

**Interview between Cathy Devos (C) Tri-school Instrumental Music , 4th and 5th and Middle/High School Instrumental Music and Vicky O'Bresly (V) HPC President
11/10/11**

V. Tell me a bit about your musical responsibilities for the schools?

C. I teach 4-12 grade instrumental music and share fourth grade with my wonderful and longtime colleague Dorothy Falarski for one-half hour s at each Elementary School. I am responsible for teaching the recorder, flute, cello/bass and clarinet units. Fifth grade I teach one hour a week at each Elementary School the string players....violin/viola/cello/bass. In sixth grade I continue to teach strings and develop further technique and ensemble playing with the children.

Before this time, most of the pieces are in unison. So sixth grade is a big jump....moving to more technique and four-part harmonies. In 7/8 I teach the strings for two days a week and then students from the band/orchestra rotate between Andria Mullan and myself, depending on their preference for a jazz band ensemble or full orchestra (winds and strings).

In PHS, I have the privilege to work with the orchestra once again on a much more advanced level....many more performances, musicals, competitions, tours, etc. On "G Days" in the block scheduling, Andria shares her winds with me depending on the instrumentation called for in a full orchestra situation. For example, right now we are working on a Mozart Piano Concerto, featuring Michael Shi....flute, clarinet, basson, trombone and horn are joining us to put this piece together.

V. How do you organize your schedule across the schools and what does your typical week look like?

C. Fifth grade is one hour a week at each of the schools. And fourth grade is one half hour at each of these schools.

V. Can you tell me something about your background, especially before you became a music/instrumental/vocal teacher for our schools?

C. I grew up in St. Louis, MO (go Cards) and received my Bachelor's in music education. My primary instrument is the flute. I taught band for

two years at a private Catholic School in St. Louis fourth-eighth grade. I took two years off to practice and study flute, and then went to the SF Conservatory of Music for my master's in performance. I have been in Piedmont since 1981, but started part time while I was at the Conservatory and gradually worked up to full time.

V. What has surprised you most about your work these past few years?

C. There is more ongoing expectation in teaching and all of the various standards across the board. And this is true for every teacher and administrator in the district and especially all of the admin assistants. More is expected in regards to email and technology, there are more meetings of every kind.

V. What do you feel most proud of from your work?

C. I love it most when a student who is not really getting it has that light bulb come on and they start excelling when you least expect it...and that's when I realize this is why I need to hang in there. I am also very proud of my high school orchestra when they compete at a high level.

V. What would you like to see, in terms of your work, going forward?

C. I would like to be able to use more technology in my classroom, once it is fully set up. For example, I'd like to be able to show a great performance from Youtube, or a colleagues special presentation about vibrato or some other technique.

V. Can you tell me something about yourself that few people know, until now that is?

C. My favorite tv show above all else is Project Runway. And the only thing I can sew on is a button!

V. What are the best ways for people to find out what is happening with music and our students?

C. Come to the concerts.....especially the high school. We don't get enough people in the audience and our students don't always tell their friend or families. We could always use more and it makes the students play better too.