

# North Greene students have 'once-in-a-lifetime experience with country rocker Dee Rock

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WHITE HALL – A group of North Greene High School students had an experience of a lifetime recently in Nashville with Dee Rock, a top country music entertainer.

The North Greene students built in their industrial arts class a new custom, patriotic guitar for the country star and he is already using it in national appearances. Rock was so touched by the guitar gift that he has decided to come to North Greene to do a concert.

North Greene industrial arts teacher Kevin Fraser said that “all the stars had to align together” for this experience with Dee Rock to occur. Fraser and Dee Rock have a mutual friend and one day Fraser responded to one of Rock’s posts about wanting to play a patriotic guitar and Fraser believed his students could build him one. Fraser asked Rock about it on Facebook and the Nashville star was very supportive for them to give it a try.

One person had the idea to take the guitar down to Rock personally once it was finished and with permission of the North Greene administration and Rock’s blessing, they did make an overnight trip to deliver the guitar. Rock was so down-to-earth and personable during the time, Fraser said.

“What is so great about Dee Rock is when we did get down to Nashville, we didn’t know what to expect,” Fraser said. “He asked us to eat dinner with him Thursday night and he told them had a surprise for them when we got there. The kids were a little shy when they got there, but once they met Dee and started interacting with him, he just took them under the wing and loosened everything up for the 10 high school kids.”

Once dinner concluded, Rock’s surprise was to take them to a recording studio and cut a song with them. The North Greene students impressed Rock and picked up things quickly.

Fraser first taught at Carrollton High School and then North Greene. During his tenure, he has always tried to be innovative and have the students build things they will remember the rest of their lives.

“We don’t just build birdhouses and broom holders in shop anymore,” he said. “I have found that several of the kids find out when we go over the science and math of building a guitar, they come out of the hands-on stuff with a greater understanding of what they are doing in the math and science classroom and how what they are learning in the classroom translates into real life.”

The North Greene students have designed, built and fine-tuned solid body wood guitars while learning and applying wood building concepts. For the students and teacher, this also stimulates creativity, critical thinking, planning skills and problem solving.

Each guitar body started "as a basic block of wood" to be transformed by the design and artistic concepts, planning and physical construction efforts of each student. There is a fair amount of creativity involved, Fraser said.

The process involved learning the safe use of hand and power tools — band saws, drills, draw knives and rasps — to create their desired shapes and contours. North Greene students surveyed see the trip to Nashville as eye-opening about the music business.

"This trip was probably one of the greatest trips I've ever been on," North Greene student Peyton Tucker said. "I would have never thought that I would be able to do anything like this ever before. It has truly changed my perspective on a lot of things.

"But in the end the message was clear. True values and accomplishments need to be worked for. Life is only for the hardworking people, and those people are the ones needed to form amazing trips like this. This trip was truly one of the greatest experiences ever."

Hallie Coad, another North Greene student, said the trip to Nashville was "amazing."

"It was definitely a once-in-a-lifetime experience to be able to go out and do the things we got to do. I will never forget this trip because of how memorable it was, especially for me since I love to sing. When we walked into that studio it was literally a dream come true.

"Dee was amazing as well, I felt as if I had known him my entire life because of how friendly he was. Opportunities like this don't just come out of nowhere, you have to work for them."

Fraser saw a difference with Coad right after she entered the studio.

"Hallie was a little shy in the beginning, but she knocked it out of the park and opened people's eyes with her voice and abilities at the end of the recording time," Fraser said.

Sometime before school concludes this year at North Greene High School, Dee Rock has said he is going to come and play a small concert.

Fraser said he believes Dee Rock has permanently changed the lives of the students.

"He made them feel like they were his friends forever," Fraser said. "That is what is so great about this guy. He stresses God, family and country in his songs and he has such a positive attitude. We couldn't have met up with a better guy to inspire them."

