

YOU NEED AN EAR FOR JAZZ

Jeff Schoening has been directing students in the skills of playing music instruments at Treynor schools for 19-yr., and he has a very long record of accomplishment at state competitions. Schoening explained that he didn't start out to be a band instructor. He wanted to play football, but lacked the physical size for it to be fun. So he joined the band to be able to get on the football field. Schoening said he started in the 7th grade playing drums and once considered a professional band career. Family responsibilities led Schoening to a successful career in teaching. Schoening stated that the success of the Treynor Jazz Band has often prompted questions of him about how he does it year after year. Schoening said band is about communication and working together-a mirror of a life lesson for success. Each year is a different mix of students and challenges to find the music material to fit the skills of the students. This, according to Schoening, is the biggest challenge. A jazz band is made up of rhythm and horn sections. It is essential that these sections to work together and complement each other. Each section has a leader that sets the tempo. ! However, Schoening explained, the jazz music language is truly unwritten and depends on listening to the sounds. He has to teach students to move beyond reading and playing notes to articulating the rhythm of the music and to listen to and support the lead players. This is essential for an award winning band.