



SPIRIT WEEK STUDENTS "TWINNING" WITH MRS. EREVIA

HONORS CHOIR AUDITION RESULTS

BMS Chorus

Over 250 students are signed up for chorus at Butler Middle School! Rehearsals are off and running. Some choir members are pictured above "twinning" with Mrs. Erevia during twin day of spirit week. Students are getting in the spirit for a successful year of making music.

May Masterclasses

Prior to graduation and spring concerts this past May, students at the Butler Senior High School enjoyed masterclasses and workshops from professional conductors and performers in the area and beyond.

Band students worked with Dr. Jason Worzbyl of IUP, Dr. Jonathan Helmick of Slippery Rock University, and Dr. Travis Weller, of Messiah College. Choral students enjoyed vocal masterclasses with Dr. Colleen Gray, of Slippery Rock University, and a Broadway workshop presented by graduate of our program, Sarah Bishop. See more about her in the "Focus on a Graduate" section.

Each expert had a different way of assisting the high school musicians to bring out the best of their talents and abilities, encouraging them to think differently about their musical craft, inspiring higher artistry as we approached the spring concerts. We hope to apply those lessons as we seek for even higher aims this school year!

Practice Room Memorialized

The "Danny Macko Memorial Practice Room" is a new fixture in the music wing of Butler Senior High. Mr. Macko loved music, and was known for playing in bands. When his band community saw an opportunity to honor his musical legacy, they wanted the Butler music program to benefit. Music students for centuries have held a love/hate relationship with practice rooms, as they can represent a respite from the real world, a chance to hone a craft, or they might serve as a place of frustration, working out a rhythm or working on instrumental or vocal technique. The foundation to honor Mr. Macko thought that to dedicate a practice room would be a suitable way to make a donation to the music department and to memorialize their friend and colleague in music.

The generous donation was made through proceeds from a rock concert held last March, which went to benefit new materials for elementary music educators, which will benefit all students. Future benefit concerts are planned, and future donations will serve to help bring more of Danny's style of music to the Butler music program. The photo below is from the dedication ceremony after the memorial plaque was hung.



On October 4, students in grades 10-12 from the Butler Choral program traveled to Westminster College and auditioned for a panel of judges who rated their tone quality, diction, accuracy of notes, rhythms and musicianship. Singers needed to place in the top twelve of their section to be selected for the festival, which consists of the highest scoring singers from among Butler, Mercer, Lawrence and Beaver counties. The Honors Choir festival will take place from November 1 to 3, culminating in a concert at 2 pm in Westminster College's Orr auditorium on Saturday, November 3. Admission is \$5 and you are encouraged to support our students. Congratulations to the following students who will represent Butler: Joseph Atkinson, Amanda Bishop, Ali Cammisa, Abby Cavanaugh, Gina Denny, and Gabe Stupka, appearing in the photo below with their fellow auditionees.



Focus on a Graduate:

Sarah Bishop

The Butler Area School District Music Department is proud of all its students as they achieve learning and performing goals. We hold in high esteem the students who go on to find successes in a variety of careers. In this column, we would like to brag about successes of our graduates and fill the community in on their recent professional activities. Miss Bishop recently returned to Butler Senior High School to give a masterclass to choral students, who very much enjoyed her session.

Sarah Bishop grew up in Butler, Pennsylvania, a small town north of Pittsburgh. In her senior year of high school, she decided to focus on theater and attended the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music, where she earned her BFA in Musical Theater. While in school, she also attended various workshops including The School at Jacob's Pillow Jazz/Musical Theatre Dance Program. Shortly after moving to New York City, she started touring with Roundabout Theatre Company's Tony award winning production of *Cabaret* as Helga. She has also been seen in Geva Theatre Center's *The Other Josh Cohen* and in Lincoln Park Performing Arts production of *The Sound of Music* as Maria. Other favorites include ELLE in *Legally Blonde* and Lina Lamont in *Singin' in the Rain*. Sarah currently studies comedy in Upright Citizen's Brigade and loves to compose and play the trumpet and piano. Sarah can also be seen performing at Feinstein's 54 Below and in Ridgewood Symphony Orchestra's Broadway Favorites. When asked to comment on how her music studies at Butler impacted her future career, she said the following:



