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**Teacher's got rhythm**

Rhonda Simmons  
 Staff report  
 Friday, March 14, 2008

Music director Paul Corbi?re stood in a circle surrounded by nearly 50 tubano drums Thursday as he helped A.G. Richardson Elementary School students prepare for today's daylong concerts.

Waving his arms, Corbi?re instructed students - holding wooden mallets in their tiny palms - when to strike the xylophones and when to tap the drums in an effort of producing bountiful melodies inside the multi-purpose room.

His weeklong visit is part of the Artist in Residence, a program that invites an expert into the community to help students and teachers sharpen their skills in a particular specialty.

Corbi?re, a Roundy Elementary School music teacher in Columbus Junction, Iowa, travels nationwide with the World Music Drumming Project to help students engage in cultural hand drumming traditions combined with singing, moving, and playing other instruments.

His workshop addresses all nine music standards, which include improvising melodies, reading, notating, and evaluating music - just to name a few.

"The benefit of this course is that it leads into everything else that we're trying to do," said Corbi?re, a staffer with WMDP for nine years. "It helps kids



Artist in Residence at A.G. Richardson Elementary School Paul Corbi?re shows third-grade students a xylophone part for a song during a world music drumming class Thursday morning. Staff photo, Vincent Vala



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grasp some of the concepts that we're trying to do on a deeper level."

Instead of just giving students a sheet of music to read, Corbi?re prefers "visual learning techniques" where he stands in front of the class and practices rhythms with his students.

"I've seen some big results with kids in this program," he said. "My biggest thing in elementary school is form. I want kids to hear form in music."

"To me, form is in everything we do," said Corbi?re, the co-founder of the Beat For Peace program. "If you put a house together there's a form to it just like there are forms to follow in geometry."

This isn't Corbi?re's first visit to Culpeper.

The Florida native began teaching weeklong workshops at Farmington Elementary about five years ago. This year is the first time he's taught music at AGR.

"He takes what we do in class to the next level," said Andrea Cottrill, AGR music teacher. "It reinforces what I'm doing in the classroom and shows the kids that there's a common thread that we all do music."

Corbi?re earned his master's of music in percussion performance from Ohio State University in 1992 and bachelor's of fine arts in music education in 1989.

He holds a certificate in drum and percussion performance from the Berklee College of Music in Boston. Corbi?re taught in Palm Beach County, Fla. for 14 years before heading mid west.

He has been a featured clinician at the Florida, Oklahoma, Virginia, and Texas, Iowa and Illinois Music Educators Association Conferences.

Rhonda Simmons can be reached at 825-0771 ext. 125 or [rsimmons@starexponent.com](mailto:rsimmons@starexponent.com).

## Want to go?

**What:** A.G. Richardson Elementary School music concert

**Where:** 18370 Simms Dr.

**When:** Today at 10:10, 12:30 and 1:30 p.m.

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