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Career Crescendo: Boone Honored By MSTA

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*By Annabeth Miller
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CAPE GIRARDEAU, Mo., March 20, 2011 – **Dedication, talented, inspiring, professional, passionate, deserving.**

Those were the six words used this week to describe a Dexter teacher honored for her service to education.

MaryRuth Boone was honored by her colleagues with the Southeast Region Meritorious Service to Education Award at a banquet Thursday evening on the campus of Southeast Missouri State University. Boone teaches vocal music at Dexter High School and T.S. Hill Middle School.

Nominated for the prestigious award by the Dexter Community Teachers Association, she was seated at the banquet at a table full of her family and colleagues. The group from the Dexter CTA was the largest single delegation of CTA members from any school district in the region.

“As I was planning what to say tonight, I was hard-pressed to find the words to convey to you just what MaryRuth Boone means to the Dexter School District,” fellow teacher Melinda Sweeney said in her introduction of Boone. Sweeney teaches with Boone at T.S.

Hill Middle School. “So I looked through the letters written by her colleagues recommending her for this award, and I found the words that are in the minds and the hearts of her colleagues, her friends, and of course, of the students who have been fortunate enough to have had her as a teacher.”

Those six words that Sweeney used described an educator who has worked with more than 10,000 students, hundreds of concerts and countless hours rehearsing with soloists and ensembles.

The words Sweeney said described Boone were **dedication, talented, inspiring, professional, passionate, deserving.**

“MaryRuth Boone is dedicated to her students and to her art,” she said. “MaryRuth is a talented musician and she shares that talent with her students, the community, and with her church, where she has served as the Choir Director for 30 years. But she's also a talented teacher who knows how to get the best from her students to help them reach their potential.”

Sweeney said Boone inspires her students to be the best that they can be.

“Good is not good enough; we can be better,” Sweeney said. “She inspires her colleagues who watch her tireless efforts, the time she spends with the students.”

Sweeney said Boone demonstrates a high level of professional commitment in her interactions with students, parents, colleagues and the community.

“MaryRuth combines her passion for music with her passion for teaching with her passion for kids and this has made her the beloved teacher that she is today. There is no question that MaryRuth Boone is deserving of our admiration, our respect and of our thanks.”

During her time at the podium, Boone recalled a number of incidents throughout her teaching career. Her stories of foibles with busses and students, of classroom activities and travels with students were all humorous stories that were appreciated by the ballroom full of educators. But the stories were also all laced with her deep love of her profession and dedication to the students.

Boone praised and thanked her husband, Bill, for his support throughout her 30 years that have included long nights working with students, concerts, trips and activities. She thanked him for his support and patience.

She noted that through the years her students have performed throughout the state of Missouri, including the 2005 Missouri Governor's Inaugural, as well as in Chicago, at Walt Disney World, New Orleans, and overseas.

"This year we are going to New York City, so I guess I am going out on a high note," she said.

Attending the banquet with Boone were her husband, Bill, and son Andrew, as well as her brother, Buddy White of Poplar Bluff, and sister-in-law Helen Claire Boone Schott of Cape Girardeau.

In addition, a number of Dexter educators were there to support and honor Boone: Bryce and Sherry Matthews, Scott and Julie Rybolt, Jeannie Cato and Sweeney.

"I always knew I had a passion for music and a calling to teach," she said. And it has been this overwhelming passion for teaching that has carried her through the years and touched the lives of hundreds of students and the community.

Boone is retiring at the end of the academic year after teaching in the Dexter schools for 30 years.

Photo Above: A number of her colleagues in the Dexter schools attended the banquet honoring MaryRuth Boone at Southeast Missouri State University. Attending were (from left) Scott Rybolt, Melinda Sweeney, Jeannie Cato, Boone, Bryce Matthews and Sherry Matthews. (ShowMe Times Photo by Annabeth Miller)

Photo Below: Family members attending the banquet were (front row, from left) Bill Boone, Boone, Helen Claire Boone Schott of Cape Girardeau, and Buddy White of Poplar Bluff; (back row) son Andrew Boone.

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