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From performer to teacher at Truro Music Festival

Raissa Tetanish

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TRURO - Belinda Adshade started performing at the Truro Music Festival at the age of six, and now she's helping others, including her granddaughter, prepare.



"I started teaching voice and piano while I was still in high school, and I graduated from CEC in '86," said Adshade, from her home. "But I really got into it in '88. I love people and I love working with kids."

Throughout the years, Adshade has done a lot of teaching and is working with voice and musical theatre participants in the Truro Music Theatre, which begins March 23 with musical theatre, jazz/blues, song and dance, monologues and recitations.

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Truro's Belinda Adshade is working with about 20 students to this year's Truro Music Festival, including those in musical theatre and voice disciplines. The festival begins March 23.

"I like to see my students' progress and achievements. It's exciting and it helps build their self-confidence and self-worth. It's very rewarding."

Knowing she's not much of a disciplinarian, Adshade said going into teaching those in voice and piano, and those performing in musical theatre, was the right fit.

"I'm all about 'let's have fun,'" she said.

With a love of performance when she first started in the festival, nothing has changed for Adshade. She said being a participant over the years was a great opportunity.

"It's fun to watch, too, to see what others are doing. You can get some ideas and make a lot of friends because you're in classes with the same people year after year. You get to know them."

Teaching students throughout the year, Adshade said many start talking about the Truro Music Festival in the fall.

"We try to pick out some songs before Christmas, and then after Christmas they start to get more focused," she said, adding she has around 20 students this year participating in the festival.

This year, she said, about three of her students have chosen to perform songs from Disney's 'Frozen,' including her five-year-old granddaughter, Brookelynne.

Working with the students for musical theatre, the majority of them can already sing, so a lot of what Adshade works with them on is bringing their character to life.

"Through facial expressions, movements ... It's not just about singing, but about really being that character," she said.

While many musical theatre teachers don't play the piano with their students, Adshade does and it's a great advantage having both a piano and voice background.

"I know what the students are going to do, and they know how I'll play," she said.

And although she's been involved with the festival for most of her life, this year will be a first for Adshade to play at the Marigold Cultural Centre.

"I'm excited about that," she said. "It's wonderful that we have that facility."

For more information on the music festival, including schedule, visit www.truromusicfestival.ca.

rtetanish@trurodaily.com

Twitter: @TDNRaissa