

## Features



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# Lesley Wins Top Singer Award

FEBRUARY 28TH 2011 BY NEWS

## Lesley Wins Top Singer Award

### Singing From The Heart

Jessica Lesley of Dexter was recently selected as the "top vocalist" at the Music Festival sponsored by the Encore Federated Music Club. The festival includes students from throughout Southeast Missouri, including Cape Girardeau, Jackson and Dexter. The festival was held in February on the River Campus of Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau. She now has the opportunity to compete on a state level with the Missouri Federated Music Clubs at the group's annual convention in Branson in May. Jessica is a senior at Dexter High School, a member of the DHS Chamber Choir and Dexter Show Choir, and is a private voice student of MaryRuth Boone. She plans to attend Southeast Missouri State after graduating and pursue a degree in music. She is the daughter of Jeff Lesley and Dawn Dowdy of Dexter. (*ShowMe Times photo by Annabeth Miller*)

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## Choir Alumni To Gather And Honor Boone

FEBRUARY 16TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

### Choir Alumni To Gather And Honor Boone

*By Annabeth Miller, ShowMe Times Editor*

For nearly 30 years there has been friendship, fun times, achievements, and dedication within the Dexter High School Choirs. And now, as she prepares to step down and retire after a highly successful career, MaryRuth Boone's students have something they would like to say to the DHS choral music director: Thank you.

To mark her years of service to the school district and community, a special tribute is being planned to honor Boone and the choral music program she shaped and led for 30 years in Dexter.

A special DHS Choir Alumni Reunion Weekend is planned for Memorial Day Weekend, May 28-29. The weekend will be a time for former and current Dexter High School choir students to gather back together to pay tribute to their former choir director and to do that thing that she taught them – sing!

A DHS Choir alumnus Eric Mathis is spearheading this effort along with a committee of individuals in the community. According to Mathis, the weekend's focus will be the formation of an alumni choir – a large multi-generational chorus of Boone's students.

“Given the decline of music and arts education programs in public schools systems across the country, Dexter is fortunate to have a music educator like Mrs. Boone who has maintained a choral program in the junior and senior high schools for 30 years,” Mathis said. “We need to celebrate this tradition. This is an event that no one will want to miss!”

Mathis and the planning committee announced plans for the weekend prior to the Christmas holiday on Facebook, the Internet social networking site. To date more than 110 people have sent word through Facebook that they plan to attend. But the committee is wanted spread the word to even more DHS Choirs alums.

To assist in the effort and to help alumni register for the event, Mathis has established a website, <http://www.dexterchoir.com>. The site contains information on the weekend as well as online registration and a place for alumni to post favorite stories and memories of their time in Boone’s choirs.

The alumni weekend will include a day full of rehearsals and old friends seeing one another on Saturday, and a second day that will feature the hallmark of the weekend – a special concert with the combine voices of the Alumni Choir.

“We will save plenty of time for everyone to reminisce, pay tribute to Mrs. Boone, and wish her well in future endeavors. This will also be a great opportunity for everyone to connect with former music friends,” Mathis said.

The schedule for the weekend calls for the alumni to gather on Saturday morning at the First United Methodist Church for a day of rehearsals. Time will be allotted for full choir rehearsals as well as sectional rehearsals. There will also be time for small groups to rehearse if they desire. At noon on Saturday the choir will share a lunch of Boone, her husband Bill, and children Andrew and Afton (who will be members of the Alumni Choir).

On Sunday morning choir members will have the opportunity attend worship services at Boone’s church home, First United Methodist Church, and present the special music for the morning’s worship service.

That afternoon, the choir will gather at Dexter’s First Baptist Church for a dress rehearsal and then a public concert in the church’s Worship Center. A reception honoring Boone will follow the 3 p.m. concert, and the public is invited to attend the concert and reception.

Planning Committee member Mark Snider said the weekend is, of course, no longer a complete surprise for Boone.

“MaryRuth has asked that she be able to ‘relax and enjoy’ the weekend, so the musical leadership for this event is falling in the hands of the next generation,” Snider said. “Eric Mathis will be directing the mass choir during the concert, and Delisa Stites has agreed to accompany the choir on the piano. This is going to truly be a time for everyone to sit back and enjoy the musical tradition MaryRuth has established in our community.”

Through her 30-year tenure at Dexter High School Boone’s choirs and choral students have consistently received top state ratings at Missouri State Music Contest, have sung at the Missouri Governor’s Inaugural in 2005, and an ensemble from the Chamber Choir sang during opening ceremonies last month for Opening Day Ceremonies for the Missouri State Senate in Jefferson City.

Choirs have performed in the historic Church of St. Mary Aldermanbury at Westminster College, in the St. Louis Cathedral, and presented each the Christmas season tradition of the DHS Choirs Madrigal Feast as well as each spring's annual Pop Concert.

In 2005 she led a group of choral students on a concert tour of England, and the Dexter Show Choir has been invited to perform at Disneyworld and performed in Branson, Chicago, New Orleans and this June will perform in New York City.

Boone was recently honored by the Dexter Chamber of Commerce as the Educator of the Year and was recognized in January for her service to music education in the state by the Missouri Music Educators Association.

