

The Story of “Kids Rock”



To hear “Kids Rock” by Glass Half Full, visit www.optimist.org/KidsRock

It took place on August 24, 2013, a day much like any other day. However, this was the day the song “Kids Rock,” was created.

At the Colorado/Wyoming District Convention in August 2012, a new band called Glass Half Full entertained the attending Optimists with a mix of oldies, rock and blues from the 50s, 60s and 70s. The band had been started six months earlier by a chance conversation between Randy Marcove of the Monaco South Optimist Club in Denver and Sam Bartley of the Academy Optimist Club in Colorado Springs. Sam, a guitar player, had heard that Randy played bass, and was practicing during one of the quarterly conferences. One thing led to another as they often do and Randy and Sam formed Glass Half Full with Jon Wachter, also a Member of the Monaco South Club on drums and Sam’s friend, Luke Gentry on rhythm guitar. Randy played bass and Sam played lead guitar and handled the vocals.

The band enjoyed playing together so much that Sam and Randy began asking the incoming Governor Phil Perington if Glass Half Full could play at the 2013 District convention. Phil did not respond as incoming Governors often have quite a bit on their plates. Then at the October 2012 conference, Sam had an idea. Phil’s theme for his year was “Kids Rock...Keeping Dreams Alive.” So Sam approached Phil with an offer – if Glass Half Full was allowed to play, he would write a song called “Kids Rock,” especially for the event. Phil liked the idea and agreed.

In April 2013, bits and pieces of the song began running through Sam’s head. It started out quietly until it became a never-ending refrain that demanded his attention. Sam kept trying to analyze how to mold the lyrics. “It should be about kids. It should be about the projects Optimists do. It should be about...” He went through idea after idea, but none of them went anywhere. Then he went on vacation and it came to him. Over the next three days, “Kids Rock” had an introduction, three verses, a bridge and numerous choruses.

Glass Half Full began rehearsing in July with two new members, Larry Brown from the Academy Optimist Club on percussion and Sam’s friend, Tom Wickstrom on guitar, vocals and harmonica. After a bit of rehearsal time, Sam introduced the band to “Kids Rock.” Within 30 minutes of playing the song at a rehearsal, everything seemed to fall into place.

The band scheduled the new song to be played fourth during their second set at the District convention. Then after an introduction from the band members about Governor Phil and the work of Optimists in the District, the time had finally come. The opening chords of “Kids Rock” rang out and the instrumental intro won over the crowd. Finally, Sam stepped up to the microphone to sing the first verse.

*Daniel sat defeated asking
“Why?”
Giving up,
holding back his cry,
He got a gentle nudge and a
few kind words, “I believe in
you” is what he heard.*

*From four to forty...
Kids Rock!
From five to fifty...
Kids Rock!
From six to sixty...
Kids Rock!
From seven to seventy...
Kids Rock!*

*Amy worked so hard to make
the grade
But her folks at home felt
betrayed
Helped up by a stranger,
she reached the top
Once she got ahead
she couldn’t be stopped*

*From four to forty...
Kids Rock!
From five to fifty...
Kids Rock!
From six to sixty...
Kids Rock!
From seven to seventy...
Kids Rock!*

*Dreams alive, dreams alive,
don’t you know we’re keeping
dreams alive
(3 times)*

(Guitar solo)

K-K-K-K-K Kids Rock!

*Growing old is
something we must do
But growing up
is optional for you
Giving something back will
keep us young
‘Cause kids of all ages
have a song unsung*

*From four to forty...
Kids Rock!
From five to fifty...
Kids Rock!
From six to sixty...
Kids Rock!
From seven to seventy...
Kids Rock!*

*From four to forty...
Kids Rock!
From five to fifty...
Kids Rock!
From six to sixty...
Kids Rock!
From seven to seventy...
Kids Rock!*

Kids Rock!

The crowd of Optimists sang along, applauded and cheered. The song was a huge success. Governor Phil was noticeably pleased. The band continued to play cover songs, but the night was over for “Kids Rock.” The song has been shelved for now, but may make another appearance if called upon by a current or future Optimist leader.