

SHIRETOWN SOUNDS

Jazz Bands and Show Choirs Have Excellent Season!

The music department is very busy January through April preparing for the various jazz festivals. Many students are involved in both jazz band and show choir (and sports...and work...and family/church/etc!). We are lucky to have such dedicated and talented students. Congrats to everyone who performed this jazz season! Houlton was well represented at all the district and state festivals!

JUNIOR HIGH JAZZ BAND

After successfully competing in the District Festival on February 24 at Presque Isle Middle School, the JH Jazz Band worked hard to be ready for their state festival. After weeks of preparation, they travelled to Nokomis on March 20 for the Middle School State Instrumental Jazz Festival. The group sounded absolutely wonderful and earned high marks from the judges. They competed against jazz bands from much larger schools and Mr. Mania is



Cameron Clark

very proud of how they performed. 7th grade drummer Cameron Clark was awarded one of only five Outstanding Musician Awards given in the division.

HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BAND

The High School Jazz Band also competed at the District Festival on February 24 at Presque Isle Middle School. They qualified for the state festival which was held at South Portland High School on March 27. The HS Jazz Band earned a gold rating from the judges. The competition was especially tough this year with 8 out of the 12 groups in their division earning a gold rating. Mr. Fagnant is very



Alexis Rush

pleased with how the group performed. "we have a very original sound and were able to highlight not only the jazz band players, but also singers and mallet players in our program."



Zach Waite and Isaac Brown

JUNIOR HIGH SHOW CHOIR

The JH Show Choir had a very busy March! They performed at the District Festival on March 18 (hosted by Houlton) and qualified for the state festival. Then the group performed the full-length musical "Doo Wop Wed Widing Hood" on March 25. (See page 2 for a full story on the musical.) With a quick turn around, they transformed the musical into a cohesive show choir package for the state festival on April 10. Ms. DeWan was especially pleased with the cast's energy and volume during the state performance. Congrats to all!



Payton Porter



Jill Howland and Haven Rhoda

HIGH SCHOOL SHOW CHOIR

The HS Show Choir "Hairspray" earned high marks at the District Festival and qualified to go on to States. The State Festival was held at HHS on April 10. Competing against more groups than previous years, the high school show choir performed beautifully! Ms. DeWan was so impressed with the energetic facial expressions! The group earned a gold rating and placed



Brandon Clark

third in their division. A special congratulations to Tyler Delano who earned the Outstanding Male Vocalist award for Division II Show Choirs.



Tyler Delano and Taylor Forest

Thanks to Joe Cyr at the Pioneer Times for allowing us to use his photos from State Vocal Jazz.

SPRING CONCERT DATES

BAND-O-RAMA

Thursday, May 6 @ 7:00pm

Concert black and white attire required

ALL CHORAL CONCERT

Tuesday, May 18 @ 7:00pm

Concert black and white attire required

SMALL ENSEMBLE NIGHT

Wednesday, May 26 @ 7:30

SOUTHSIDE BAND/CHORUS CONCERT

Tuesday, June 1 @ 7pm at the Amphitheater



SMALL AND NOTEWORTHY NEWS



HS Musicians Accepted to All State Music Festival

The All State Music Festival is the highest honors festival available to young musicians in the state of Maine. Students go through a rigorous audition process in November. Six singers and one instrumentalist were accepted from Houlton to these prestigious groups. Congratulations to senior Stephannie Kreyszig, juniors Tyler Delano, Tyler Swimm and Zach Waite, sophomores Zacharia Harvey, Lucas Anderson and Dustin Fitzpatrick! Dustin will be playing percussion in the orchestra while the others will be singing with the chorus. The orchestra is comprised of approximately 100 players and the chorus of 240 singers. Musicians rehearse extensively Thursday and Friday and perform a concert on Saturday (May 20-22) at the University of Maine in Orono. Congratulations - this will be an amazing musical experience!



Back row: Dustin Fitzpatrick, Zacharia Harvey, Lucas Anderson
Front Row: Stephannie Kreyszig, Tyler Swimm, Tyler Delano, Zach Waite

“Doo Wop Wed Widing Hood” a smashing success!

The Junior High Cast and Crew of “Doo Wop Wed Widing Hood” performed the musical twice in March. First as a preview performance for grades 3, 6, 7 and 8 on March 24. Then again in the evening for parents and community members on March 25. Both performances were a huge success! Thanks to Mr. Mania for working with the tech crew to prepare for the production. With the exception of Carole Bates on piano, it was a completely student-run musical. Students were running the light board, the sound board, they were in charge of scene changes, props, and curtains, and playing bass and drums in the pit. What an accomplishment - thank you tech crew and pit musicians!

