Schools partner with community band for inaugural Night of Jazz

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ASHEBORO — The Southwestern Randolph Cougar Music Department is hosting its first ever Night of Jazz, 7 p.m., Thursday, May 4 at the Southwestern Randolph High School Auditorium, 1641 Hopewell Friends Road.

The Randolph Community Jazz Band has top-billing and will offer a full-length concert. The Southwestern Randolph Middle and High school jazz bands will also perform at this free, public event.

The Randolph Community Jazz Band is comprised of high caliber, semi-professional musicians from

JAZZ REVIVAL — Kenny Butler directs the SWRMS Jazz Band. Performing are, from left, Michaela McIntyre on clarinet, Jonathon Trogdon on clarinet, Kimberly Alston on clarinet, Callie Turner on trumpet, Brianna Mabe on alto sax, Caleb Hurley on electric guitar, Ashton Allred on drums and Alex Davis on bass guitar.

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all over Randolph County. The student bands include musicians in grades 7-12.

“This night of jazz is going to be great! I am looking forward to show off what we have learned this year. Learning to play jazz music has made me a better overall musician,” Lydia McKoy, an eighth-grade pianist in the SWRMS jazz band, said. “The Randolph Community Jazz Band is going to play really well and I’m excited to hear them. I hope that everyone who appreciates good music comes out to see the groups perform.”

The concert includes an hour-long performance by the community band, as well as 20-minute performances by each of the school bands. There will also be an intermission.

By attending the free concert, the community can show its support for America’s music in the local schools. “Jazz is a wonderful cultural and historic teaching tool,” Kenny Butler, director of band and chorus for Southwestern Randolph Middle School, said.

The middle school jazz band meets outside of school hours, so those who participate are particularly devoted. Butler also noted that this is the first year the middle school has had a jazz band in nearly a decade.

While Night of Jazz is a first-time event, Butler would like to see it blossom into an annual community concert.

Members of the Randolph Jazz Band include:

- Rob Yingling on alto saxophone.
- David Wright on alto saxophone.
- Paul Lineberry on tenor saxophone.
- David Haynes on tenor saxophone.
- Nikki Peters on baritone saxophone.
- Ricky Cox on trumpet.
- Ed Bunch on trumpet, Terry Lawrence on trumpet.
- Kenny Butler on trumpet.