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## NWCA teachers find new home in Soundview

**CHRISTINE PIZZUTI**

THE PATENT TRADER

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Much to the joy of the Northern Westchester Music Teachers Alliance, the Soundview Preparatory School on North Bedford Road in Mount Kisco has asked some members to teach music courses.

The teachers alliance was established after the Northern Westchester Center for the Arts closed in October and left some teachers without a home.

While NWCA was open, there was little space to house the hundreds of students so, almost seven years ago, the center and Soundview made an agreement: The center would use Soundview's classrooms to teach music and Soundview could use the art center's stage for performances and its gallery to display students' artwork.

The center, which was open for 27 years, closed after filing for bankruptcy. While open, the nonprofit offered art education programs and cultural events and performances. Its closing meant the instructors would have nowhere to teach what they loved, until now.

"We've always gotten along with Soundview," said Jennifer Eyges, a voice instructor who will begin teaching there in September. "And now we're part of the school."

Eyges, who is professionally trained in many types of music said before Soundview made the offer, it did not have a music curriculum.

"One of the courses I want to do is music appreciation," said Eyges. "It will have an emphasis on voice, guitar, violin and piano."

Soundview Assistant Head Mary Ivanyi said the program will be part of the middle

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school program and will be considered for the high school grades, depending on its success.

"A program without music is not a happy program," said Ivanyi. "I think music brings happiness and joy to our lives."

She said the music program should be a great addition to the school's already successful art department, something in which the school takes great pride.

"Why not encourage whatever passions and whatever interests the students have," she said. "For a small school, we do a pretty good job with tapping into whatever the children want — within reason."

The school, founded in 1989, has about 80 students in grades six through 12. Ivanyi said that the classrooms, many of which house no more than 10 students at a time, are the perfect playing field for students to learn in a noncompetitive environment. The school believes that if students don't feel so much pressure socially, they'll be better able to focus on academics and growth.

Ivanyi made it clear that the new program is still very much in the planning process, and the school was still deciding which instructors it would use, though she believed strongly in having one alliance member in particular teach there in September.

"Geoff Hartwell does classical guitar, and I think what a wonderful thing to expose the children to," she said.

Eyges said that, in addition to herself and Hartwell, violinist Alexander Abayev and pianist Peter Tarsio, also members of the Music Teachers Alliance, would be able to teach at Soundview, if asked. The other members — guitarist Jaime Grossman, violinist Gabriel Tevan and pianist Maryna Rogozhyna — would not be able to teach because of conflicts in their schedules.

But Eyges said all the members look forward to teaching private lessons at Soundview starting Sept. 11.



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