



BUTLER ORCHESTRA STUDENTS PERFORM WITH "THE PIANO GUYS"

# Butler Music Dept Newsletter

## Winter 2016

### ORCHESTRA MASTERCLASSES

## Orchestra News

### Violinists for Piano Guys

Eight violinists ranging from grades 9-12 were given the opportunity to perform with The Piano Guys at Westminster College on November 30, 2016. The violinists were seniors Nina Grossi, Katelen Shuler and Corrine Thiel, junior Alexes Velez, sophomores Julia Coyle and Michelle Kenyon, and freshmen Hannah Lindell and Calista McFeaters. The Piano Guys are an American musical group consisting of Jon Schmidt, Steven Sharp Nelson, Paul Anderson, and Al van der Beek. They gained popularity through YouTube, where they posted piano and cello renditions of popular songs and classical music. The students from Butler performed on the piece "Beethoven's 5 Secrets" which combines OneRepublic's tune "Secrets" with melodies and moments from all four movements of Beethoven's 5th Symphony. The students performed for over 1,700 people and even got to meet The Piano Guys after the concert.

### Rock Orchestra

The Butler Rock Orchestra is well under way for the 2016-17 school year. This new performing ensemble began last January and has grown into a 28-member ensemble.

The Rock Orchestra is an audition-based ensemble open to grades 7 - 12 that meets after school once a week. By combining traditional orchestra instruments (violin, viola, cello) and adding electric bass, keyboard, and drum set, the Rock Orchestra has a unique sound of their own. Taking ideas from groups such as Vitamin String Quartet and 2Cellos, the Rock Orchestra performs orchestral covers of pop and rock songs. Last spring they performed pieces by bands such as Journey, The Beatles, Nirvana, Guns N' Roses, and more. This holiday season, we are performing pieces by the Trans-Siberian Orchestra. The Butler Rock Orchestra will be performing at the IHS Orchestra Concert on December 12 at 7:00 pm in the Intermediate High School Auditorium.

### Professional Violist Visit

Having a professional musician visit the students is always a positive learning experience. At Butler we strive to give our students real world music experiences and bringing in professionals of the field is just one way to achieve this.



On December 16, Stephen Weiss will be visiting both the SHS and IHS Orchestras. Weiss is the Assistant Principal Violist of the CMU Philharmonic, and he is a member of the CMU Contemporary Music Ensemble. Other orchestral experience

includes seasons with the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra, and the Pittsburgh Civic Orchestra where he was their Principal Violist. He has also performed the Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 at the Interharmony International Music Festival in Arcidosso, Italy.

Orchestra students also received a masterclass from David Sinclair (photo above). Sinclair is a Butler High School graduate, principal violist for the Westmoreland Symphony Orchestra, adjunct faculty at Seton Hill University, and has appeared with leading regional orchestral organizations.

### PMEA DISTRICT FESTIVALS

The Butler Orchestra is fortunate to have 4 students selected for District Orchestra this year at Indiana Area Junior High School on January 26 - 28, 2017. Butler will be represented by **Jennifer Baum** (viola), **Sarah Hepfl** (violin), **Michelle Kenyon** (violin), and **Olivia Montag** (cello). The following band students have also been selected for the orchestra festival: **Mckenzie Cooper** (flute), **Nicole Laborie** (flute), **Kayla Karenbauer** (oboe), **Noah Reed** (clarinet), **Gabby Finan** (horn), **Dante Burns** (percussion), and **Luke Walker** (percussion). The Festival Concert is at 11:00 AM on Saturday, Jan. 28. The Guest Conductor is Scott Laird.

## Straight No Chaser

The Butler Senior High Choirs traveled to Pittsburgh on Tuesday, December 6 to hear the a capella group *Straight No Chaser* (pictured below) perform at the Benedum Center. Students dined at the Hard Rock Café in Station Square and then enjoyed a fantastic performance of rock hits and holiday tunes. According to senior Trey Lorenzini: "It was a fun experience getting to see an a capella group live!"

A new student led a capella group has arisen from out of the Butler Senior High Choirs, and this evening was inspirational for them as they head into their debut performance on Wednesday, December 14.



