

Shields Brothers rock the barn

Friday, Mar. 9 By Eric Kambach



Rixeyville brothers Tristan and Rory Shields made time to play in front of 150 local fans at Lord Fairfax Community College in Warrenton Friday evening. Photo by Adam Goings

It seems that everyone can't get enough of The Shields Brothers, especially their fans at home.

The punk rock duo returned to a part of their roots on Friday evening when they performed in front of nearly 150 people in the Barn at Lord Fairfax Community College's Warrenton campus.

"Man, we haven't played in Warrenton in like forever," Rory, sitting behind his drum set, said through his microphone, "this is awesome."

After gaining celebrity status for their blind audition performance on NBC's "The Voice" and earning a spot in the show's battle rounds, Tristan and Rory have found their names in the most unlikely of places, from a tweet from singer Bret Michaels to praise from Rolling Stone Magazine.

Even clips from their performance made it to "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" last week, and on Monday they were heard on Z95.1 Lite Rock station in Charlottesville and appeared on the 4 p.m. news on NBC.

On top of all that, their Twitter account won nearly 1,000 new followers, their Facebook page has been "liked" by fans from Puerto Rico and Malaysia, and their full recording of "Dancing With Myself" is selling on iTunes.

"I'm just so happy for them," said father Pat Shields, who sat behind a table with Shields Brothers T-shirts and CDs. "This is just exciting. You always hear about these singers coming from California or New York or somewhere else, but you never hear of any coming out of Rixeyville, Virginia."

The two were enjoying a break at their parents' farm before returning to the stage.

"I heard they were back in town," said LFCC student activities coordinator Felicia George.

"They've played here before in a Battle of the Bands contest, and Rory's an alumnus, so I called them up to see if they were interested in headlining the show, and they were really excited about coming back," she said.

The duo were greeted by old friends, familiar faces and newly star-struck followers when they took the stage, singing original songs from their early days and familiar covers, capping off the show by playing Joan Jett's "I Love Rock 'n' Roll" with fellow "Voice" contestant Erin Willett of Gaithersburg, Md., before posing for pictures with excited fans and signing autographs.

"They're just an awesome group," said Colin Pierce of Warrenton, who played guitar with local band Among the Silent right before the Shields Brothers. "I first saw them a couple of years ago at First Night in Warrenton.

Coming out of Virginia and doing what they're doing is just awesome, and they're always fun to watch."

Zac Keiter of Culpeper, a Lord Fairfax student and singer himself, has seen them perform countless times, and has always been impressed with their stage presence.

Whether the brothers are on NBC or playing at bars or in the Barn, he doesn't see anything slowing them down.

"I think they'll do well on the show," said Keiter, who also sang that evening. "They're really representing Virginia. They have great chemistry with each other and are just great with their harmonies. Everyone has a lot of fun watching them play, and they have a lot of fun playing in front of everyone."

"The Voice" aired the first of its duet battle rounds Monday evening, in which two contestants from the same team compete against each other through a duet performance.