



Bellwood-Antis School District

Pride - Tradition - Excellence

**400 Martin Street
Bellwood, PA 16617**

Superintendent of Schools

Dr. G. Brian Toth
Phone: (814) 742-2271
Fax: (814) 742-9049

Elementary Principal

Mrs. Terri Harpster
Phone: (814) 742-2272
Fax: (814) 742-9040

Middle School Principal

Mr. Don Wagner
Phone: (814) 742-2273
Fax: (814) 742-9817

High School Principal

Mrs. Diane Williams
Phone: (814) 742-2274
Fax: (814) 742-9817

Assistant Principal

Mrs. Lisa Hartsock
Phone: (814) 742-2274

Director of Special Education

Mrs. Shannon Eye
Phone: (814) 742-2181
Fax: 742-9040

October 25, 2011

Donna and Joy,

I would like to again extend my appreciation for your enjoyable, and very informative, presentation at Myers Elementary School on 19 October, 2011. You provided the students with a rich opportunity to experience in fun and interactive ways how music and history have come together to shape America, and how music has influenced our understanding of ourselves as Americans. Your keen integration of music with stories of our collective past, and your use of costume and instruments popular in early America - from the triangle to the fife and penny-whistle - provided all of us with a vision of just how important a role music has played in the history of our nation and the shaping of our national images and narrative. You also challenged the students to explore how important music is to not only our collective life but to our individual lives, in particular the value of music in the writing and sharing of our own, personal, life story. We too often take for granted music as a backdrop to what we do each day and, more generally, to the development of American society. But you animated a different way of thinking in your presentation by encouraging the students to keep close in mind that music is integral to what we do and to how we interpret and tell the history of our still young country. Finally, thank you for including Maestra Teresa Cheung in your program. Her participation added value to the learning experience for the students and complemented your presentation.

Jennifer Wright

Vocal Music Teacher
Myers Elementary School

Name Madison Otto

Dear Ms. Cheung, Ms. Wissinger, Ms. Myers

Thank you for coming to our school.

It was a pleasure to meet you. I liked

when you dressed up as Johnny Appleseed.

Where did you find all of the flutes?

How did you get all of the information?

Is the piano hard to play? Does

the flute take a lot of practice?

Is it hard to be a conductor?

You did an excited performance. I had

an amazing time. How much time did

it take to learn about the

Revolutionary war? Does it take

a lot of practice to perform?

The flute is a very beautiful.

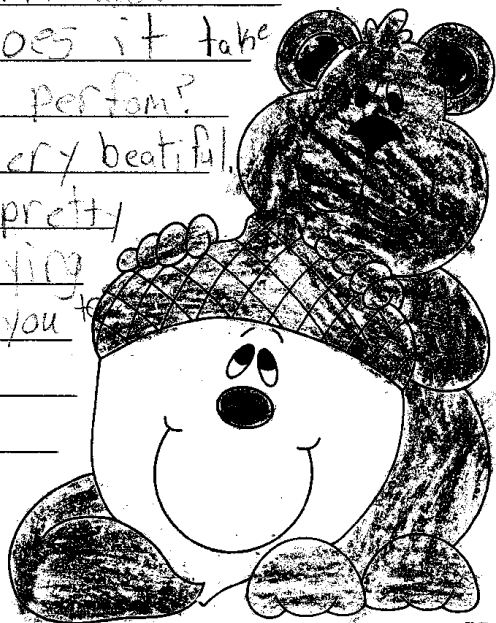
The piano is very pretty.

