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Concert kicks off campaign for the Salvation Army

CAROLINE EGGERS ceggers@bgdailynews.com 1 hr ago

From left, Major Stephen Story and Major Sandra Story of the Salvation Army, area businessmen Jim Cooper, Jim Martens and Jim Johnson, and Scott Watkins and Jeff Reed of Orchestra Kentucky pose for a photo at the Southern Kentucky Performing Arts Center on Tuesday, March 12.

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In a first, the Friends of the Salvation Army will sponsor a concert at the Southern Kentucky Performing Arts Center this weekend.

On Saturday night, the Gaither Vocal Band will perform southern gospel pieces with Orchestra Kentucky.

“Bill and Gloria Gaither are responsible for writing over 700 gospel songs. If you look at any Protestant hymnal, you’ll find some of their songs,” said Jeff Reed, music director of Orchestra Kentucky.

The Gaither Vocal Band boasts five singers, including Bill Gaither. Larnelle Harris, who started with the band and studied at Western Kentucky University, will also perform during the concert.

Though the gospel tunes feature orchestras in recordings, the band has never performed with a live orchestra.

“I worked on it for two years to get him to come,” Reed said.

On Tuesday, several representatives from the Salvation Army met with concert organizers and other donors to discuss what it means for their organization to act as a title sponsor.

“The event is a kickoff of an awareness and fundraising campaign that our board is doing,” Maj. Stephen Story of the Salvation Army said. “We’re really thankful for the partnerships.”

Since 1939, the Salvation Army in Bowling Green has been serving Warren, Simpson, Monroe and Logan counties with food, shelter and clothing. The nonprofit offers hot meals, employment assistance, life skills education and summer camps for kids, among other programs and services.

“We’re serving 67,000 meals a year, we’re doing 60,000 lodging nights a year,” Chris Head of the Salvation Army said. “The things that we do are not free. We’re looking for support from the community.”



The nonprofit hasn't sponsored any type of community event before, according to Story, but he hopes to make it an annual occurrence.

"I'm very excited," he said.

The Salvation Army Maj. Sandra Story, who studied music in college and still plays the horn and sings during services at the nonprofit, is also looking forward to launching the new campaign, called "Fight for Good," and revisiting some of her musical beginnings.

"I grew up listening to the Gaithers," she said.

After the concert, the Salvation Army will independently reach out to donors and host a few small dinner events to fundraise grassroots style.

– To learn more about the Salvation Army, the staff hosts "lunch and learn" events each month. The next tour is March 21 at 11:45 a.m. at the army's chapel at 401 W. Main Ave. in Bowling Green.

– Follow reporter Caroline Eggers on Twitter @eggersdailynews or visit bgdailynews.com.

Caroline Eggers

News reporter.

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