

# THE AMBLER GAZETTE

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## **SANDY RUN MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER DEBUTS ALBUM OF JAZZ**

By Jon Campisi (Staff Writer)

Sean Kennedy recently set out to achieve a long-awaited goal - to cut his very own CD. The Lower Gwynedd resident and accomplished drummer ventured over to Mark Kramer's Platinum Seven Studio in Dresher and began laying down tracks with the help of his jazz ensemble. In March, Kennedy, a professional musician and music teacher at Sandy Run Middle School in Upper Dublin, recorded his debut album, "Sean Kennedy - Road to Wailea" The record was a culmination of years of study and practice in his chosen field.

Kennedy's fascination with music began at a young age. He got started on piano when he was 12 and eventually moved on to percussion. "In high school, I was drawn to the drums," the 32-year-old Kennedy said. His drumming carried over into his college years, during which he met a fellow drummer and his future wife, Heather Ann. The two play together occasionally to this day. Kennedy began honing his musical skills over the years, yet eventually decided to break into the world of teaching as a fulltime profession, something he said actually aided in his creativity. "You can be mad at yourself, but you have to patient to patient to teach," he said. Working with different kids has also helped me to become a better musician. After I can get them to do it, it can be introspective."

Teaching, whether at school or during the private lessons he offers, allows a feeling of satisfaction he may not enjoy strictly by playing, he said. "I can break out an old record, and it's cool to see them get into it," he said. Kennedy said making the correlation between what he deems the classics and the music most of his students listen to also makes his job worthwhile. "Everything's connected," he said. "I try to tie everything together." Kennedy said most of his students were also impressed when they found out their music teacher had actually put out his own CD. "They think I just practice on a pad - that I don't have a life outside of class," he joked. "The real life experience is what makes it exciting." As for his latest venture, Kennedy said he has wanted to record a CD for the last 10

years, and although starting a new family may prevent others from pursuing such a time consuming goal, he found it to quite the opposite. "I found the busier I got, the more stuff I got done," he said. Since he has three children, two of whom are 3-year-old twin daughters, one may be amazed that he has time to sleep, let alone sit down at the drum set. Somehow, he manages to do it. He even had the family on his mind during the recording session, dedicating some of the tracks on the new album to them. "I thought the CD would be a good monument for my kids," he said.

Kennedy also plays live shows, although clubs don't seem to pay like they used to. Now, he sticks to freelance gigs such as weddings and other private functions. Music has certainly been good to Kennedy, although he said he doesn't see himself leaving the teaching profession anytime soon. "It would have to be something pretty remarkable," he said. In fact, many of the guys he plays with also have daytime teaching jobs. "Luckily, we're in a position where we don't have to live gig to gig," he said. For now, Kennedy said he will continue trying to inspire his students. "I know what my good teachers did for me, and if I could do the same for [my students], it would be great, " he said. He'll also try setting aside more time to write music, although spending time with his family comes first on his list priorities. He said he is grateful, however, for the support he gets at home. "It's great to come back to the babies, because it brings me back to reality," he said. Kennedy lives in Lower Gwynedd with his wife Heather Ann, daughters Ashley and Juliet and 1-year-old son Aidan.