

# Music Spotlight

Daniel Petrich

By Karina Schlect

For some people, getting involved on campus means trying different clubs or going to many events and programs, but for senior Daniel Petrich, it means participating in almost every music ensemble offered on campus. One of his newest roles is being the president of Pep Band, which has helped him find friends and community.

When he was in tenth grade, Petrich realized that music was what he wanted to pursue. He was selected to rehearse his symphonic band on one piece to be performed at the concert. He says, "Just after the last rehearsal before the performance . . . I took a step back and realized this is what I want to do for the rest of my life. I want to work with groups and ensembles, I want to rehearse with them and expand their knowledge and their skill level in music."

Petrich has always loved music, but it wasn't until high school that he began to see "the importance of, not the music so much as the words, and how the music portrayed those words — how the music increases the power behind the words and Biblical teachings." When he listened to the Christus CD from the "A Light Shines in the Darkness" tour and heard that every piece had a purpose, he realized Concordia would be a great fit for him. He wanted to be part of a program where the Word is the focus.

Petrich is majoring in K-12 Instrumental and Literature

Music Education with a Lutheran Classroom Teacher minor. He hopes to teach in a small Lutheran high school where he can direct both the band and the choir, and one day, he may return to school to get his Master's and Doctorate so that he can teach at a university level.

He feels like Concordia has been preparing him to teach on an academic scale. In the Choral Conducting class he took with Dr. Mennicke last semester, they talked about everything from discipline and music selection to rehearsal techniques. Petrich says, "I feel like I'm prepared to teach choir in a school setting." Now, he is in Instrumental Literature, and next semester he is taking Instrumental Conducting with Professor Aaron Isakson — both of which he feels will prepare him to direct a band. While academics are important, Petrich points out that the college experience is about more than that. He encourages the younger music education students to join groups, make friends, take risks, and be exposed to new social situations. "I'm finding out more and more now that I'm making friends in my music career field. You need a group of friends you can talk to and let off steam — otherwise you'll burn out, and nobody

wants to burn out." With his heavy involvement in campus music, it's a good thing Petrich has friends to spend time with so he doesn't burn out. The music program would definitely notice his absence.



# Concordia Staff Spotlight

Dr. Jeffrey Burkart

By Tara Rupiper

Dr. Jeffrey Burkart is, as one would say, a busy and productive man. Anyone would get that impression from someone who has a BA, MA, PhD, and a LittD. Dr. Burkart has often, as he puts it, "Stepped into a different role for different situations." This, however, is quite necessary and very true in Dr. Burkart's case as he has many wonderful accomplishments. He has written many books and music compositions, such as plays, musicals, and hymns. He also plays the organ and piano at different churches around St. Paul.

Not only does Dr. Burkart have a talent for creating works of literature and music, but he has also used his talent as the Director of Drama Ministry and Artist in Residence at Concordia University, St. Paul for the past 37 years. Nationally, he is known as a teacher, author, musician, speaker, and dramatist.

As an author, Dr. Burkart has written 15 books, such as *The Hidden Prince* (a children's book) and *Fifteen Cautionary Fables*, and about 150 published magazine articles, plays, and musicals, like *Sure Can Use a Little Good News* (play) and *Don't Get Burned* (musical). Dr. Burkart has just finished a play about Martin Rinckhart, who was a poet and pastor. Rinckhart wrote a hymn, "Now We Thank We Thank All Our God," in a time of plague and war. The play is set as a futuristic version of a talk show.

Dr. Burkart loves to write and compose. He became an

author because, he says, "I have the insatiable desire to share things and a lot of the things I do are very practical. You get into situations where people ask you to do something and you do them." He feels that everything he does will, at some point, serve a purpose.

Someone will contact him with a need for a project, and he will give them his work. The great thing about Dr. Burkart is that if you ask him to write a hymn or a music composition, he can create a piece in no time.

As for the reason he writes plays, he says, "I write these plays for several reasons: One, because it fun; two, because I never know where the writing will lead me (I learn a lot of stuff when I write); three, it's become an important part of my devotional life (even when I write things that aren't used they help me focus on what God has done for me in Jesus); four, they give children the opportunity to participate in leadership roles in worship (something we could use much more of, in my opinion); and five, they may be useful in proclaiming the Good News."

It is clear that Dr. Burkart, even though he is retired, has a passion for creating works of art. It was no surprise that he was selected as an honored speaker at the 12th Annual Poehler Lecture. Dr. Burkart continues to work on writing and composing music for anyone who asks him and works as an organist at churches. His newest book, *Fifteen Cautionary Fables*, is available in the bookstore.

