

*Aaron Meyer Music in the Schools***Local musician brings music education to students**

By **TRISHA WALKER**  
News staff writer

Mid Valley and Parkdale elementary school students got a taste of both traditional acoustic and modern electric violin at all-school assemblies at both sites on April 2.

Local musician Aaron Meyer brings the 40-50 minute assemblies that focus on music, history and science to various sites as part of his nonprofit music education program, "Aaron Meyer Music in the Schools," in conjunction with Oregon Music Hall of Fame.

Meyer and Oregon Music Hall of Fame "both want more music in Oregon schools, and we try to visit schools that don't have music or the students come from lower-income families that might not get opportunities like this outside of school," Meyer said in an email last week.

This April, he'll visit every Hood River County School District site minus the high school — he's still working on setting that one up. He'll be at Hood River Middle School and Wy'east Middle School on April 17, and will finish up April 19 at Cascade Locks, May Street and Westside elementary schools. Parkdale and Mid Valley were the first of the district schools to host the assemblies.

"I fundraise on my own, with the Oregon Music Hall of Fame, who is my fiscal sponsor," he said. "We have a mission of giving 20-25 of these assemblies to schools



Submitted photo

**MUSICIAN** Aaron Meyer and students at Parkdale Elementary, one of two local elementary schools he visited on April 2.

all throughout Oregon."

At his assemblies, he demonstrates the similarities and differences between classical and rock music, and integrates musical history and the properties of physical science that produce the sounds.

Kim Yasui, Mid Valley Elementary principle, said Meyer left her students eager to learn more.

"He shared the many ways a violin, using different techniques, could be used to pro-

duce a multitude of musical styles," she said. "This was not a stuffy violin concert! He treated the students to rock, classic, blues and jazz songs that greatly expanded their ideas about how to make music from one little instrument."

Yasui said Meyer also talked to the students about the importance of practicing and being willing to make mistakes.

"The opportunity to hear

and see a musician with such skill and connection with students left many of our students wanting to learn more," she added.

"I try to sneak in some of the classroom content without the kids really knowing that it's in there," Meyer says on [www.aaronmeyer.com](http://www.aaronmeyer.com), where he has a short video explaining the music assemblies and the concepts he covers.

And while he does connect the dots between music, sci-

ence and history, the point of the assemblies is to have fun while doing so. He began his program in 1998 and has consistently presented since then.

His upbringing may point to his interest in teaching. Meyer is the son of a well-known violin teacher from Philadelphia. His father, Julian Meyer, "was a very active private violin instructor for young people, who taught seven days a week for 40

years. He taught thousands of young people, starting many of them from scratch," he said.

Meyer also has an annual benefit concert for the United Way each December. This year's concert, already planned for Dec. 15, will be his 10th.

"Over 400 people attend every year," Meyer said. "... I bring my 12-person band with horns and the fabulous gospel group, The Brown Sisters."