Butler choir students selected for District choir will travel to Hickory High School on 12-24. Good luck to the following: **Joe Atkinson, Steven Beichner, Abigail Cavanaugh, Mckenzie Cooper, Darian Gold, Nina Grossi, and Noah Reed.**



## IHS Choir

The BIHS 7th and 8th grade chorus has been hard at work with Ms. Walker preparing for their Winter Concert on Monday, December 19th at 6:00 pm! We hope you join us for an evening of holiday music. The program includes works in varying styles, tonalities and languages. Some student favorites include: Nes Gadol Haya Sham (a Hebrew celebration of Hanukkah), Dona Nobis Pacem (a Latin plea for peace) and Carol of the Bells (a Ukrainian Christmas carol). Much thanks goes to Ms. Victoria Walker, who did a stellar job filling in for Mrs. Waseleski, who returns in January from maternity leave. Ms. Walker also served as a long-term substitute in our elementary music classrooms during last school year. She has been an asset to our programs, and we appreciate all her hard work!

## McQuiston Music TEAM

Mrs. Persichini's students at McQuistoin elementary school will visit Sunnyview Center on December 9. They will also be caroling for school bus arrivals on December 20. McQuiston Music TEAM is a voluntary enrichment music activity open to McQuiston students in grades 3 and 4. TEAM stands for Teaching Everyone Acceptance through Music, and their goal is to promote a positive school community through song and performance.

## Band Notes

The Butler Golden Tornado Marching Band will be performing on their trip to Orlando, Florida over the holiday break. The spring issue of this newsletter will feature more news and events from that trip.

Congratulations to the following students who represented Butler at the PMEA Honors Band festival on December 1-3: Mckenzie Cooper, flute; Nicole Laborie, flute; Sarah Nedz, flute; Kayla Karenbauer, oboe; Keera Gilliland, clarinet; Gabby Finan, horn; Dante Burns, percussion; Luke Walker, percussion.

Congratulations to the following students who will represent Butler at the PMEA District Band festival in January: Mckenzie Cooper, flute, Nicole Laborie, flute, Sarah Nedz, flute, Kayla Karenbauer, oboe; Noah Reed, clarinet; Gabby Finan, horn; Dante Burns, percussion; Luke Walker, percussion; Anna Kaufman, alto saxophone; Patrick Kriley, Eb Contralto Clarinet; Phill Smith, euphonium

## Student Quotes

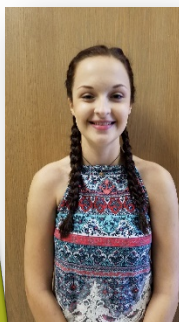


I'm very excited for the band trip to Florida

--- Trey Lorenzini, senior

The music program here has inspired me to become a musician for the rest of my life. It's something that I don't want to give up. I can't imagine doing anything else with my life

Mckenzie Cooper, senior



## Elementary students care

Students in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade who have Mrs. Kathie Groves for general music reached out to Jon Schmidt from the "Piano Guys." Mr. Schmidt suffered a tragedy recently in losing his daughter, so these students made cards to give him on their local tour. While our orchestra students got to share the stage, Mrs. Groves was able to deliver over 200 cards to Mr. Schmidt. Mrs. Groves shows a different video of The Piano Guys as an opening activity for her general music classes, and so this loss provided a logical way for these students to reach out and express their caring attitude.







## Butler Choirs with Butler Symphony

On December 10, the Butler Senior High Women's Ensemble and Mixed Ensemble will merge with the Seneca Valley Chamber Ensemble to perform a concert with the Butler County Symphony Orchestra. The orchestra and the choirs will perform an array of holiday favorites. Butler choirs will also present an a capella pre-show as entertainment in the lobby of the Butler Intermediate High School.

This represents the fourth year in recent years that the Butler Symphony has requested combining with our high school choirs. Past years students have commented that the experience of performing with professional musicians for an audience of 1000 people has been a highlight of their academic and musical year!

The choirs will hold their holiday concert on December 14 at 7:30 in the Senior High auditorium. However, prior to that, there will be a celebration of carols and cookies in the cafeteria at 6:00. Donations will be made to the Caring Angels, and student performances will occur during that hour while people are enjoying snacks and fellowship. Thanks to Texas Roadhouse and Regal Theater for their generous food donations!

Students taking the Audio Recording 1 and Audio Recording 2 class will have new computers and updated software to use this year. Butler Area School District is very proud of its offerings in music technology. Other students using the lab are those taking music theory, songwriting and class piano.

