

OCTOBER 2018



From
Spotlights
to Friday Night Lights
at Mars Hill Bible School

NEW FCC RULES FOR
WIRELESS MIC SYSTEMS

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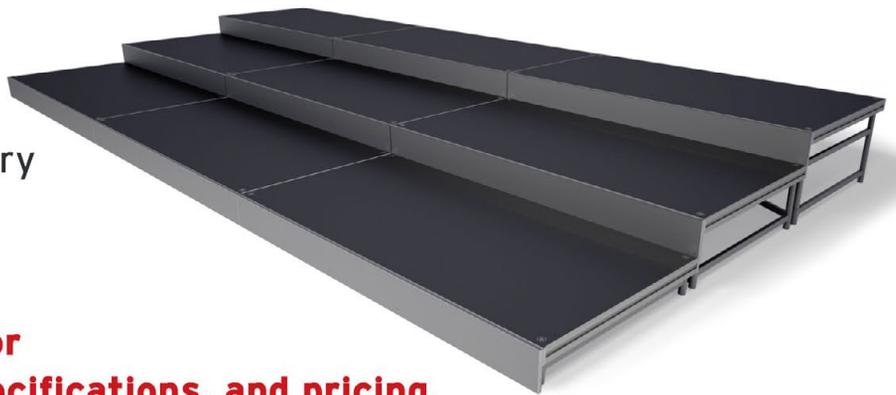


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STAGERIGHT



6

FROM SPOTLIGHTS TO FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

by Lori Eastep

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12

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Photo courtesy Mars Hill Bible School



From
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AT MARS HILL BIBLE SCHOOL,
EVERYONE BELONGS IN SHOW CHOIR

by Lori Eastep

It's an oppressively hot July morning in Alabama, and 17-year-old Jayce Thornton is up with the sun, getting in his workouts for the upcoming football season. By 9 a.m., he'll head to his school's auditorium for choreography and vocals, and by evening he'll be on the field sweating it out with his teammates.

It's a grueling schedule, but it's the only way he can be a part of two activities that are each equally important to him. Jayce is a member of the Celebration Show Choir cast at Mars Hill Bible School. He's also the kicker and a wide receiver for the football team. And he's not alone...almost all of the 55 members of the Mars Hill show choir participate in multiple sports and other school-sponsored programs.

Mars Hill Bible School is a private K-12 school located in Florence, Alabama, a growing town nestled in the center of the Southern musical hub known as the Shoals. "There's something magical about the Shoals," said show choir director JJ Davenport. "Music is just engrained in the people here. These kids have a talent that is simply exceptional... all we're doing is tapping into that."

And tap into it they have. MHBS has a 9th-12th grade enrollment of 146, making it a 1A school, the smallest classification in Alabama's system. When Mars Hill produced its first show choir program in the early fall of 2000, the school didn't even have a football team. "The fall was the quietest time of year," says Davenport with a laugh. "Not so much anymore."

The show choir grew to be a wildly popular program, with almost 40% of 9th-12th grade students participating each year. So when the school added a varsity football program in the fall of 2013, leaders knew that their collaboration was key. "Everyone does everything around here," Davenport said. "We knew that if all our programs were going to flourish, we were all going to have to work very closely together to make it happen."

Coaches, directors, and administrators juggle their collective schedules and trade off practices to make sure no organization is getting the short end of the proverbial stick. For their part, the students recognize and value the collaborative effort that allows them to be a part of multiple programs. "Most of Mars Hill students are involved in just about everything that's offered," said four-year show choir member and cheerleader Emma Heupel. "It probably seems difficult trying to find a time where everyone can come and rehearse, but it's not...everyone at Mars Hill seems to understand how big and truly amazing this show is."

Now in its eighteenth year of producing a show choir, Mars Hill's cast list is chock full of

students who might not typically be seen on stage. From ball players to cheerleaders and from debate team members to academics, a spirit of inclusivity inhabits every element of the program. "These kids are getting the best of all worlds," said head football coach Darrell Higgins. "When they're learning discipline, perseverance, the power of teamwork... those things carry over to their other activities and makes them better at everything they do. Those things will keep carrying over for the rest of their lives."

