

Outlook on Halton Hills

"Electricity in the air" at Music Fest Canada

There was electricity in the air as approximately 9,000 students from across Canada joined together for MusicFest Canada in Calgary.

Thirty-two Georgetown District High School students returned from the Prairie province victorious as the jazz choir and stage band captured two bronze medals.

"It is quite an incredible accomplishment considering they have been in existence two years," said Anita Blake, the conductor of the stage band. Katie Kirkup-Ortolan conducted the jazz choir.

One Grade 11 student, Adam Broughton, who is a drummer and vocalist for the jazz choir and drummer for the stage band, was one of 100 students nominated by their peers for their talent.

MusicFest Canada, held May 17 to 23, is a national jazz festival and competition.

Originally called the Canadian Stage Band Festival when it started 16 years ago, the festival has expanded to include vocal and more traditional music.

"It is the biggest festival of its kind in North America," Mrs. Blake said.

To qualify bands had to be invited to perform and therefore had to take part in regional competitions.

Before their performances the stage band and jazz choir received a half hour of work with a music professor from the University of Washington.

"It was the most positive criticism we have ever received," the music teacher said. If you want to improve you have to be constantly criticized for what you are doing right and wrong.

During their competitions, the stage band played Strike Up The Band, Only Yesterday and Gringo, while the jazz choir sang Route '66, I'll Be Seeing You and Birdland.

The bands played one 20-minute concert each.

Not only did the students perform their selected numbers, but they also participated in clinics and workshops taught by experts of their own particular instrument.

After catching a quick bite, the Georgetown students trooped to the Stampede Corral in Calgary to listen to top musicians perform evening



Katie Kirkup-Ortolan, conductor of the jazz choir, and Anita Blake (right), conductor of the stage band, took 32 Georgetown students to Calgary for MusicFest '88.

concerts.

The music festival, Mrs. Blake said, "was one of the best musical experiences I have had in a long time."

Not only was it highly professionally organized and had the finest musicians there, she said, but the best young musicians were there.

The whole event was phenomenal and had so many facets, the teacher said. There were kids in jeans intermingled with those dressed in costumes in readiness for playing on stage, and one hundred million instruments lying around.

There was noise and energy and enthusiasm, Mrs. Blake said. "A

showcase of our Canadian talent."

Students ranging in age from 12 to 25 from schools across the province attended the event.

"The kids had a great time. The learning was very positive," the teacher said. "They had fun doing it. When good education can be fun, I am all for it."

On Sunday, the Georgetown group had an excursion to Banff to see the mountains. It was a wonderful, hot day, Mrs. Blake said. Everyone wore their shorts.

To put the show on the road, the Georgetown musicians raised \$20,000 through fundraising and

donations from corporations and service groups.

It was really hard, stressful work practising for the festival, fundraising and teaching on top of that, the teacher said.

"If someone asked me was it worth it I would say without hesitation yes," Mrs. Blake said.

MusicFest is to be held in Toronto next year. Mrs. Blake hopes to include a concert choir and band.

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We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate

MRS. F. ALEXANDER Mississauga

the winner of our "Money Jar" draw at the B.I.G. Show this last weekend.

Mrs. Alexander's Guess \$133.33

ACTUAL TOTAL \$133.40

We wish to thank everyone who took the time to drop in and see us!

New curator named

The McMichael Canadian Art Collection is pleased to announce the appointment of Jean Blodgett to the position of Chief Curator. Ms. Blodgett is a highly respected curator, writer, teacher and researcher who brings to McMichael a wealth of over 20 years experience in Canadian art.

Ms. Blodgett has served as curator for a number of art galleries including: The Art Gallery of Ontario, The Winnipeg Art Gallery and The Agnes Etherington Centre. She has acted as a consultant for the Canada Council Art Bank and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. As well, she has been Associate Curator at McMichael since 1983 and in 1986 she organized the highly acclaimed Kenjuak Retrospective.

Ms. Blodgett is a prolific writer of books, exhibition catalogues and articles including: Kenjuak, Grasp Tight the Old Ways: Selections from the Klamer Family Collection of Inuit Art, and A Bibliography of Contemporary Inuit Art.

As a teaching professional at numerous Canadian universities, Ms. Blodgett has taught and lectured on many aspects of historical and contemporary art.

Ms. Blodgett will be joined by Megan Bice, who was recently named Associate Curator at McMichael. Ms. Bice will have curatorial responsibility for the works of the Group of Seven and their contemporaries. The combined strengths of Ms. Blodgett and Ms. Bice will further the development and depth of this growing collection.

The McMichael houses the largest display of works by the Group of Seven, and their contemporaries, and has developed an important collection of Inuit art, Woodland Indian and Northwest coast Indian art.

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