The actors onstage worked hard in rehearsals from January-March preparing for the performances. Rehearsals were a mix of improvisation and theater games, choreography, music learning, and blocking. They learned about using stage voices and big facial expressions. They offered praise and constructive criticism to their peers. Ms. DeWan is so proud of the work the cast and crew did on this musical!!! She has so much fun working with this age group. Their energy and willingness to try new things is wonderful.

The cast and crew were supported by the many adults helping with the production: Marcy Hernandez (grade 11) choreographed, Carole Bates was the accompanist, Shelly Beals organized and created costumes, Jessica Fitzpatrick organized hair/makeup and Carla Hamilton and Nancy Gervais gathered set pieces and props. Thank you to all the parents who helped backstage and with hair/makeup!

HS Show Choir performs for Aroostook Principals

The High School Show Choir travelled to Presque Isle High School on Thursday, April 8 to perform for the Aroostook County Principals Association meeting. Mr. Bouchard extended the special invitation to the group, and the performers were honored to accept. It was a great opportunity for the group to perform at another venue for a different audience. They represented Houlton High School well.

Boosters organize a great State Vocal Jazz Festival

Friday, April 9, the high school was filled with adults and students working together to transform the school into a performance area for the next day's festival. The amount of work needed is tremendous, and the Music Boosters did an excellent job. Workers arrived as early as 6am on Saturday and the work was not complete until past midnight. Numerous directors and parents from other districts commented on the quality of the festival organization. Below is an excerpt from a letter sent by Bronwyn Kortge, vocal director at Mt. Desert Island High School:

I want to congratulate you on another amazing festival. It was great to have the support of students to guide us when we arrived to unload sets Friday night. How wonderful it was to arrive to those well-organized, friendly, polite, smiling students. It was definitely a preview of things to come. Plus, I just love the auditorium renovation. Frankly, I'm jealous! It's a lovely space in which to see the shows and seemed to be a great spot to perform in. I can't imagine all the time and organization on the part of your adult and student volunteer core and yourselves that must take place to mount such a production as the State Vocal Jazz Fest. The quality and smoothness of the festival that you run might make it seem easy, but I know it is not. Congratulations to you and your dedicated supporters. My students, their parents and I had a wonderful time celebrating the musical inspiration and talents that bless the young people across our great state!
Very Gratefully Yours, Bronwyn

HS Groups to Travel to Boston Next Year

The MSAD #29 Music Department, with the assistance of the Music Boosters, will once again be putting together a music festival trip next spring to Boston and Six Flags New England. The following things will need to take place in order to meet our travel goals.

1. Set an itinerary and budget.
2. Set fund raising goals, estimate over \$50,000.
3. Start fund raising at the end of the year with some car washes run by parents.
4. Students will have to commit to \$150 payment by November 2010. Boosters will provide financial assistance to families in need.
5. Students will have to earn 10 trip credits to receive the full financial support.
6. Boosters will have to host and provide up to 20 fundraising events from now until the trip in May of next year.

The past state vocal jazz festival did help in our fundraising efforts, but there is still a long way to go. A three day trip to Boston for 140 students will cost around \$52,500. We know that we will need the support of all the parents and students who want to make this trip a success. We also hope that those families in need of financial support will take the opportunity given to them by the boosters. The trip to New York City was an enriching musical and cultural experience. We look forward to offering a similar experience next year. We will be discussing this trip more at our next meeting in June.

Many Combined Pieces at May Concert

This is the perfect time for me to be writing about the JH Chorus because we had the most amazingly musical rehearsal yesterday! I heard all three parts perfectly balanced. The group was singing with dynamics and phrasing, and bringing life to the texts they were singing. After a rehearsal like that, I cannot wait to share our progress with the community at the All Choral Concert on May 18.

A reminder that it is mandatory that all singers in the chorus attend the concert. Students are given a grade for their participation. Students must be on time (6:30) and dressed in concert black and white. Every singer is important to the success of the group!

One of the kids' favorite songs is "Brand New You" from the musical "13." While the High School Show Choir last year did a medley of songs from "13," they did not perform this piece. This will be a combined piece at the concert, both the HS and the JH choruses will sing it. A

big thank you to Carole Bates for continuing to support the music program by accompanying this group.

The High School Chorus will be performing a wide variety of pieces at the concert including Toto's "Africa," a gospel rendition of "America, the Beautiful" (also a combined piece) and a favorite from last year's All Aroostook Festival, "Kaki Lambe." Watch for a special musical transition between the JH and HS chorus at the spring concert.

In both HS and JH chorus, I have been using individual recorders to keep track of students' progress. The benefits to using these recorders are great: a time saver during rehearsal, students develop a digital portfolio of their singing, and I can get to know students' voices within the context of choral singing.

I look forward to sharing our work with you on May 18 at 7pm in the auditorium. Hope to see you there!
~Rebecca DeWan, 5-12 Vocal Music

Piano Class & Music Theory

The high school piano class has been having a great time using the technology available to them to further their understanding of music. A recent project had them recording their own playing into GarageBand on their Laptops using the new keyboards designed specifically for easy usb-computer connection. Thank you Music Boosters for providing the funds to purchase the great keyboards!

