

Schoolkids stay in tune with VH1

Nurses' errors deadly, investigation finds

Mistakes made by nurses are resulting in thousands of deaths and injuries to hospital patients every year, says a newspaper-generated investigation of hospital records. The Sunday report by the *Chicago Tribune* found overdosing of medications, delaying of and performing of medical procedures without training among the causes of 1,720 deaths and 9,548 injuries caused by nurses nationwide since 1995. Hospital policies that cut professional nursing staffs encourage nurse assistants to perform duties beyond the scope of their training are cited as possible causes. The American Nurses Association says it is a critical need for research to explore the relationship of staffing levels and the number of medical



Faced: Gordon Bendersky says ancient drawings appear to be scientific in nature.

Art may be first-ever scientific artwork

A researcher has discovered a medical link to Pre-Columbian sculpture dating to 1200 B.C. and perhaps the first scientific artwork ever undertaken. Gordon Bendersky, a researcher in the history department of the University of Pennsylvania, has concluded that the grotesque figures created by an ancient group of artists near what is now Mexico City are artists' impressions of conjoined twins. His article will appear in *Journal of Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, published by Johns Hopkins University Press, later this year. The figures, which measure less than 12 inches high, were believed by art historians to represent biological figures. They were created by artisans in Mexico, between 1200 B.C. and 700 B.C., Bendersky believes the figures, which show humans with two separate heads or two faces on a single head, actually a representation of the condition known as conjoined twins. Diprosopus is an extremely rare malformation that can result in duplicated heads and faces.

Male college presidents continue gains

The number of college presidents who are women declined in the past 14 years, but growth in the share of presidents who are minorities has been slower, says a survey of college presidents released today by the American Council on Education (ACE). The report, *The American College President: 2000 Edition*, notes that in 1986, the percentage of women who were college presidents has increased from 9.5% to 19%, while the percentage of minority presidents increased from 11%. It also says the profile of women differs from that of their male counterparts. Women had less time than men in their current positions, were younger, were less likely to be married, and, if married, were more likely than men to have spouses who worked. Minority presidents were more highly represented at public master's and baccalaureate institutions and were least well represented at private master's institutions.

Adults need to be wary of chickenpox

Adults who have never had chickenpox should be vaccinated against it, researchers said Thursday at a meeting of the Infectious Disease Society of America in New Orleans. In a study of 557 vaccinated adults, 43 developed chickenpox within eight years of the vaccination, said researcher Krow Ampofo of Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York. Of 86 people in the study directly exposed to the virus by a member of their household, 18 (21%) developed chickenpox. All of the people exposed to the disease by a family member will become ill, unless they've already had chickenpox. Annually, about 4 million cases occur, leading to 9,000 hospitalizations and 100 deaths.

Soap-clean environment?

Soaps are disinfecting the nation, and consumers may be unaware of the implications, a new study suggests. Eli Perencevich of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston reports that 76% of liquid hand soaps contain triclosan and triclocarban. Recent research has suggested that widespread use of the products may have the emergence of resistant organisms, undoing the bactericidal properties that the soaps are supposed to have. Researchers looked at 295 brands of liquid soaps and 733 bar soaps in national chain and regional stores and three Internet stores. "With so many of these products on the market, consumers may not realize they are purchasing soaps that contain antibacterials," Perencevich says.

Thanks to cable channel's Save the Music Foundation, the beat will go on in NYC schools

By Jennifer Merin
Special for USA TODAY

NEW YORK — On a sweltering day earlier this summer, East Harlem kids abandon asphalt playgrounds and the cooling spray of open fire hydrants to welcome visiting bigwigs and press into the air-conditioned auditorium at P.S. 96, on East 110th Street.

Fourth-grader Kelvin Eusebio, age 10 and a rookie drum player, is center stage. He's not practicing his parade but is getting some sound advice about music study from President Clinton.

"No matter whether you study drums or saxophone, just stick with it," Clinton says. "Learning music changed my life. I don't think I would have become president if it hadn't been for school music."

Clinton, along with a handful of stars from the pop music world, is here drawing attention to VH1's announcement of a \$5 million commitment to restore music programs in New York City schools over the next five years. P.S. 96 will get \$25,000 worth of musical instruments.

The cable music channel's Save the Music Foundation (STM), which just earned VH1 a special public service Emmy Award, makes similar contributions to needy music education programs around the USA. The goal is to sustain the reintroduction of music in public schools.

Public attention isn't new for P.S. 96. For years, it ranked among New York's worst-performing public schools, noted for poor morale, worse achievement. But the school's scores changed when principal Victor Lopez increased class time, got computers and, with support from STM, introduced music instruction.

"It all helps, but music makes the biggest difference," Lopez says. "Everything improves, including reading and math. Parents become more involved when they come to school to see their children perform."

As the school year begins, instruments are being delivered to 200 public schools in 40 cities, including Denver, Houston, Milwaukee and Charleston, S.C. STM's 10-year goal is to restore music instruction to 1 million children.

"Music study isn't about creating more recording artists; it's about creating more intelligent people. In short, music education equals brain power," says VH1 president John Sykes, who founded STM in 1997, after participating in the Principal for a Day program in a Brooklyn public school.

STM spearheads an advocacy movement born in 1989, when President Bush's education summit established the National Education Goals core subjects as English, math, science, history and geography.

Exclusion of music and the arts galvanized teachers and performers, as well as the National Association for Music Education, the International Music Products Association, the Music Teachers National Association and other organizations, to work in concert, forming the National Coalition for Music Education in 1991 and lobbying for music in public schools.

An impassioned pro-music speech by National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences president Michael Greene at the 1992 Grammy Awards made 2 billion TV viewers worldwide aware of the plight of music education in the USA. "The very idea that you can educate young people in a meaningful way without music or the arts is simply absurd," Greene said.

