

School putting talent on display

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COVENTRY — After 20 years the event is still going strong, attracting nearly half of the student population and an even greater portion of the community.

It's the Western Coventry Elementary School's annual talent show and this year marks its twentieth anniversary.

Robin Dazzeo, who co-directs the show with Deb Chase, said there are 165 students in this year's show and 21 different acts including singers, dancers, gymnasts, a violinist, and several group acts.

"This is the twentieth year that the school has put on the show, which we think is pretty impressive, so we decided to call it 'Anything Goes,'

that way we could include everyone and every type of performance that wanted to be a part of the show," Dazzeo said. "And we have. This show has every theme you can imagine in it from Disney, to the United States, to Broadway, there really is a little bit of everything here.

"And what is even more exciting about this year's show is that we have 165 students participating out of a school population of around 300, so that is more than half of the kids, which I think is wonderful," she said. "We even have some alumni who are in this year's show too because they just can't help but want to come back and join in the festivities."

In order to make sure that none of the students at the school felt left out of the event even if they were not going to be performing on stage, the event coordinators planned something to get

all of the kids involved. The event coordinators asked the school art teacher, as they do every year, Dazzeo said, to have all of her students help to design the cover of the program for the event. According to Dazzeo, the students spend time in their art class coming up with ideas for the cover, designing it and then creating the final draft.

The entire show, including the production of the cover, takes a great deal of time to prepare for, Dazzeo said. She said students begin coming as early as January before school and after school to rehearse for their acts.

"The students are expected to be at all of the rehearsals, so it is a real commitment for them and for their parents because it is all done outside

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of school, so parents have to re-work their schedules to get their kids to the rehearsals because without the parents, they couldn't get there," Dazzeo said.

Each year Dazzeo said interest in the event appears to grow. She said the largest group she ever had for the show was 180 students, but typically she said the average number stays right around 150. She said the show typically attracts a good number of attendees as well.

"We almost always have a full house and it is not uncommon for us to sell out," she said.

This year's show will take place on Sunday, March 29th, at 2 p.m. at the Coventry High School inside the auditorium.

Dazzeo said doors will open at 1 p.m. and tickets will be sold at the door, so those who were not able to get tickets in advance, should arrive early to assure themselves a seat.

Tickets are \$10 a piece or \$8 with a canned food item. Dazzeo

said the school has already amassed 300 cans of food in advance ticket sales. All of those canned food items will be given to the Coventry Food Bank. The monetary funds brought in for the show will be used to support the event, Dazzeo said. She said a portion of the proceeds from ticket sales are consumed by the costs to buy trophies and t-shirts for the performers, but the remainder of it goes directly into the school's PTA fund to support other programs for the students at the school.