I always loved being involved in music at Butler Area School District. My first love for theater and music developed when I participated in Center Township Elementary's 6th grade musical of *The Secret Garden* and played trumpet and piano in the band and orchestra. The first time I felt like I was learning how to become a true musician, however, was when I started participating in PMEA Choir, made possible through the Butler school system. I was lucky enough to participate in every one of those festivals and even got to attend the All-Eastern Conference. I learned to sight read, to sing in many different languages and to listen and blend as a group. But most of all, I got to sing. I got to miss Calculus and English for a couple days to make some of the most interesting, beautiful, challenging and stimulating music that eventually launched me on my career path. And who says that arts in public schools aren't that important? When it came time to audition for schools, the music department had my back. I spent most of my lunch breaks in the music wing practicing piano and rehearsing songs for my college screenings. Y'all college auditions are hard. Not impossible, but extremely hard.

When I applied, not only did I have to do the normal application stuff, the essays, the tests, but I also had to show up at each school and audition to be accepted into their specific program. Now, that can be quite challenging for any teenager who is not only a full time student, but is loaded down with extracurriculars in order to get into said colleges. Even though that time was challenging and insane, it taught me many skills that I still use as an artist living in New York City.

Once you leave school and you no longer have a set schedule, it can be challenging to juggle working so you can pay rent, auditioning on a weekly basis and continuing to study and shape your craft. It's a skill that even the most practiced professionals will say is a constant challenge- the juggling act.

So if any of you students feel like you are just barely treading water and you can't wait to graduate, just know that what you're learning will stay with you in some capacity for the rest of your life. And if you love music, keep doing it. You don't necessarily have to become a full time musician and move to New York City, but if music is a part of your life and it makes you happy- never let it go. That's the most valuable thing I learned at Butler High School.

Modern Band Summit

Mrs. Carrie Persichini, music teacher at McQuiston Elementary, Center Avenue Community School, and partially at Summit Elementary, attended the Modern Band Summit at Colorado State University this past July. The four-day professional development conference included teacher-led workshops, guest speakers, and nightly jam sessions that featured music creativity and community. The Modern Band program teaches kids to perform, improvise, and compose using popular styles they know and love including pop, rock, reggae, hip hop, R&B, and other modern styles. Modern band classes feature guitar, bass, keyboard, drums, vocals, and technology. Thanks to a grant from the Golden Tornado Scholastic foundation, Center Avenue Community School now has 12 acoustic guitars and the students are now learning the Modern Band Program!



Mrs. Persichini was also the 2nd place winner of a teacher essay contest sponsored by NextTier Bank. Her prizes included a \$200 gift card for musical equipment, notebooks, folders and pencils for the students, and even a huge gift basket of school supplies!



Upcoming Events

- October 9: Marching Band Indoor concert. 7pm. IHS Auditorium
- October 10: Senior High Choir Fall Concert. SHS Auditorium 7:30pm
- October 13: Ligonier Parade
- November 3: Honors Choir concert. 2:00 pm Westminster College
- November 12: Veterans Day Parade
- November 16-18: Virginia Band Trip
- November 24: Spirit of Christmas Parade Pittsburgh (AM)
- November 24: Butler Holiday Parade (PM)
- December 1: Honors Band (Westminster)
- December 1: Butler Choirs with Butler Symphony (IHS 7:30 pm)
- December 4: 8th grade band 7:00 pm
- December 11: BMS choir concert @ SHS 6:30 pm
- December 12: Senior High Choirs 7:30 pm
- December 13: 7th grade choirs at 6 pm (IHS), 8-9 grade choirs at 7:30 pm
- December 18: IHS orchestra 7 pm (IHS)
- December 19: SHS orchestra 7 pm (IHS)