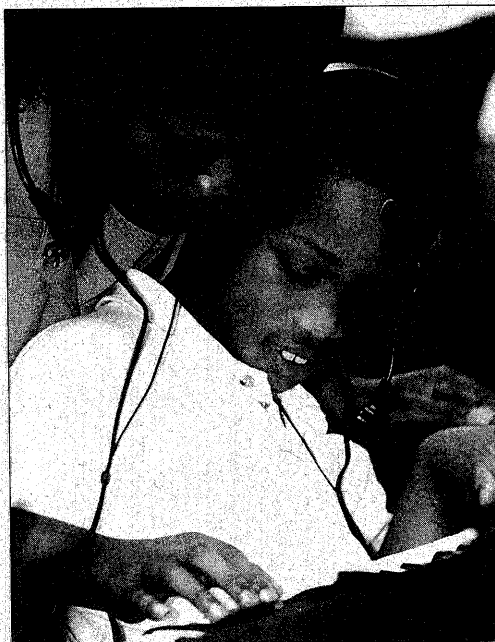
In 1993, as scientists released studies showing causal links between music participation and childhood development, the Clinton administration promised to include music and arts in revised national education goals, formalized in the Educate America Act of 1994. This June, the House of Representatives unanimously approved Resolution 266, introduced by David McIntosh, R-Ind., acknowledging music study's enhancement of intellectual development and enrichment of the academic environment. The resolution is in the Senate's Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, chaired by Sen. James Jeffords, R-Vt.

"Research shows children involved in music programs have higher self-esteem and are less likely to be involved with gangs and drugs," says STM executive director Bob Morrison. "But at present, only 25% of eighth-graders can participate in instrumental music instruction, and access is least available in extremely rural settings and in inner cities."

That picture may be changing. A 1998-99 survey of school music budgets in *The Instrumentalist* magazine shows U.S. schools overall had 13% more money for



Orchestrating smarter kids: Fraser Elementary School fifth-grader Hikeem Green performs at the Save the Music presentation. Below, Mari Bruner of MTV Networks tutors Donald Fleming, another fifth-grader from Fraser.



Emmy for public service: John Sykes of VH1, left, and Bob Morrison of Save the Music Foundation.

In the key of music resources

Yahoo!, Alta Vista and other search engines lead to Web-based music resources. Here are some Web sites to get you started:

► **www.VH1.com.** Save the Music pages report music education news and events, and suggest how you can participate.

► **www.ArtsEdge.kennedy-center.org.** Details national standards for music education. Dance, theater and visual arts, too.

► **www.ArtsEndowment.gov.** The National Endowment for the Arts' site suggests music funding sources.

► **www.MusicNotationStation.com.** Provides online music notation and theory tutorials for teachers and students; allows teachers to post interactive lessons.

► **www.hitsquad.com/smm.** Shareware Music Machine.com offers 2,700 music software titles.

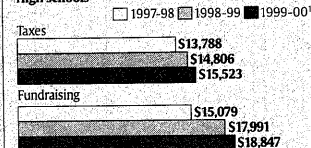
music programs than the previous school year. The survey notes that more tax money is going into school music budgets after nearly two decades of decline that reached a low in 1996, when only 30% of high school music budgets were covered by public funds.

Still, fundraising by parents, schools and students

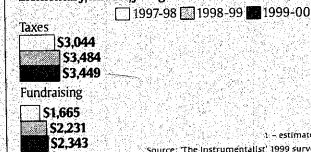
Music funding turns more upbeat

Funding for music took an upturn in the mid-1990s after years of decline. Average school music budgets in recent years and the sources of money:

High schools



Elementary/middle/jr. high



* - estimated
Source: "The Instrumentalist" 1999 survey
By Julie Snider, USA TODAY

Parents can play maestro

There are many ways parents who want to enhance their children's musical education can do so, music educators say.

► **Observe young children's favorite sounds;** present similarly sounding musical instruments. Help them try a wide variety of instruments. Talk about music; ask what they're learning in school, what they like.

► **Expose children to all music categories:** classical, jazz, folk, ethnic, pop. Take them to see professional musicians, especially those playing instruments they study or favor. Encourage efforts to imitate.

► **Know their music teachers.** Ask if your child's physique befits particular instruments (piano players benefit from large hands and long fingers, for example). Ask for learning tips.

► **At home, supervise practice and play,** designating regular times and place for music activity. As children mature, make practice (pre-set goals) increasingly challenging. Praise efforts.

► **If you arrange private instruction,** check teacher credentials, look for good student-teacher rapport and musical compatibility (classical or jazz, for example). Seek situations where kids can perform or enter competitions.

► **Attend community school board meetings;** discuss and vote for budgets. Insist that your school district has a written music curriculum (compliant with local, state or national standards), qualified music teachers, adequate facilities, class availability for all students.

► **If your district's music program isn't fully funded,** support fundraising efforts.

accounts for 49% of overall music program funding, the survey finds.

"We all agree music soothes the proverbial savage beast. Nevertheless, music education is a combat zone, where people who think music instruction is essential battle those who want to save a buck by cutting music programs in public schools," says STM's Morrison. "Gallup polls show the public wants music taught in public schools. At this point, everyone's task is to convince policymakers that music matters."

"We need a groundswell of interest in music education across the country," Sykes says. "Meanwhile, it's all about Kelvin Eusebio, and millions of other school kids who need and deserve music instruction."

And, how does Kelvin feel about it?

"Music makes me like school," he says. "It improves my math, 'cause it makes me count. Right now, I like drums 'cause I'm good with my hands and I get the beat, but I wouldn't mind trying the saxophone, too."