The lab update, like all technology, did not begin smooth, but our school's technology department was on top of things with regards to calling music software companies, working through bugs and issues, and helping to get us operational so that we can use the software as a tool for learning.

Songwriting students will have access to notation software Sibelius and the cloud-based notation software, Noteflight. Music theory students are using [www.musictheory.net](http://www.musictheory.net) and [www.teoria.com](http://www.teoria.com). Check these sites out as a way to improve your own music theory knowledge.

Recording students are creating their own hip-hop loop-based songs, learning to edit existing music, creating music to sync with video, and they created a spooky soundscape for Halloween.

Senior music student McKenzie Cooper said "The new computers give easier access to learning how music works." Senior recording student Trey Lorenzini said "Computers are making recording a lot easier."

## CHOIR PARTY!

The Butler Senior High Choirs joined up with the Butler Middle School 6<sup>th</sup> grade choirs on November 21 (pictured below). Senior High students performed for the 6<sup>th</sup> graders, and the 6<sup>th</sup> graders performed for the Senior High choirs.

## Music Tech lab gets updated



*Students using the Pro Tools recording software in the newly update music technology lab at the Butler Senior High School*

We followed up the performances with pizza, some bonding time, and finally some Christmas caroling. Senior high students "adopted" a sixth grader, and vice-versa. It was a fun event, and we hope to see these 6<sup>th</sup> grade singers all back in choir next year when they attend Butler Intermediate School! These groups are performing on December 14 (SHS) and 21 (6<sup>th</sup> grade).



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- December 10: Senior High Choirs sing with Butler Symphony – IHS auditorium 7:30 pm. Tickets available at [www.butlersymphony.org](http://www.butlersymphony.org)
- December 12: Intermediate Orchestra and Rock Orchestra concert – IHS auditorium 7:00 pm
- December 13: Senior High Orchestra concert – IHS auditorium 7:00 pm
- December 14: Senior High Choir – SHS cafeteria 6:00 pm for carols and cookies (and pulled pork courtesy of Texas Roadhouse). Then concert at 7:30 pm in the SHS auditorium
- December 19: 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Choir concert – IHS auditorium – 6 pm
- December 19: 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Choir concert – IHS auditorium – 7:30 pm
- December 20: 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Choir concert – BMS auditorium – 6:00 pm
- December 21: 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Choir concert – MBS auditorium – 6:00 pm
- January 12-14: PMEA District Choir – Hickory High School
- January 26-28: PMEA District Orchestra – Indiana High School
- February 3-4: PMEA District Jazz Band
- February 8: Choir party grades 9-12 – SHS choir room 6:00-8:00 pm
- February 9-11: PMEA District Band at Butler Intermediate High School
- February 17: Big Band Dance – Crossfire 7:30 pm
- February 22-24: PMEA Region Choir
- March 9-11: PMEA Region Orchestra
- March 12: Jazz Band concert – Succop Theater at Butler County Community College – 2:00 pm
- March 17&18: All School Musical (*Shrek*): SHS auditorium – 8:00 pm
- March 23-25: PMEA Region Band
- March 28: PMEA Junior High District Band
- April 4: Butler County Festival – IHS auditorium 7:00 pm
- April 5: Choral Masterwork Concert – SHS auditorium 7:30 pm
- April 19-22: PMEA All-state Choir, orchestra, band
- April 22: FAN (Fine Art and Beyond) Showcase – IHS multiple venues
- See the spring newsletter for May concert dates or log onto our music department website at <http://www.basdk12.org/domain/1509>

### More student quotes:

Katelen Shuler: *The Piano Guys concert was a great opportunity for our class and people that got to go. Performing in front of 1700 people was different!*

Sarah Hepfl: *Orchestra is always a lot of fun!*

Jennifer Baum: *Clinician David Sinclair was interesting and made the class a lot fun – it was a different experience.*

Julia Coyle: *Orchestra definitely gave us a lot of once in a lifetime opportunities like performing with the piano guys and different concerts.*

Michelle Kenyon: *The orchestra always provides amazing opportunities for its students. We had the opportunity of playing with the piano guys, which is a once in a lifetime opportunity. The master class with Mr. Sinclair was an awesome look into what college music would be.*