### **Photo above**

MaryRuth Boone (center) received the Educator of the Year honors from the Dexter Chamber of Commerce. On hand from the presentation were (from left) State Rep. Billy Pat Wright, Boone, State Senator Rob Mayer, and Chamber Board Member Dana Adams.

### **Photo Gallery**

A selection of photos from the DHS Choirs in recently years.

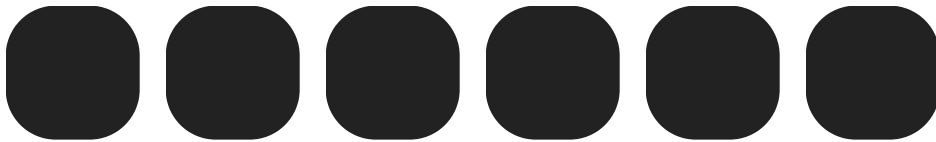
*The address for the DHS Choir Alumni Weekend is <http://www.dexterchoir.com>.*

*The Facebook event page is "DHS Choir Alumni Weekend Reunion."*

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## Smith Pursues His Field Of Dreams

FEBRUARY 13TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

Smith Pursues His Field Of Dreams

*By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports*

**West Palm Beach, Florida Feb 13, 2011** Whenever a youngster begins to play a sport, a common dream for many is to go on to play at the professional level. A young Dexter man has taken the first step in realizing that dream.

Sawyer Smith, 19, is a 2010 graduate of Dexter High School and the son of Kip and Pam Smith and is playing baseball at the collegiate level.

“I’ve been playing baseball for as long as I can remember. I started out playing seriously on some traveling teams when I was 13 or 14,” said Smith, “and I moved into Babe Ruth league when I was 15. The team I was on won state [championships] twice.”

Smith grew up playing the sport on league and traveling teams. In addition, he learned much about the game-and life-from his mom’s father, the late Jack Overby of Newbern, Tenn. ‘Papa Jack’ mentored a young Smith, giving him tips, advice, and support in life and sports.

Smith had an outstanding high school career for the Bearcats, starting several

images/Blog Images/Local News/sawyer2.gif

games his sophomore year and becoming an everyday starter in his junior and senior years. “I played the corners [1st and 3rd Base] my sophomore year, and rotated between that and catching my junior year.”

Smith plays at Palm Beach Atlantic University, a NCAA Division II school located in West Palm Beach, Fla. Coming out of high school, Smith had offers from many schools spanning all levels of collegiate baseball. He cited Arkansas State University, the University of Tennessee-Martin, Austin Peay State University, the University of North Dakota, and Palm Beach Atlantic as his top five schools after he had narrowed his choices down.

“My family and I decided that a four-year NCAA school would best fit me. I wanted to play at the highest level possible; somewhere that I would have the best opportunity to play and have growth as an athlete, student, and person,” Smith said. “It was hard to turn down a Division I offer, but Palm Beach Atlantic fit all the criteria; I loved every bit of my visit and I couldn’t see myself anywhere else.”

PBAU assistant baseball coach Ryan Holmes said the university was looking for a strong catcher that would get stronger with both age and experience.

“What led us to recruit Sawyer was we were looking for a catcher for our 2010 recruiting class and Sawyer was a kid we could project to get stronger as he physically matures; he already possessed good size at six-foot four and 210 pounds,” Holmes said. “He has an above average arm and in high school showed the ability to project as a power hitting prospect with his swing. His versatility was also a big factor.”

Smith also has a very rare opportunity being a catcher at PBAU - his head coach is Gary ‘the Kid’ Carter. Carter had an 18 year Major League Baseball career, and played catcher

for the Montreal Expos, New York Mets, San Francisco Giants, and Los Angeles Dodgers. He was an 11-time All-Star, five-time Silver Slugger, three-time Gold Glove winner, and 1986 World Series Champion with the Mets. Carter was inducted into baseball's Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY in 2003.

"I'm very blessed with the opportunity; it's unbelievable," Smith continued. "I never thought that I'd have a chance like this. He's as good of a person and coach as he was a player. 'The Kid' doesn't mess around when it comes down to business. He does so much for us, opens up a lot of doors to help us succeed and advance as players."

Smith said Carter works closely with the team's catchers and he has taken advantage of the opportunity.

"I've picked his brain a lot. I've got a great relationship with him; it's not every day that you get to talk to a baseball legend about how to improve your game," he commented.

Smith was adamant in his praise for the entire PBAU coaching staff, as well as his teammates.

"Again, I'm very blessed to be surrounded by such great people. The assistant coaches and trainers here at the 'U' are great; everyone here has your back," Smith said. "We're a family, and stick together no matter what. I think our chemistry as a team will help carry us and make a big difference in our season."

Holmes praised the Dexter native and said Smith will see some action this season.

<images/Blog Images/Local News/sawyer3.gif>

"He is battling to be our backup catcher as a true freshman and will get some meaningful playing time this year," Holmes continued. "In college baseball you need two good catchers to get through the season; we are mostly playing five games a week, and usually play a three game series on Friday night followed by a doubleheader on Saturday."

