

MUSIC

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songs was easy for the band. "In the beginning I thought, 'Man, could I still do this?'" said Garzella. "It just kind of fell into place."

After the Bicentennial Celebration, Abilene began playing regularly again about twice a month and currently performs at the Wyld Horse Saloon, the River Street Jazz Café and Rhythms and Brews. The band also does a lot of outdoor fairs and festivals. Although Abilene plays all cover music, a few members have written original music and Garzella hopes the band will eventually play and record some of its own work.

Garzella lives in West Pittston and has a wife, the former Carmella Vullo, and two daughters. He began teaching in 1974 and worked with special education students at Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18. He has been a special education administrator at LIU, taught special education for the Dallas School District and was as-

sistant special education director for the Hazleton Area School District.

Before schools had separate music, art and gym teachers, Garzella had to teach the subjects himself so during his music class, he played his guitar for students. Last year, a chorus teacher asked Garzella to accompany some students on bass guitar and a vice-principal on drums and, although those plans fell apart, Garzella is willing to play in front of or with students in the future.

Reflecting on the fact both he and Reinert are superintendents who play in bands, Garzella said, "I think that's cool. I think it shows we all have another side."

Reinert is assistant superintendent of the Dallas School District. The Dallas resident has played bass guitar in the band Just Us since he and his friend Joe Lynch formed the band in 1979. The men decided to call their band Just Us because, even though the band has always featured a female singer, the two men were good friends since high school, were in several bands together and - in the end - it always came down to just them.

According to Reinert, Just Us opened for Abilene in 1979 at the Hearthstone Pub, though Garzella does not remember it. In 1981, Mary Denn replaced the female vocalist of Just Us. Today, she is Joe Lynch's wife and is still a member of the band. Although two other men sometimes perform with Just Us, they are not official members of the group.

Just Us plays mostly cover folk music such as that of Simon and Garfunkel and Peter Paul and Mary and Joe Lynch has written some original music for the band which it sometimes plays. Reinert said the band does not perform very often because of work and family commitments of its members but, instead, does private work including weddings, graduation parties and benefits. Although the trio has never taken the stage at the Dallas Days Dance, it has played at the Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction and at Open Mic Night at the Dallas Harvest Festival.

Reinert lives with his wife Kim, daughter Virginia, 17; son Jake, 15; and son Samuel, 12. The family is very musical: Kim plays the violin, Virginia the flute, Jake the guitar

and French horn, and Samuel the guitar and clarinet. Jake is in a rock band with his friends, Virginia and Samuel are in concert band, and all the children are in chorus.

With a love for children, Reinert began working at summer camps as a teenager. He decided to go into education and was a teacher for 12 years and a guidance counselor for four years in the Lake-Lehman School District. There, he coached wrestling, track and soccer. In 1997, Reinert became the assistant principal at Dallas High School and, prior to being named assistant superintendent in January 2007, he was a principal at Dallas Elementary School and Dallas Middle School.

Though Reinert puts his career first and music second, he has mixed the two by playing for his students many times. He sang in the classroom many times and, when he was a principal, rewarded classrooms of behaving children by singing and playing his guitar. Reinert also sang with his two older children in their school talent show. By request, Just Us has even played at the weddings of some of Reinert's former students.

For Reinert, music and educa-

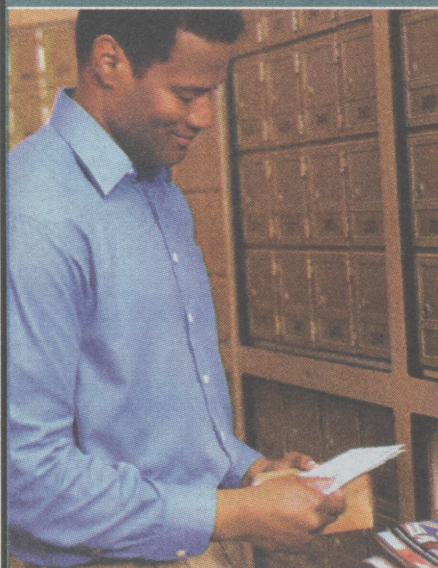
tion go hand-in-hand.

"There's research that indicates that children who are involved in music have better achievement," said Reinert.

He also said learning to read and play music strengthens the brain. Reinert feels band and chorus give students a positive way to belong at school. Children in the older grade levels can participate in music competitions, which give them skills to help in life. Reinert also thinks music provides children with an awareness and appreciation for the arts and culture.

Just Us will take the stage at the Dallas Days Dance from 7 to 8 p.m. Abilene will perform from 8 p.m. to midnight. A limited number of tickets for the Dallas Days Dance is available at \$25 per person (advance sales only) and may be purchased at Joe Nardone's Gallery of Sound locations in Kingston, Wilkes-Barre (Mundy Street), Dickson City, and Clarks Summit; and at Carpet Concepts in Wyoming; Ochman's Coins and Jewelry in Dallas; and the Dallas Borough Municipal Office. Ticket price includes beer, soda, snacks and Grotto Pizza. A cash bar will be available.

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