐ Maybe Attending
☐ Not Attending

Other Information

- Guests are allowed to bring friends to this event.

Other Invites

Maybe Attending (181)

[See All](#)



Katie Olson



Bryce Blankenfeld



Haakon Pederson

Not Attending (263)

[See All](#)



Dom Trom



Nicole Buraw



Justin Guy

Awaiting Reply (85)

[See All](#)



Jeff Knodel



Andrew Longline



Breanna Lynn Adams

Event Type

This is an open event. Anyone can join and invite others to join.

Admins

- Matt Nistler (creator)
- Shawn Campbell (St. Cloud, MN)
- Dev Sarkar
- Bob Stein

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Early Draft

LOVE IS THE MOVEMENT.★

BENEFIT CONCERT FOR:
TO WRITE LOVE ON HER ARMS
(TWLOHA.COM)

TO
WRITE
LOVE
ON HER
ARMS.

APRIL 19TH, 6:00 P.M.
\$7 ADMISSION
(\$6 WITH CANNED FOOD ITEM)

BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY
MEMORIAL HALL 100

Camera
Can't Lie
GLORIA
& MORE!

↗
All band names
NOT included

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GLORIA

The Voice of Sleep.

Halls Guide
Service

Patience
of the Hero

FROM THE FLAMES

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**BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY
MEMORIAL HALL 100**

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Can't
Lie**

VENTA

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The Voice of Sleep.

**Halls Guide
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