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# Neighborhood Post

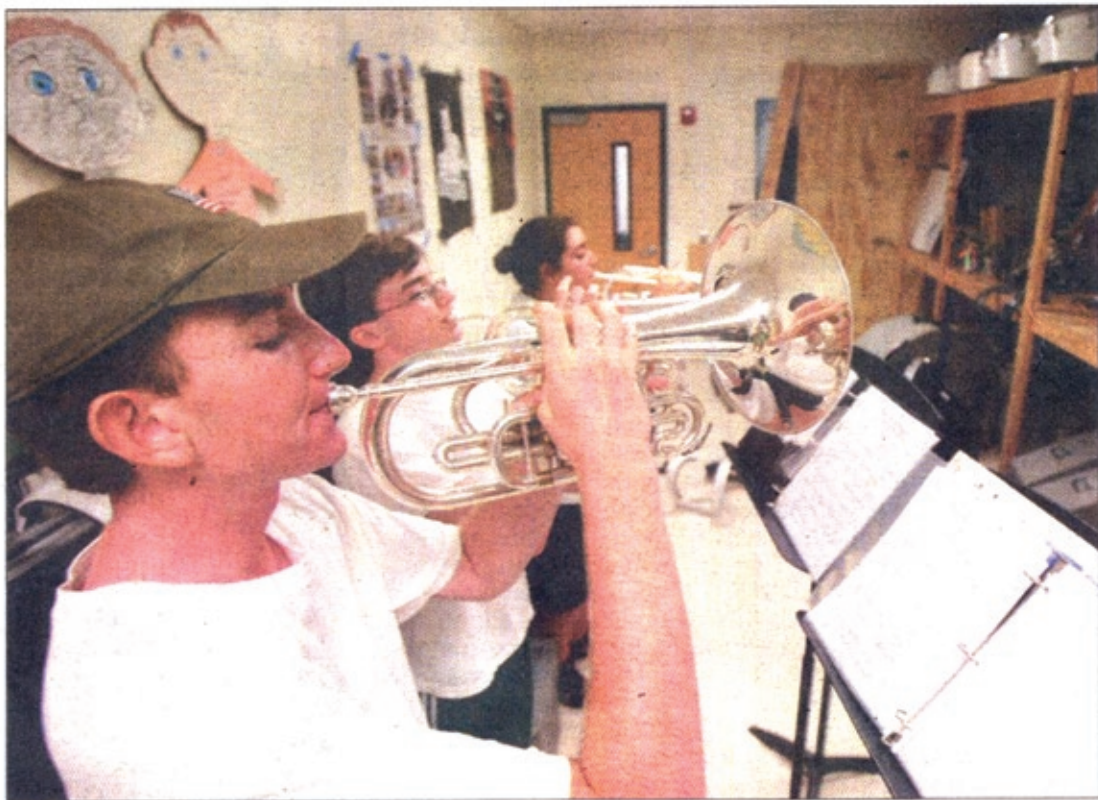
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## Gift of music

Jupiter High School students Shane Cullen, (from left), 15, Greg Wiley, 14, and Tai Belmberg, 16, play mellophones bought by the Jupiter Performing Arts Fund.

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## Volunteers put instruments in the hands of students

*New and refurbished equipment helps keep the band marching.*

By BILL DIPAOLO  
Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

JUPITER — Got an old piano collecting dust?

Seeking old instruments for high school musicians, the Jupiter Performing Arts Fund wants used trumpets, drums and other instruments. The organization also raises money to buy new instruments and repair old ones. Both



**Axelband**

are badly needed in these tough economic times, said Jupiter resident Bari Axelband, president of the not-for-profit volunteer organization.

"People who used to play may still have instruments in a closet or attic somewhere," Axelband said. "Somebody recently gave us a set of cymbals. Dented or scratched up is OK. We'll fix it and give it to a performer who is in need."

Axelband, who is not a musician, started New



Life for Old Notes about two years ago. Her daughter, Elena, played the trumpet at Jupiter High School. As she became more involved, Axelband saw the need for more and better instruments.

She started organizing other parents, and they since have raised about \$25,000 through donations, events and grants.

"Fixing a trumpet can cost \$500. Repairing the valves on an old tuba can cost \$1,200. Band programs can't afford that, especially these days," she said.

Music is much more than playing an instrument, said Randy Sontag, a band teacher who recently retired after 35 years with Palm Beach County schools. Becoming proficient as a musi-

cian takes determination, teamwork and discipline, he said.

That lesson was brought home to Sontag last month when his wife organized his retirement party. Many of his former music students, most who no longer play, attended.

"They told me how music changed their lives. How music gave them a positive attitude, how it was an outlet for them to express themselves," Sontag said.

Repairing a damaged instrument is far less expensive than buying a new one. A new trumpet can cost about \$700. But many times an old trumpet someone donates just needs a valve lubricated. For \$50, the trumpet is back in working condition, Sontag said.



Photos by RICHARD GRAULICH/Staff Photographer

Austin Alberto, 17, tries out some cymbals donated through the Jupiter Performing Arts Fund, at Jupiter High School on Tuesday afternoon. At left, Greg Wile, 14, plays a mellophone bought purchased by the arts fund. The group is seeking used trumpets, drums and other instruments, and it also raises money to help repair and maintain instruments.

"We get old saxophones, flutes and trombones. They just need a little adjustment to get them back in order," he said.

As schools and all other agencies face budget cuts, Axelband expects the program to become increasingly important. Now active in north county, she hopes

to expand the group throughout Palm Beach County.

The 25-member group also brings music teachers to local north county public schools. They have collected, fixed and donated tubas held together with duct tape, old, dented drums and ancient flutes.

Brass instruments are

especially needed, Axelband said.

"We were surprised when we were offered that piano. We'll take anything a student can learn from," Axelband said.

To make a tax-deductible donation or donate an instrument, go to [jpaf.org](http://jpaf.org) or call (561) 722-8568.

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