Of primary importance to administrators is the idea that in the show choir program, as well as in the school as a whole, everyone belongs. "Mars Hill is truly a family that works together so students can thrive and explore multiple areas of interest," said four-year cast member Abby Foust. "We all have different talents, but anybody can step right into show choir and be a part. The cooperation of my cheer, cross-country, and soccer coaches with my show choir directors has given me the opportunity to be involved in everything I could ever want to take part in." Heupel agrees. "It's a place where you can be who you really are, and have a moment to shine."

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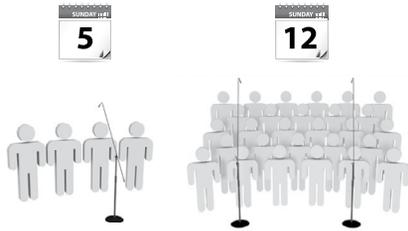
THE BEST SOLUTION FOR CHOIR MIKING CHALLENGES



Challenge: Miking a choir with condensers seems expensive.

SOLUTION: Audix Micros™ Series Condensers

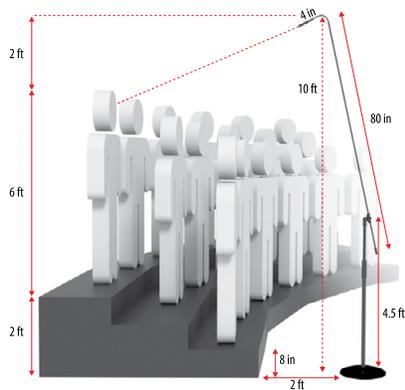
These affordable microphones are unique because they feature a fully integrated circuit (including pre amp) all in a two-inch long body, making it the most powerful miniature microphone on the market. They pack a punch— only one microphone is needed to cover up to 20 singers.



Challenge: Choir placement and size varies from week to week.

SOLUTION: Audix MicroBoom

Today's worship environments accommodate an array of congregations and configurations. Where the choir is one week may be where the band is the next. In some cases, the size of a choir may go from 20 people to a holiday production of 80. The MicroBoom system is portable, easy to move, and easy to store. Plus, it is **available in black or white finish**, making it uniquely discreet in appearance, virtually becoming invisible within the sight lines.



Challenge: Hanging microphones from the ceiling is a huge hassle.

How do you get microphones high enough to cover all the singers in the choir?

SOLUTION: Audix MICROBOOM50 or MICROBOOM84

For complete coverage of a choir, the microphones are positioned 2 feet in front of the first row of singers, extending 2 feet higher than the tallest person in the back row. With a standard three row choir riser of 2 feet, the mic will typically need to be 10 feet in the air. The MICROBOOM50 (50" carbon fiber boom) attached to a standard mic stand will extend to over 10 feet. The MICROBOOM84 (84" carbon fiber boom) attached to a standard mic stand will extend to over 11 feet and will cover up to four rows of choir. Unlike hanging microphones, the clutch assembly and integrated gooseneck mount grants precise fine-tuning of the microphone positions.



Pictured in white finish. Stand not included.

Photo courtesy Mars Hill Bible School



The result? Mars Hill has developed an outstanding culture of cooperation, and the proof is in their collective success. The 125-minute 2018 show choir program included 25 songs, 13 costume changes, and brought in almost 800 attendees each night. “We don’t do competitions,” said Davenport. “We have to be finished before football starts so that we can support their efforts.” As for the football team... at the time of publication, they’re boasting an undefeated season and are ranked #1 in their region.

Clearly, the collaboration is working. “There’s a lot of behind-the-scenes work that goes into making this happen, but it’s worth every minute,” Davenport said. “The other programs’ successes are our successes, and our successes are theirs. Everyone wins here.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Lori Eastep is the Director of Marketing, Alumni, and Public Relations at Mars Hill Bible School. She is a second-generation MHBS alum and a current MHBS parent. Eastep holds a B.S. in Communications from the University of North Alabama.

