

Chemawa's Music Man Keeps Things Lively

"My parents got me started in music, back when I was in about the 4th grade," said Mr. Dennis Surmon. "I started with the saxophone. My favorite instrument is still the alto sax."

Surmon is now Chemawa's Music Man, handling both the band and the choir, as well as two classes of guitar. "Two full classes of guitar," he stressed. "It's one of the most popular courses on campus."

To teach this course, he has 23 wide-neck classical guitars. He chose them because their nylon strings are easier on beginners' fingertips. Most of the Students learn folk and rock tunes. This year's crop of guitarists is a good one, Surmon mentioned. He said that they should be picking and doing bar chords soon.

What does the band need? More bodies! Surmon can count only 13 students in band, and only three of them have any experience. "For the rest of them, it's beginning band," he said. He added that for a bunch of beginners they are doing quite well.

"A kid beginning in band in high school has it rough for a while," Surmon commented. "By the time he is in high school, a student wants to play popular music or light classical. But that's difficult stuff. Starting with tunes like 'Mary Had a Little Lamb' comes hard for someone in high school. But if he can endure it for a few months, then he's ready for the popular stuff."



Tim Boyer and James Williams concentrate on their trumpet practice. Chemawa's band is small and could use more members reports Mr. Surmon. (Photo by Mr. Matt)

Most Chemawa students like drums and want to play them. Some may think that drums are the easiest instrument, but Surmon says no, drums can be just as hard to play as any other type.

Right now the band has no trombone, French horn or baritone players. They also need more students on clarinet and saxophone.

The choir is also short. "There are 14 in choir right now," Surmon said. 20-25 would make a better sound, and 40-45 would be fantastic." The choir has some good

sopranos, but is hurting for altos and could always use more boys.

Right now the choir is working with ballads. "We have several who have never sung in choir before," he explained. The choir plans to give a concert this Christmas.

Why doesn't the choir do more Northwest Indian music? "We'd like to," Surmon said. "But hardly any of it has ever been written down and we have no access to it." He added that if anyone on the staff could come over and help him find and teach some, he would welcome them.

Volunteers Elect

The C.A.E.C. volunteers elected officers October 3. They are President, Mike Gomez; Vice-President Marti Moses; Secretary, Corwin Howtopat. The volunteers also elected two persons who will be in charge of picking the crews" Linda Sue Decker will be in charge for the girls, and Ron "Boss" Heath will take care of the boys.

The Adviser for the officers is Mr. Arthur Corwin.

Last year the staff picked out the crews who would work Friday and Saturday. This year the student leaders will take that job, and workers will have to check with them. All workers have to be qualified student volunteers or alternates.



DeeDee McVay takes advantage of the good fall weather and one of the music department's guitars. Guitar is one of Chemawa's most popular courses. (Photo by Mr. Matt)