Smith has always been enthusiastic about the game, and being able to play at the collegiate level has done nothing but make his love for the game grow.

"As a freshman, I'm not a starter, but I will get in there quite a bit," Smith said. "I'll probably catch the tail-ends of doubleheaders on the weekends, and the occasional mid-week game," he said. "I actually made my debut Saturday [Feb. 5] at Northwood

University. I caught the second game of a doubleheader, and we won 4-2.”

According to Holmes, Smith could potentially have the opportunity to play at the professional level.

“Sawyer has the size that professional scouts look for. With hard work and continued development, you never know what could happen beyond the collegiate level.”

Smith conceded that professional baseball was always tucked away in the back of his mind. Even after being contacted by a few professional scouts while still at DHS, Smith and his parents decided that college was the better all-around option.

“It was rough at first, and I still have a lot of room to improve,” Smith said on his transition to catcher. “I feel like its the toughest position on the diamond.”

Smith said the catcher controls the tempo of the game, and has to mentally and physically stay in control. But he has never completely let go of playing at first or third base.

“I’ve never completely let the corners go,” he commented. “I still take reps to keep me versatile. Who knows-maybe one day I’ll wind up back there.”

Despite all of the praise from coaches and achievements throughout his baseball career, Smith still stays a very driven, humble young man. For the boy who began Little League on the fields in Dexter, to learning the love of the game from his ‘Papa Jack’ to the high school standout - he has come a long way while keeping his roots.

“Its my love of the game. I’ve played it for as long as I can remember, and its always been my favorite sport,” he said. “I love this game and I’ll keep playing it as long as I am able to. However, I do it all to glorify Christ, and I give all the credit to Him, as well as my family, for giving me all these amazing opportunities.”

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# The Top Ten: Eli Whiteman

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FEBRUARY 10TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

The Top Ten: Eli Whiteman

## The Basics:

**Eli Whiteman** -- kid, Keller Library patron, builder of snowmen

**Age:** 3 (Feb. 8)

**Parents:** Anna and Greg Whiteman, Dexter

## The Questions

### 1. What is your favorite thing?

A dinosaur! Like the one at the museum (The Science Center in St. Louis). It's a plain one with striped on it (translation – a King Rex).

### 2. What is your favorite thing to do?

My favorite thing to do .... (thinking) go to the Science Center. They've got dinosaurs.

### **3. What do you like to eat?**

Red Lobster pinchers (Translation – crab legs).

### **4. You turned 3 this week. What kind of birthday cake do you want?**

A train cake with a railroad track. (Arms spread wide to demonstrate the size of the railroad track birthday cake.)

### **5. Are there any pets around your house?**

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Brudie (translation ... Bruttie the dog) and Percy (named for the Percy from Thomas the Tank Engine" stories, not Percy Weasley from the Harry Potter books)

### **6. What's the best thing about a snow day?**

Build a snowman, go sledding and drink hot chocolate. (Lots of hot chocolate.)

### **7. A third birthday is important. Did you do anything special for your birthday?**

Went to the Science Center to see the dinosaur. (The St. Louis Science Center)

### **8. What do you want to do when you grow up?**

Build a cake – a big cake! (Again, arms spread wide to indicate the enormous size of the cake.)

### **9. Do you have a valentine?**

Noooooo. (Even though is busy preparing a valentine for the special women in his life (mom), he is emphatic on this answer.)

### **10. What is your favorite word?**

Loc Nes Monster (said with great enthusiasm and sound effects!)

*Editor's Note: Eli and more than 20 other children were on hand Tuesday at Story Hour at the Keller Public Library in Dexter. Story Hour is a weekly treat for youngsters at 10*

*a.m. each Tuesday. Story Hour is a feature of the Keller Public Library and is free and open to the public.*

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## Boy Scouts Enjoy Saturday's Snow

FEBRUARY 05TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

Boy Scouts Enjoy Saturday's Snow

*Reader Submitted Story and Photo  
by John Stephens*

GREENVILLE, Mo. - Dexter's Boy Scout Troop 200 woke up Saturday morning and discovered their overnight camping trip had become a trip into a winter wonderland.

The Saturday morning snowfall created the perfect environment for the boys and leaders,

with imrprovised sledding down the hillsides and - of course - snowball fights!

Boy Scout Troop 200 will join Boy Scouts throughout America in observing Boy Scout Week beginning Sunday, Feb. 6 with Boy Scout Sunday.

Boy Scout Troop 200 has been serving boys and young men in the Dexter area for over 50 years. The troop is sponsored by the Dexter Kiwanis Club and the United Methodist Church.

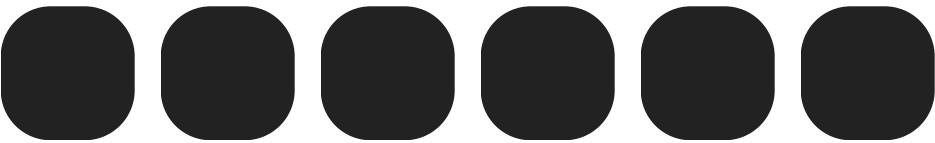
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