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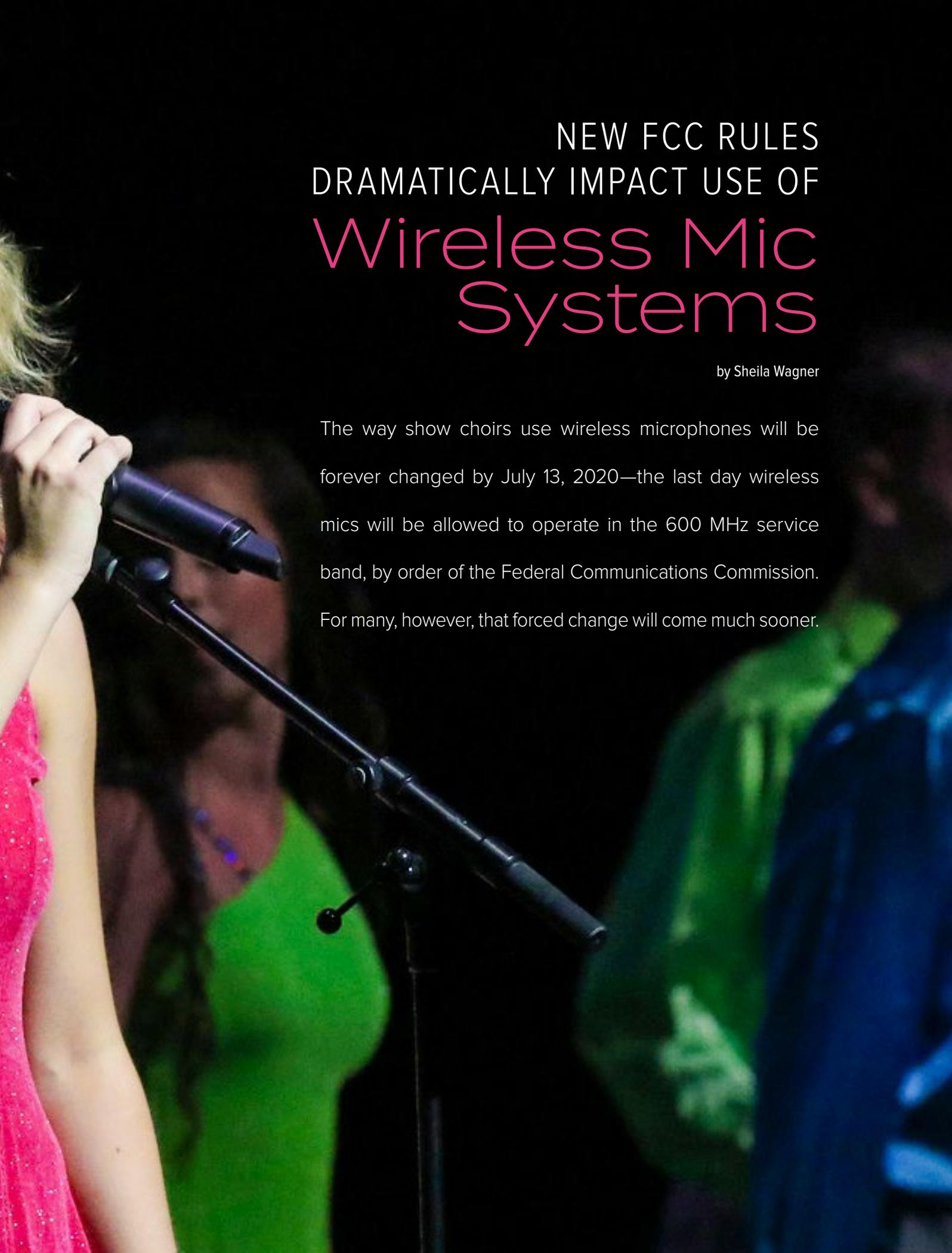
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A woman in a red dress is holding a microphone on stage. In the background, other people are visible, including a woman in a green top and a man in a blue shirt. The scene is dimly lit, typical of a stage performance.

NEW FCC RULES DRAMATICALLY IMPACT USE OF Wireless Mic Systems

by Sheila Wagner

The way show choirs use wireless microphones will be forever changed by July 13, 2020—the last day wireless mics will be allowed to operate in the 600 MHz service band, by order of the Federal Communications Commission. For many, however, that forced change will come much sooner.

The Background

Wireless microphone systems were first invented in the 1950's when several companies and individuals patented their own products. At that time, the microphone could only go about fifteen feet away from the receiver.

One company, Sennheiser, offered a wireless microphone that had a box about the size of two water bottles that hung on one's back and had an antenna that came up the back of a jacket and clipped to the collar. It held six D-cell batteries and could last for 90 minutes.

Poor Sound Quality

While that was hardly convenient, the biggest problem was poor sound quality. It was twenty years later before audio company Nady Systems improved that by introducing companding, which is the process of compressing the dynamic range of a signal before transmitting it to the receiver.

