

# MHS Fine Arts Newsletter

"So long as the human spirit thrives on this planet, music in some living form will accompany and sustain it."  
~Aaron Copland

## Artist in the Spotlight

This month's artist:

Devyn White, MHS Choirs

The MHS Choirs, including concert choir, freshman chorus, women's choir, and chamber choir, offer students opportunities to sing, make music with each other, rehearse, and perform for the school district and community. Students gain musical skills and a lifelong appreciation for music. The groups also take advantage of touring and taking part in festivals and competitions in the greater New England area.

Devyn White, a senior at MHS, has displayed exceptional talent and leadership in choir. She is involved in concert choir, women's choir, and chamber choir. This past December, Devyn sang "O Holy Night" as a solo in our annual winter concert at the historic Organ Hall. Devyn would like to take a moment to talk about her singing journey.



"As if most of you don't know, singing is huge part of my life. Music has always been incorporated into my day since I was born. I've been singing since I was 3 or 4, starting out with just singing to CDs while I was in my car seat. I was in my church children's choir when I was 5 and had cute solos here and there. I started choir in 5th grade at the Marsh Grammar School and that's when I fell in love. That hour that I got to spend in the crowded room was the best part of my day. It was about blending our voices to create a beautiful sound. I didn't really get a solo until my 8th grade talent show when I sang for a full auditorium. It was exhilarating! I continued on with choir in high school, knowing that I needed it to keep me sane. Freshman year flew by but I wouldn't have survived it without choir. I've been very lucky, getting a solo each year for our concerts. Mrs. Mancini and Mr. Woodard have always given me the chance to prove my greatness and I'm very grateful for that. Now here I am, my senior year, as choir president and singing the solo for our winter concert. But I'm still humbled by the fact that people compliment me on my voice, and I wouldn't have the confidence I have now to stand in front of a crowd of strangers and sing my heart out if it wasn't for my family and my friends."

Devyn is a joy to have in choir and we are excited to see where her voice continues to take her in the future!



### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Thursday, January 26

Concert Band & Jazz Band  
Winter Concert  
7pm - MHS Auditorium

#### Saturday, January 28

NESBA Winter Guard  
Competition  
3pm - Salem HS, Salem, Ma



## In the Classroom

MHS Studio/Jazz Band challenges students to learn the language of Jazz.



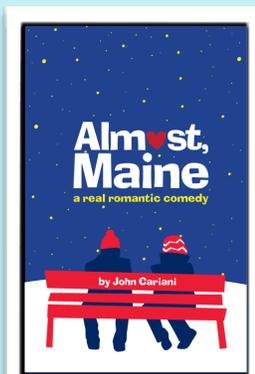
The Methuen High School Studio/Jazz Band is an audition-only ensemble which, along with Dirty Hands Ink, is made up of the top instrumental music students in the school. This year's Jazz Band is 23 members, made up of 1 flute, 1 clarinet, 5 saxophones, 6 trumpets, 4 trombones, and a rhythm section comprised of guitar, piano, bass, and percussion.

The Jazz Band has been rehearsing every Thursday evening since the beginning of November and have already had one performance, as the opening act of the Tenney winter concert on December 13th.

Jazz Band rehearsals are fast paced and challenge students to learn the "language" of jazz. New to most of the members this year is jazz improvisation. We have been working every week on improvised solos, where the students are provided with chord symbols. These symbols act as a roadmap of sorts, providing a framework of notes that they can use, while actual order of the notes and rhythms are made up on the spot. Students are effectively learning to compose new music on the fly with each improvised solo. Students have also been learning how to perform in different styles, including swing, rock, and funk.

Want to hear the Jazz Band perform? Join us at the Methuen High School Winter Band Concert on Thursday, January 26th at 7:00 in the MHS auditorium.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING - MHS THEATER



The Methuen High Theater department is "at it again" as they begin rehearsals for their upcoming production of *"Almost, Maine"* by John Ciarani. *Almost, Maine* is a unique story of nine different couples and the many stages of love that we all experience. One magical Friday night under the cover of the Aurora Borealis, the fictional town of *Almost, Maine* comes alive and discovers (through the eyes of it's residents) that love is exciting, painful, disappointing, hope-filled, joyous and sometimes even embarrassing - but in the end, always worth it! It is a sweet and tender look at the realities of love performed by some of the best actors in the school. In auditioning for *Almost, Maine*, one of the many things that theater students have discovered is that there are not as many roles or ensemble opportunities in a play as there are in a musical. Over 40 students auditioned for the play with only 19 roles available. It's difficult, but often the reality of theater. That said, there will still be plenty to do as the

theater group is also getting ready for an upcoming musical cabaret. Sticking with our theme of "love and heartbreak" the theater group will be performing and hosting a dinner cabaret entitled "Seasons of Love".

Student Director, Cristian Ramos will work under the guidance of Mrs. Walsh to bring over 20 Broadway "love and heartbreak" songs to life at The Sons of Italy in Methuen. There is a lot going on in the theater department! *Almost Maine* performances are March 2, 3 and 4 in the MHS Auditorium. The cabaret will also be in March.

The MHS Fine Arts Newsletter is a monthly collaboration and contribution of teachers and students within the department.

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