

Former music students experience success

by Andrea Smith
Staff Writer

The Music Department at Clackamas Community College has many success stories to its credit. Although there are numerous former students who have made a name for themselves in the music business, three people are especially noted for their outstanding accomplishments.

Chris Azorr, a 1986 graduate of Clackamas, has, during the past four years, been the keyboardist for "The Daddies," a popular local band.

"We play all around the Northwest, and we're moving into new areas including California, in San Francisco and L.A., Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico. We're expanding into the East," he said.

"The Daddies," who are managed by the Bill Graham Management Company in San Francisco, are currently working on a second album to follow their successful first album "Ferociously Stoned."

"How can I describe the music we play? I guess you could call it 'gutter punk swing'," Azorr explained.

Azorr recalls his time at Clackamas as "a great experience. At the time I was a business major,

but because I went to school on a music scholarship, I played piano for the jazz band and vocal jazz ensemble. I took two years of Music Theory from Judy Hylton at CCC, and when I went to the University of Oregon, I was able to test out of the theory courses there. That says a lot for the quality of education I got.

"(Former jazz band director) Leroy Anderson really helped my music reading ability, and Lonnie Cline (vocal jazz ensemble director) really pushed and helped me to be creative," Azorr continued. "That's rare to have someone let you try new things."

Clackamas graduate Wenda Johnson, 1986, is the lead vocalist for the band "Playground." She also plays keyboards for the group, which is regularly featured at the Lloyd Center Red Lion, The Inn at the Quay, The Sandpiper in Ashland and various other Oregon and Southwest Washington night spots.

"Usually bands have to travel to get steady work, but we haven't had to go too far. Pendleton is about as far as we go now. We have built a good reputation in the Northwest," Johnson said.

The band plays top 40-style music. "Top-40 is my job.

It's great to be able to sing for a living, but I don't have the freedom to try new things with the music because people expect it to sound a certain way," Johnson explained. "There's a big difference between top-40 and jazz. With jazz you have ultimate freedom."

When Johnson attended Clackamas, she sang with the vocal jazz ensemble. She attributes much of her current success to Lonnie Cline's inspirational and energetic approach to teaching. "Lonnie taught me to look within myself and find what makes me happy. His positive input gave me the self-confidence to do what I do now."

Johnson spent some time singing in a rock band but soon learned, "It wasn't me." She also sings with the alternative band "New Verses." Johnson said performing is easy now, but it wasn't always that way. "It was shell shock when I first got into it. Everybody expects so much. Now I do it totally for me."

Arranger/composer Ron Jones has experienced tremendous success in the music industry. Jones graduated from Clackamas in 1974, attending college music theory courses during his junior and senior years of high school.

Theory instructor Judy Hylton recalls Jones was "not a very good student. He was so consumed with writing music day and night that he didn't have time to do his homework or practice his instrument. He knew what he wanted and he pursued it with single-minded dedication and in the end it paid off.

"We're very proud of him and his accomplishments. He has worked hard and deserves the success he has achieved," Hylton continued. The college now offers the "Ron Jones Scholarship," which is awarded each year to a promising music student.

Following his years at Clackamas, Jones attended Seattle Pacific University. Upon graduation, Jones moved to Los Angeles to study arranging, composing and film scoring at Dick Grove School of Music. Subsequent to completion of his study program, Jones landed a job with Hanna-Barbera writing and arranging music for

cartoons, including "The Flintstones," "The Smurfs," and "Scooby-Doo." After several years with Hanna-Barbera, Jones began work for television shows like "A-Team," "Magnum, P.I.," and "Hunter" just to name a few. He scored several motion pictures, although none were major films.

In 1987, Jones was signed to work for Walt Disney Studios forthcoming animated series "Duck Tales." The same year he was asked to score the first episode of a new series called "Star Trek: The Next Generation." Both series became smash hits, and Jones continues to compose and arrange for these shows and others.

In an interview for the cover of a Clackamas Registration Guide, Jones said, "The music theory I learned at Clackamas was far superior to any four-year school I attended. I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing if I hadn't had that piece of the puzzle."



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ASG sponsors family movie night

by Michele Myers
Staff Writer

"Friday Night at the Movies," sponsored by ASG, is a program focusing on the community.

Family films such as "The Little Mermaid" and "Aladdin" are shown for students and the community at such low fees that it is cheaper than even renting a movie for home viewing.

Shannon Chinn, Senator to ASG Vice President, is in charge of promotions for "Friday Night Movies."

"We don't do it (show movies) to make a profit," Chinn says. She wants to focus on inviting people to see what we (Clackamas) have to offer. "This is a way of reaching out to the community."

This year "Aladdin" and "Homeward Bound" have already been shown, but there are still several other movies in the future. Dec. 3 will start the Christmas season off with "The Muppet Christmas Carol," "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" airs Jan. 7; "A Far Off Place," Feb 4; "Free Willy," will be shown March 4;

"The Secret Garden" is April 1 and on May 6, "Dennis the Menace."

All movies will be shown at 4 p.m. and at 7 p.m. in the Gregory Forum. Admission at the

4 p.m. show is \$1 for all seats. Admission at 7 p.m. event is \$1.50 for all seats. Family admission is \$5. Children under 3 are free. For more information, call 657-6958, ext. 2245.

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