



Entrain locks in the groove

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Tara Fletcher of Hyannis has always been active with the PTO for the public schools in Barnstable, but she may have outdid even herself with the doubleheader event she pulled off with the Martha's Vineyard rock/world beat band Entrain last Friday.

Fletcher, who used to work at Christine's in West Dennis, saw the band perform there several times over the course of nine years. Last Friday, Entrain took to the stage for a PTO benefit show at Barnstable High, only hours after talking about their craft to students in the music room at Barnstable Middle School, ending with several percussion students joining the band in a jam session to end the hour-long visit. The evening show went just as well, according to Fletcher.

"It was awesome," raved Fletcher. "Everyone had so much fun. The kids were star-struck. I can't wait to do it next year."

Tom Major, Alex Howell and Sam Holmstock of Entrain were on hand Friday afternoon, offering their musical insight to everything from Reggae Dance Hall music to Brazilian rhythms to Bo Diddley (who Major played for at one time). "We've done this for the last year or so," said Major. "Alex and I teach during the winter, working with private students. We like hanging out with the kids and it's rewarding. It's fun trying to bring it to a new generation."

Entrain's "Dancing in the Light" has been featured on commercials for both Jordan's Furniture and Sylvania, but many of the students weren't all that familiar with them at first. The trio (Entrain has six members in all) tackled all sorts of different rhythms, utilizing a wide variety of drums in the process. Major explained how, in Africa, the dancers and drummers get involved in the musical performance together.

"We try to do that with Entrain," Major said. "I wish every one of our shows could have us in the middle of great big room, so everyone could just dance around us and get involved."

Major stayed primarily on the drum set, while Holmstock used several different kinds of drums. Howell joined in on drums and also played piano.

The name Entrain comes from the word Entrainment, which was the word Grateful Dead percussionist Mickey Hart used in his book "Drumming at the Edge of Magic" to describe the event that takes place when a group of drummers/musicians are all "locked" into a groove.

Following the introduction to the various forms of music, Major invited students to join the band in an impromptu jam session for the last five minutes of the class.

"I've never done somethingthis big," said Fletcher. I brought in a lot of storytellers and science guys at the elementary school, but this great. It's all for the kids."