In ensembles, students learn the basics of music theory: rhythm and notes. The Music Theory class (one semester) takes students above and beyond. Right now they are learning about chord structures, intervals, and chord progressions. They are learning to recognize common chord progressions and to take musical dictation in a variety of time signatures and key signatures. The students are enjoying learning how music is put together. This will culminate in a final composition project for which students will compose and record their own pieces.

"Heroes" in our Band

Before highlighting our upcoming spring concert, I have to thank the students in jazz band for dedicating countless hours, putting in time to grow musically, and also being very professional at our state competition. Going into this jazz season, I knew we graduated a lot of experience, and this year's crew stepped it up, especially at the state festival. Our competition was the hardest I have seen in years, with 8 out of 12 groups scoring higher than an 88, which we were able to accomplish and earn a gold award. The students had an outstanding performance, and even received a standing ovation after the second song! I strive to have a different jazz band than others you hear, while performing a variety of styles and still be entertaining. I believe we accomplished those goals and then some. Great job jazz band.

The percussion ensemble is also gearing up for its spring performances. Our challenge is just getting together as an ensemble. There are so many talented students in our group who also participate in many activities. I appreciate their balancing act. I hope you will come enjoy the Small Ensemble Night on May 26 at 7:30 featuring the Percussion Ensemble and the Chamber Choir performing a variety of entertaining pieces.

This spring's concert activities are coming to a close. The theme of "Heroes" allows both the symphonic band and concert band to be creative with their selections. The symphonic band is an honors group chosen by ability and will open with "Summon the Heroes" the John Williams Olympic Theme from the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. They will also

perform "The Incredibles". The concert band opens with "In the Presence Of Heroes" a song that honors teachers, public safety members, and those that make a difference in peoples lives. There will also be two songs from composer Samuel Hazo. The students enjoyed his music in the winter, and we are going to perform two more of his selections. The concert band will close with "Northwoods: of Might and Mettle" where we will be able to honor generations of family "lumberjacks" who were heroes that were so important to the growth of this region. The entire concert finishes off with our class of 2010 performing one final time together in their senior showcase "School of Rock", featuring classic rock tunes. I am sure all of you will enjoy this program on May 6th. I know I am enjoying the music we are making! ~Joe Fagnant, HHS Band

JH Band performs a theme concert around The Sea

Jr. High Band continues to rehearse for its spring concert that will happen at the Band-o-Rama on May 6. This year we will give you a concert themed around the Sea. Each section in the band has made great strides this year, learning not only more on their instrument, but more as a musician, learning how to listen as an active part of the group. We have been practicing in the band room for about a 2 months and now we are back on stage and the kids sound great. We hope you enjoy our concert.

This year's jazz band season has been another success. The students played

amazingly well at the state jazz festival. We were placed in another division this year with schools much bigger than ours, and we gave it our all. Cameron Clark received an honor of Outstanding Musician at the festival for his great drumming skills. Every judge in our room was very impressed with his ability.



Junior High Jazz Band at the State Festival

Unfortunately we did not place at the festival, but the students and parents who attended could hear how hard and well the kids played. I heard from other directors that they were impressed with what we have up in Houlton, and congratulated our group on a great performance. Looking forward to seeing you in May, Kevin Mania, 7/8 Band

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MSAD #29 MUSIC BOOSTERS

Thank you to all parents, students and volunteers that made the State Vocal Jazz Festival a huge success. The music department really appreciates the efforts of our various chair people for the event. A big thank you to...

- Michelle Daigle and Liz Anderson for co chairing the event and overseeing all the details.
- Michelle Van Tassel for tallying and awards
- Mary Beth DiMarco for set up and tear down
- Julie Delano for judges, timers and door people
- Denise Hannigan for flowers
- Alisha Murray for t-shirts
- Michelle Sullivan for tickets
- Mr. Casillas for parking detail
- Mary Jane Cleary for judges food
- Dina Currier and Peggy McGary for concessions
- Janice Good for her expertise and help with concessions
- Steve Ward for his assistance with a truck for concessions
- Shelly and Jeff Bouchard for helping track student workers

With an event like this, there were hundreds of parents and students involved, too many to name. We have received so many compliments from visitors on how well things were run. Please read the letter on page 2 from Bronwyn Kortge, director at Mount Desert Island High School. At the time of this publication, we still were paying bills and figuring out some profit margins. We will keep everyone informed. Thank you again!

We are applying to host the Middle School State Instrumental Jazz Festival for 2011 and 2012. MSAD #29 Music Boosters has a great reputation for hosting well-run festivals, and doing so helps tremendously with our fundraising efforts.