Do you have fun playing

it? It is very nice of you to

Come to
our

School
Madison Otto





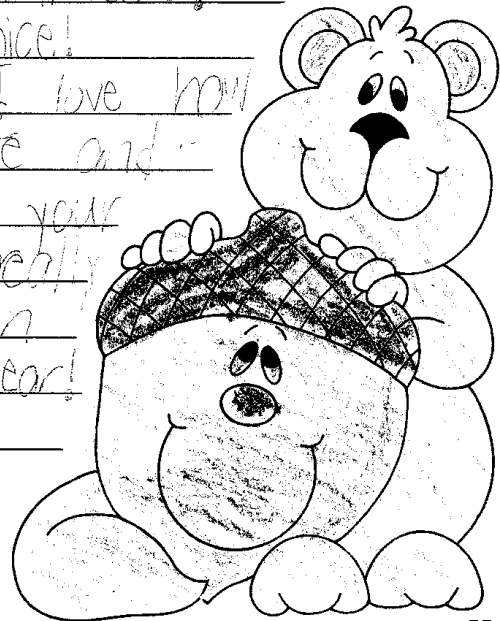
Name Haithyn Dickerson



Dear Ms. Cheung, Ms. Wissinger, Ms. Myers
thank you for coming to our school
I really liked when we clipped, and I
liked the show. My favorite part
was when you dressed up like
Johnny Appleseed I really liked that. I
Love to play the flute. When I grow
up I want to be a conductor just
like you Ms. Cheung. I can't wait to
go to the Mishler Theatre! And I
was wondering, does Ms. Cheung do
you play any instruments?



I think you are all nice!
you are all the best. I love how
you play the flute and
piano. And I loved your
out fits they were really
cool. I hope you can
come again next year!
Your friend, Haithyn



Keys Kids Learn about Symphonic Music

There was a lot of happy clapping in the Tennessee Williams theatre the morning of November 15, 2012. In addition to bringing artists to the schools, this time the schools also came to hear the artists: Donna Wissinger and Joy Myers, Key West native Maestra Sebrina Alfonso and her South Florida Symphony.

In a wonderful preface to its regular November concert, the orchestra hosted over 900 students from up and down the Keys in two 45-minute presentations designed just for them, and the first and second graders were well prepared. In advance of their trip to the theatre, their teachers and teaching artists Donna and Joy told them stories about what they would see and hear and gave them a taste of the music.

The theme of the concert was America and freedom (“the freedom to make good choices”), and the welcome was from one conch to many others, as Maestra Alfonso emphasized her common heritage with the children. They were kids, of course, and some squirmed and bounced in their concert theatre seats, but all paid attention.

Some of the students were rapt with the music—their first live orchestra concert. Many kept time, following Maestra Alfonso’s motions with their own conducting hands. Even more bounced their legs or otherwise kept time with the rhythms. They all laughed at the blatt of the brass section mouthpiece, part of a well-constructed and generously given set of demonstrations by members of the various orchestra sections. They sent up a whoop when they heard the gong in Copland’s “Fanfare for the Common Man.” They cheered and applauded when they heard the themes from “Star Wars” and “The Little Mermaid.” And they listened attentively to Jeremy Ribando’s Falling Down Doodle and the story and music of Robert Kerr’s Ulster-Scots: Voyage of Hope and Johnny Appleseed, clapping along as part of the rhythm section for “Johnny’s Hoe Down.”

Experiencing their reactions to the music and stories and demonstrations was an adult pleasure of major magnitude. We sat there and soaked in all of the appreciation that we felt in that room—it was palpable. The oohing and aahing and pointing, clapping, tapping and conducting were a joy to watch. We got goosebumps knowing that more than a few lives were changed that morning. It was clear that the teachers were thrilled, and backstage afterwards everyone was glowing. They truly enjoyed being able to provide the experience. It was a win-win for everyone.

On this November 15 morning, you did not have to be born in New York City to be a child introduced early to a full symphony orchestra. You just had to be lucky enough to live in the Keys.

Susanne Woods, Board member, Florida Keys Council of the Arts

“Our students were not able to come! How can we make sure they too have this opportunity?” Father Baker

From the Executive Director of the SFSO:

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. As you can see, I have copied Donna, the brilliant mind behind this powerful program and Liz from the Keys Arts Council. We are working on another similar event for January. We will be happy to let them know about your group so hopefully, they can work them in. This program was created by a collaborative effort between Donna and Joy who design and implement the curriculum at the school level, Liz who coordinated with the school district and the SFSO for the musical opportunity. This first event targeted the early elementary year students, January, the older elementary kids.

This was the first time I have been a part of this and I still can't get the images of the children's looks of joy out of my mind. Donna and Joy met them in the hall with fife and snare drum and the kids marched right into the TW! They made the music come alive.

You will be happy to know that Manny and Anita Garcia provided the housing for Donna and Joy for the entire week, as they visited all of the public schools from Marathon, south.