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Richland Christmas Band Concerts

DECEMBER 18TH 2012 BY BETH FARRAH

Richland Christmas Band Concerts

*Written by
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Essex, Missouri - When Christmas rolls around, the Richland Music Department is always busy, busy, busy as they prepare for their four humongous performances. Music and Band Director, Amber Duley, has been light on her toes as she has prepared music for three band concerts and one elementary performance. It's safe to say that all the students have had their holiday spirits lifted as they played their way into the Christmas season.

On Thursday, December 13th, the elementary school put on a Christmas Program both during and after school for parents, grandparents, and other students. The play was a big hit and followed a couple of elves that were working in Santa's workshop to prepare for Christmas. The kindergarten class, known as the Little Christmas Carolers, started out the program by singing classic Christmas songs such as *Jingle Bells* and *Up On the Housetop*. The first and second graders performed *Deck the Hall* and *The First Noel*, and a few of the children had speaking parts in the play. The third through sixth graders held a bigger part of the play, including solos and larger speaking parts. Fifth grader Allison Jones and sixth grader Kate Wyman were given a number of solo parts throughout the program and the crowd enjoyed every word the two sang.

On the same night as the Christmas Program, the Sixth Grade Band swapped their elf costumes for their dress shirts and dresses as they performed in their own Christmas Band Concert. This was the sixth graders' first performance and although it was nerve-racking,

they hit all the right notes and played very well. The older band members are excited to have them and their growing talents join them in their own concert next Christmas season.

On Tuesday, December 18th, the Junior High Band performed in their own concert and was the opening act to the High School Band which performed right after. The Junior High students have been working very hard since marching season to prepare themselves for their first concert of the year. This year, they played *Rockin' on the Roof* and their personal favorite: *Jingle-Bell Rock*. The High School Band joined them in the Junior High's grand finale as both bands performed *The Legend of Christmas*, which is a mash-up of the two songs *We Three Kings* and *Go Tell It On The Mountain*. Overall, the Junior High students did an excellent job and they are looking forward to playing in the Spring Concert later this year.

This was an eventful night for both  Duley and her many students. Most students that are enrolled in a band class are also involved in many other extracurricular activities that have to do with music. Two of Richland's brass players, junior Tristan Wamble and freshman Alicia Meeker, performed at West Park Mall in Cape Girardeau with many other local brass players at a Tuba Christmas. Wamble and Meeker, along with other students enrolled in Duley's Music Appreciation Class, performed a *Jingle Bells Percussion Ensemble* during the High School Concert. The ensemble contained various types of bells, xylophones, woodblocks, and jingle bells to give the traditional song a new twist and feel.

The High School Band then took the stage and kicked off by playing *A Christmas Fantasy*, which is a song that contains *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*, *Silent Night*, and *Good King Wenceslas*. Their second song, called *Holiday for Bells*, was a little more upbeat and was new to the audience's ears. The band slowed things down a bit with *Happy Xmas* by John Lennon. It was the band's overall favorite song that they enjoyed not only listening to on their iPods, but also playing on their very own instruments.

The Christmas season at Richland Schools was overall joyous and enjoyable. The Christmas Program was enjoyed by many and by the students who took part in it. All three concerts were a success and each member of the audience is definitely looking forward to seeing the bands play again in the spring.

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