Up ‘Til Dawn joins up with Riderpalooza

By Mike Caputo

The Cavalla Room was rocking all through the night last Friday, April 8, and for a good cause.

For the first time, Rider’s annual Riderpalooza joined forces with the annual Up ‘Til Dawn (UTD) finale. Riderpalooza is a yearly event sponsored by the Residence Hall Association (RHA) and is a night of music, food and other fun activities for students. Bands that perform at Riderpalooza are various local and out-of-state bands that get an opportunity to perform in front of a college audience. The UTD Finale is the culmination of the organization’s efforts during the year in raising money for St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital in Memphis, Tenn.

UTD executive director sophomore Beth Nyhus was more than pleased with the outcome in combining the two events.

“It’s the first time we have had the two events come into one,” said Nyhus. “We weren’t sure it would work, but every organization came together. It just all clicked.”

The most important part of the night came just before midnight, when Rider’s UTD executive board presented a check to St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital. This check, worth $18,854.08 according to UTD finance chair junior Matthew Block, included all of the money raised at various events held throughout the year at Rider.

Key fundraisers that factored into this year’s contribution to the hospital included: letter-writing parties, the Association of Commuting Students’ (ACS) Craft Fair, carnation sales sponsored by Wright RHA, pin-up sales organized by morning show host junior Cameron Merante, and a group known as the Care Bears. And T-shirt sales at the Cranberry Fest sponsored by the Office of Campus Life (OCL).

“History has shown that the letter-writing parties have brought in the most contributions for UTD, but Nyhus acknowledges that all the events, big and small, have lent a major hand in the UTD’s efforts to raise as much money as possible for the cause,” Parton said.

“Everyone is working with the Office of Campus Life and there has been cooperation and, as much as we love writing parties, the Association of Commuting Students’ (ACS) Craft Fair, carnation sales sponsored by Wright RHA, pin-up sales organized by morning show host junior Cameron Merante, and a group known as the Care Bears. And T-shirt sales at the Cranberry Fest sponsored by the Office of Campus Life (OCL).

“The event that raised the most money other than letter-writing was the ACS craft fair, which brought in a few thousand dollars,” said Nyhus. “Lots of people have been doing events on the side [to help] and there has been cooperation from everybody.”

A major portion of the success can be attributed to the work of the executive board, according to Nyhus. She said that the group is already undergoing a search for new board members for the upcoming 2005-2006 fundraising period, especially since many positions will be open.

“A lot of those on the executive board this year can’t make the commitment to come back next year,” said Nyhus. “We are a group of very busy and dedicated people to other organizations and, as much as we love [UTD], we have so many other commitments.”

Carrie Denning, Rider UTD’s representative from St. Jude’s, acknowledges the impact Rider has across the country.

“At St. Jude, every dollar counts for the children and families, and the fundraising done by Rider students will go a long way,” said Denning. “Rider is a big part of St. Jude’s Up ‘Til Dawn efforts nationwide.”

“I think that people know that they are going to walk away without getting anything,” said Polak. “We have never done it like this before. At the end we will look back and correct what needs correcting and keep what we liked.”

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Correction

Six Degrees of Separation will be performed on Thursday, April 21, and Friday, April 22, at 8 p.m. in the Yvonne Theatre. The dates listed in a caption in last week’s issue were incorrect.