

ATLANTIC NEWS

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MORNING AT RYE HARBOR
— The sun rises over sleepy Rye Harbor as 2004 gets underway.
— Atlantic News
Photo by John Hirtle

Integrating music into the 'Three 'Rs'

By Liz Premo
HAMPTON — Beethoven's Für Elise: It's not just for music class anymore. Neither is jazz, rock, contemporary, vocal or instrumental compositions. In fact, any number of musical genres can be successfully employed in the classroom to enhance student learning, whether or not a teacher happens to be musically inclined.

That's the educated opinion of Hampton Academy Junior High School music teacher Elizabeth Peterson, who in her first published article has shared these beliefs with the readers of "Educational News Quarterly." Peterson's informative two-page article, "Music for Every Classroom: Listening with a Purpose" currently appears in the Winter 2003-04 issue of the newsletter.

The article encourages teachers to integrate music into their curriculum so students can learn to be active listeners, and offers helpful tips to get students thinking and talking about the music that they hear. No longer randomly employed as mere "background noise" while regular classwork is being done, music can easily be utilized as an important, active ingredient in just about any recipe for learning.

"I took this into a lot of con-

sideration," says Peterson of the article's topic.

Peterson, who has taught music at HAJH for the past three years and also serves as the chorus director, is a firm believer that music can enhance many academic areas, such as language arts and mathematics.



Elizabeth Peterson

"It's very exciting," says Peterson, "finding ways to integrate music into the 'Three R's' which are at the core [of learning]." She encourages teachers "to feel non-intimidated to use music — [to] collaborate with a music teacher or just do it themselves."

She offers one example where the aforementioned "Für Elise" was used in a language arts lesson in which students practiced their letter

writing skills. Students listened to the classical piano piece, discovering the different sections and the form of the music, as well as the half-fiction, half-true story behind it (Elise was quite possibly a woman Beethoven fancied).

Then, each student — pretending to be the composer — had to write a letter to Elise, paying attention to the various moods throughout the piece, and reflecting upon what Beethoven may have been saying with the music. It's this kind of exercise which can increase skills and generate a deeper appreciation for music.

"Kids love music, and it helps to motivate them," explains Peterson.

Peterson, who has a BS degree in Education, a BA in Music, and a Masters degree in Arts and Learning, attended Gordon College in Massachusetts. She began her career not as a music teacher, but rather as a second grade teacher in elementary school.

"I started having my kids listen to music everyday, and it actually developed into a music program," she explains, adding it was integrated "mostly into language arts."

Her latest career as a published writer is actually rooted in her college experience. Her professor granted her the opportunity to utilize her two

majors into a combined project ("How to Integrate Music in the Elementary Classroom"), rather than make program notes for a senior recital. "From there I did a little collection of essays," says Peterson.

The collection is growing. Recently, Peterson has been "in the middle of writing my next article, [entitled] 'How Music is Like Reading a Story.'" She appears to be excited about the prospect of submitting music-related articles to "Educational News Quarterly" on a regular basis.

"It's something that's not written about — the whole aspect," she says of her musical subject matter. A series of articles combined to create a teachers' reference volume is indeed a future publishing possibility for Peterson. "Hopefully it will become a book," Peterson says. Workshops, too, will likely enter the picture, and will help participating teachers to do what Peterson is promoting through her articles: "to get music in the classroom."

"Music is motivating," reiterates Peterson. Actively listening to music, talking and writing about it, and experiencing it in a general classroom setting can boost test scores, improve grades and inspire students to achieve academic excellence. And that should be music to any teacher's ears.

NHS Penny Sale is this weekend at WHS

HAMPTON — It's time again for the North Hampton School Eighth Grade Penny Sale, taking place at Winnacunnet High School in Hampton on Saturday, January 17

beginning at 5 p.m. All proceeds raised at the Penny Sale will benefit the NHS eighth grade trip to Washington, DC...

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The 'Penguin Plunge' is coming

HAMPTON BEACH — A fundraiser for Special Olympics New Hampshire's fifth annual Penguin Plunge will be held on Wednesday, January 21 from 6-8:30 p.m. at Ron's Landing, located on Ocean Boulevard, Hampton

Beach. Music, an auction and a raffle will be part of the fun, and hors d'oeuvres will be served. Proceeds raised at the event will benefit the athletes of SONH...

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Exeter's own designing woman

By Alice Zachos
EXETER — Beverly Joyce of Exeter is a firm believer that the future belongs to those who prepare for it. Joyce offers graphic design to a

diverse group of clients that include nonprofit organizations, colleges and businesses ranging from medical offices to home-based operations...

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Legislators make plans

CONCORD — What is your legislator planning to do in 2004? Granite News Service will help you find out. The following are not titles of bills but

legislative service requests (LSRs) of your legislators. A LSR is a stating of a legislator's intent to file a bill...

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