

Teacher talents: Drummer in our midst

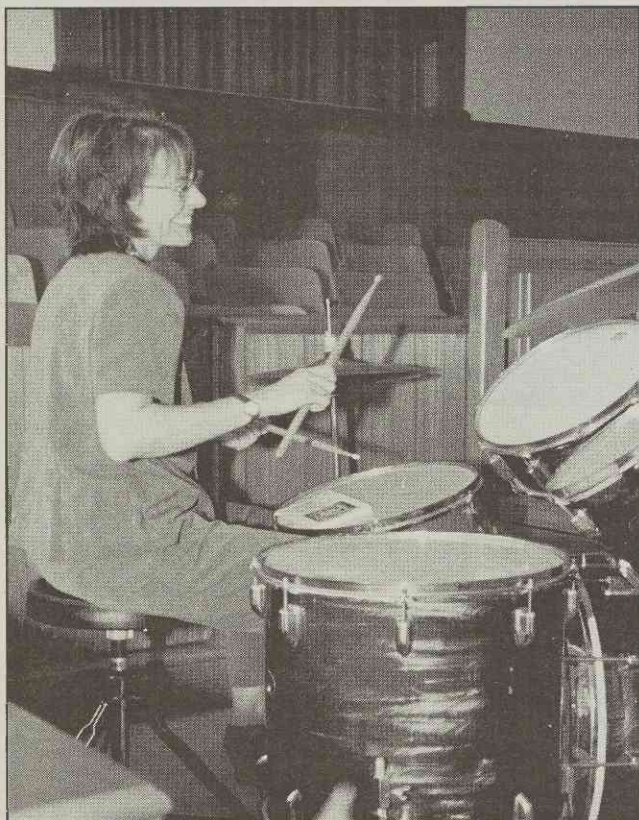


Photo by Tara Hostettler

Paula Qualls, professor of religion, plays the drums at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church for the praise band.

Faculty Talent Show features the best of staff

Christi Hallis
Pilot staff

After the Senior Pinning Ceremony on Friday night, Dover Theater was packed for the annual Faculty & Staff Talent Show, sponsored by Student Alumni Council.

Professors and staff members from a variety of departments participated.

Vice President for University Relations, Drew Van Horn, played lead guitar and was the lead vocalist of the houseband, "The Roaches."

The band, which also included faculty members Scott White, John Hoyle and John Varley, played cover songs of Smokey Robinson's "Really Got a Hold on Me" and closed the show with the Beatles', "Twist and Shout."

After this last number, several girls rushed the stage in

mock "Beatlemania."

Other performers included Carolyn Billings and Matt Whitfield of the music department, Carmen Butler and Company and Matt Theado of the English department.

President White, after playing his rendition of "Mary Had A Little Lamb," played "Ivory Palaces" and "Make Me a Blessing" on the grand piano.

Possibly the crowd favorite was the music department's newest professor, Paul Etter, who played "The William Tell Overture"—on his face.

The crowd erupted into laughter and applause as he concluded.

Tickets for the event were \$2 and the proceeds benefited the Student Alumni Council Scholarship Fund.

Mike Shade
Pilot sports editor

Any student that has had Paula Qualls for class knows that she's about as nice and as genuine as they come.

Her voice is clear, gentle and sincere. She has a smile that seems to have been surgically implanted. She comes to class, asks how everyone is doing and takes prayer requests.

They know all that.

Most don't know she plays the drums for Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church every Sunday.

Just by having her for class and seeing her around, her and a set of drums just don't seem to fit.

If VH1 had a show called "The 100 people who most look like they would play the drums," Qualls probably wouldn't make the list. She just doesn't seem to fit the drummer persona. Or does she?

If you get to know Qualls, you might see the drummer in her. Sure she doesn't have the torn jeans or bleached hair, but she has what any good drummer needs, which is patience and a lot of enthusiasm.

It's the way she lives.

Qualls says her favorite class to teach is her Old Testament Introduction class.

The first day of class she goes around the classroom and asks everyone the same questions. What's your name, your major and why are you taking this class? Her favorite answers are not what you might think.

"I love getting students who don't know about the Old Testament and don't care, and then igniting a flame and gen-

"I'm having a blast. I had always dreamed of playing in my church. It's something I've always wanted to do and God has opened that door."

~Paula Qualls

erating interest," she said.

Qualls loves what she does, and she makes no secret about it. She loves teaching Biblical Studies here at Gardner-Webb. She loves spending time with her family. And she loves to play the drums.

"I started playing the drums in 6th grade," she says.

"I took lessons for four years, and became very good and became very competitive also. I had the first chair in high school, and I was determined not to let anyone get the first chair ahead of me."

After high school though, the drum set was put in the attic. And it would stay there a good while.

Last year, Mt. Pleasant began a praise band and they needed a drummer.

"It started as a joke really," she says. "When the band was first forming, I always joked with them that I could play the drums—just kidding around."

It had been 15 years since she had played last, but she decided to give it a shot. She took the drums out of her parents' attic and started practicing. Now, it's a weekly event at Mt. Pleasant.

"The first time I visited Mt. Pleasant, I was shocked to see my advisor, Dr. Qualls, playing the drums for worship," said GWU student Amy Callahan. "But I was very much impressed by her talent and ability on the drums."

"I'm having a blast," says Qualls. "I had always dreamed of playing in my church. It's something I've always wanted to do and God has opened that door."



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