There wasn't a huge demand for wireless microphone systems until the 1980's, when theatre productions with more actors on stage meant more microphones were necessary.

That increased the need for discreet wireless microphones. Those early systems used the 700 MHz band, which worked well for everybody who used them for the next 20 years or so.

Then, in 2010, the FCC banned the use of wireless microphones in the 700 MHz band to reserve those frequencies for police, fire, and emergency services and mobile and broadband voice carriers, which rendered hundreds of existing models obsolete.

This ban created a need for new systems and paved the way for upgrades in technology, which brought in the wave of digital systems, which have better audio quality and the ability to put more sound frequencies in a specific spectrum.

Incentive Auctions

In 2017, Congress authorized the FCC to use incentive auctions as a means to free up spectrum in the 600 MHz band for wireless broadband use. The bidding concluded on March 30, 2017.

One result of this auction and repack is that the use of wireless microphone systems in much of the 600 MHz band will eventually not be permitted.

Impact for Performing Arts

Many show choirs and choral arts departments have been using 600 MHz frequencies for all their wireless microphone needs in their performance arts programs.

The specific frequencies affected are 616-653 MHz and 663-698MHz. All wireless systems display the frequency band on the receiving unit or on the mic or body pack.

Location Determines Timeline

Depending on their location, some schools may be able to use their 600 MHz system until the summer of 2020. However, in some situations, they will be affected sooner. Phase 1 (of 10 phases) began on September 14, 2018.

For a list of the markets for each phase and the dates of discontinuation, visit the FCC's wireless microphone website at www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/operation-wireless-microphones or call the FCC at 1-888-CALL-FCC.

Scalable Rebate Programs

This is definitely bad news, especially for show choir programs with a limited budget. A lot of money has already been spent on systems in place now. Unfortunately, failure to comply leaves the school open to legal action.

To ease the pain of replacing non-compliant systems, major wireless microphone manufacturers are offering scalable rebates on those systems when traded in for a new system.

Lynn Fuston, Manager of Written Content with Sweetwater, recommends that school

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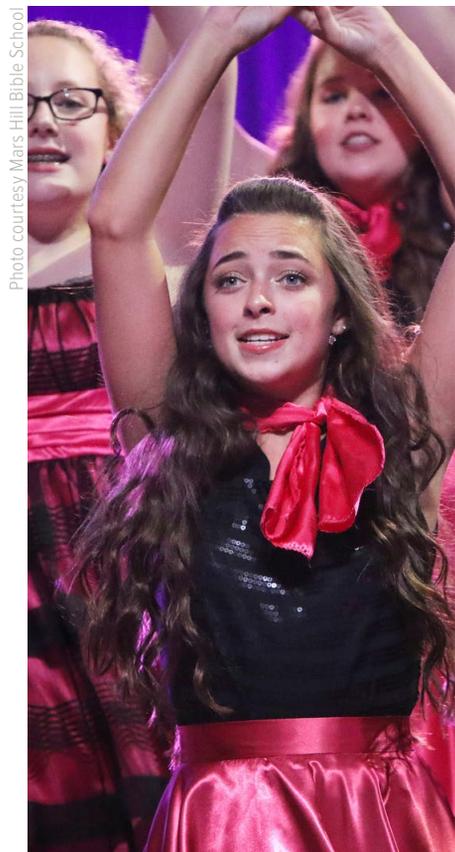


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administrators begin planning and budgeting right away, if they haven't already, to replace those wireless systems that run within the affected frequencies. They carry several brands that are offering trade-ins and rebates, including Shure, Sennheiser, and Audio-Technica.

Ed Hansen, Marketing Manager with Audix Corporation, advises that manufacturers will be prohibited by the FCC from servicing units or selling replacement components operating in the 600 MHz band.

Hansen said, "Most people will prefer to migrate out of the 600 MHz band altogether and purchase new units in available, legal bands." He continued, "Our new wireless systems have both upgraded feature sets and a price that is lower than the systems they are replacing. So, in a way, we've built the rebate savings into our price up front."

Bethany Dineen, Director of Marketing with Anchor Audio, stated that the discontinuation of certain wireless microphones due to the FCC's Auction will have a ripple effect across many different industries. She commented, "It is important that consumers stay informed and ahead of the ball, especially if they have tight budgets."

