

# Planet Make-Over benefit strikes chord with Dallas film producer

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*Kirk Dooley is a University Park writer.*

Dallas film producer and director **Rocky Powell** has a thing for guitars. Some would call it a passion; others would call it an obsession. Mr. Powell calls it a sickness. At the Cole Avenue office of his company, Rockhouse Films, he keeps many of his 59 guitars.

He's a pretty good picker, and, in the back of his mind, his next guitar will make him a better guitarist.

This past weekend Mr. Powell flew to Austin for the kick-off event for a worldwide initiative called Planet Make-Over, a Web destination anchored by an ongoing 60-minute internet TV show featuring music, celebrities and more. He had been approached by one of the Austin sponsors, **George O'Dwyer** (a Highland Park native and 1973 graduate of HP High School), about producing and directing the show.

Planet Make-Over will provide immediate and simple directions for millions of "Climate Concerned People" about how to adjust their individual behavior in order to reverse global warming. It will also track and measure the results from individuals around the world.

An impressive live music set, directed by **Stephen Bruton** and his 12-piece band, featured a dozen Austin musical celebrities (led by **Joe Ely**, **Delbert McClinton**, **Marcia Ball**, **Eric Johnson** and others) performing one song each. At the end of the music session, a live auction featured an autographed Fender Stratocaster guitar.

Mr. Powell was already salivating. He had just heard one of the greatest guitarists in the world, Mr. Johnson, and was in one of those guitar trances. He opened the bidding at \$2,500. The bids stalled at \$3,000 and the auctioneer announced that in addition to the guitar, three Austin musicians had volunteered to show the winning bidder just how it was to be played. One hour each with Mr. Bruton, David Grissom and Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Powell's eyes glazed over. He yelled, "Thirty-five hundred!" and bought himself an autographed Stratocaster.

When he told Mr. O'Dwyer that the lessons with the three guitar legends put him over the edge, Mr. O'Dwyer responded with, "Well, what are you gonna teach those guys?"

Leaving the event at the Four Seasons in Austin, Mr. Powell carried his 60th guitar and murmured, "My wife is gonna kill me."

As it turns out, his wife, **Kathleen**, understands her husband's guitar addiction. Their three sons, **Riggs** (13), **Griffin** (11) and **Dillon** (7) all appreciate Dad's music. They enjoy listening to their father jam with other Park Cities musicians like **Brant Bernet** and his son, **Chap** (and occasionally Chap's grandfather, **Ed Bernet** on the banjo).

Mr. Powell is in the beginning stages of directing his first feature film. The script is complete, the talent is signed and he hopes to begin shooting in the spring of 2009.

That's exciting for him, but it doesn't hold a candle to an hour session with Eric Johnson, breaking in Mr. Powell's new Stratocaster.

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