Nick Craig, Director of Sales at Anchor Audio, explains that they created the Upgrade Program to allow a simple upgrade of the internal

components without the trouble of having to purchase a totally new system, which includes the dual wireless microphones and receivers operating on the 1.9 GHz wireless frequency along with Lithium Ion batteries, improved Class 1 Bluetooth, and Anchor AIR transmitters that allow customers to wirelessly connect multiple units within a 300' range without the hassle of cables.

For customers with products that are not eligible for the upgrade, Anchor Audio is offering a discounted price on new portable sound and public address systems.

One Step at a Time

So, while this "bad news" is going to be a difficult problem for many music programs, there are some solutions. It is important to look at the equipment that their school uses the most frequently and take care of those things first.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sheila Wagner has spent the last several years working as a professional editor and recently became the staff writer for Productions Magazine. She also was a booster club parent for Attaché Show Choir for 6 years. Wagner can be reached at swagner1@bellsouth.net.

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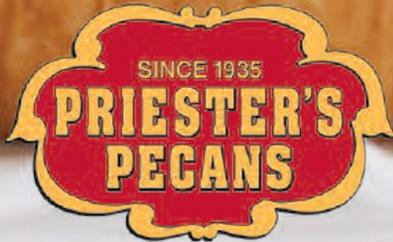
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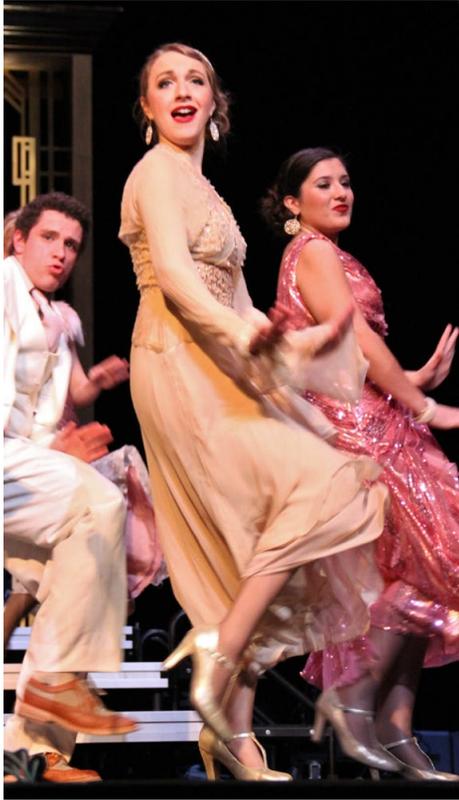
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The idea for School Spirit Coffee came to owner Debbie Hohman as a result of her school spirit and frustration with typical fundraisers. As an active booster mom for fifteen years, with two wonderful daughters, Debbie has helped organize and sell all the typical fundraising products—candy, nuts, wrapping paper, candles and the list goes on and on. Because of the high cost and low quality, often the items were difficult (or embarrassing) to sell to family and friends. If you are looking for an easy fundraiser that incorporates great products with your private label at a competitive price, give us a call at 800-570-1443 or submit a request form from the contact page of our website. We would appreciate the opportunity to help you have a fantastic fundraiser.



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2019 DATES & LOCATIONS

FAME New York	March 7-10
FAME Orlando	March 14-17
Show Choir America (Orlando)	March 21-24
FAME Chicago	March 28-31
FAME Branson	April 4-7
FAME Hollywood	April 11-14
Show Choir National Finals	May 4

www.fameproductions.com

A special thank you to our sponsors:



The Show Choir National Finals, held April 22, 2018 at the Genesee Theater in Chicago, presented the annual **Aspire Awards** to the following industry professionals:

Lifetime Achievement Award	Michael & Randie Parks
Vocal Vanguard	Zach Bjornsen (Millard West HS)
Visual Vanguard	Kevin Chase
Best New Director	Thomas Young (Millard West HS)
Best New Choreographer	Dallas J Pritt
Best Arranger	Nick Brockamp
Best Costumer	Gail McInnis Productions
Spirit of Service	Damon Brown (Thirst Project)
Most Promising New Program	Sheridan Northern Stars (Beth McClain)
Best Regional Competition	Central Wisconsin Spectacular (Colby HS, WI) Kevin Spidler, director

Be sure and submit your vote for the 2019 Aspire Nominees beginning Feb. 1! Log onto www.showchoirs.org and select ASPIRE to vote.



AD INDEX

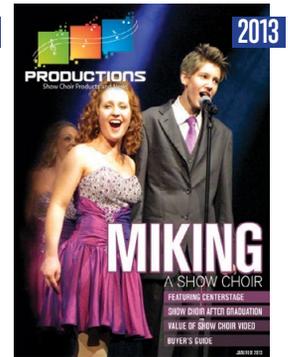
COMPANY NAME	PAGE NO.
Audix	9 & 17
Breeze Tunes Productions	21
Country Meats	24-25
Dornink.....	8
Dutch Mill Bulbs.....	2-3
FAME.....	22
Fun Pasta Fundraising.....	20
Manhasset Specialty Co.....	20
Music Arrangement Services Inc	16

COMPANY NAME	PAGE NO.
Peak Performance	10
Priester's Pecan Co.....	18-19
Satin Stitches LTD.....	26
School Spirit Coffee.....	21
ShowChoirStock.com.....	14
StageRight.....	4
Staging Concepts.....	15
Wenger.....	11

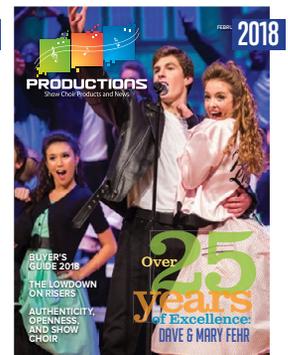
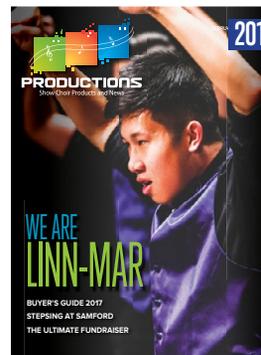
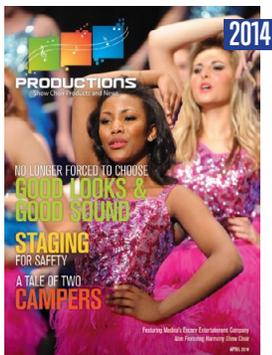


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"For several years as FFA Advisor at Vernon High School we used your products as our primary fundraiser. For anyone looking for an easy way to raise a little (or a lot) of cash for your organization, give Country Meats a try!"

Hiram Tison
Vernon HS FFA FL

*You make 45% profit on sticks you buy for \$.55 and sell for \$1.00.

You create the memories with your productions; we just help you pay for them.

Speaking of Memories

It was 1984. The story I heard was that the other brothers needed cash. They pleaded with little brother Michael to temporarily put his stellar solo career on hold and hit the road as the Jackson 5, one more time. He agreed. I bought my tickets and the Jacksonville Florida concert called the "Victory Tour" went up on my calendar.

My seats had my back against the furthest wall in the Stadium. Thank goodness for the giant video screen; without it I'd swear I was looking at a Flea circus. I'll remember that day for the rest of my life because that was the day I witnessed a performer who transcended any level of entertainment I had thought possible. I can forever say I experienced Michael Jackson in concert. He had the thousands of concert goers mesmerized by his voice and otherworldly dance moves. Michael left it all on the stage.

Just a few years earlier, in 1978, the whole Country Meats concept was started with a seedling sized dream in our old barn. My Dad performed the miracle of creating from scratch a product that thunderstruck the people who tasted it and changed forever the conventional idea of what a smoked snack stick could be.

Until we came along, few thought a snack stick could be non-greasy and heaven forbid, even taste amazing. We perfected the formula and have been adding new flavors along the way. Today, my two brothers and I run the operation from our state-of-the-art USDA inspected snack factory right here in our hometown of Ocala, Florida! (Ocala is known for Triple Crown winning race horses and long time resident John Travolta.)

With your plates full, any idea of a fundraiser must, at the absolute least, be easy peasy lemon squeezy. Offering an irresistible product to people that has a high profitability will amaze you at just how easy it is. What's just as amazing is how we treat each and every customer like family. Prompt and friendly service is just as important as the quality of our product, giving you a stellar performance every time.

My hope is to help you pave the path of a successful journey in your endeavors of making memories for folks that will last a lifetime.

Thanks,
Paul



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