

MUSIC

in the

Schools

March is Music in the Schools Month. To celebrate this, the Kalamazoo Gazette is featuring a local musician or group of musicians every Wednesday in March. For more information on Newspaper in Education contact nie@kalamazoo Gazette.com or 373-7144.

Musician shares message via his mandolin

Western Michigan University graduate student Brendan Weaver, 23, uses his mandolin to communicate his message to the world.

The Kalamazoo native first picked up the mandolin because he wanted an instrument that was easy to take with him while he traveled studying historical anthropology. He quickly found the instrument appealed to him in other ways.

"It's all about finding the best instrument for your personality," said Weaver, who took piano lessons for years before teaching himself the mandolin.

He feels the mandolin helps him express his values of family, social justice, environmentalism and peace.

"I have a holistic

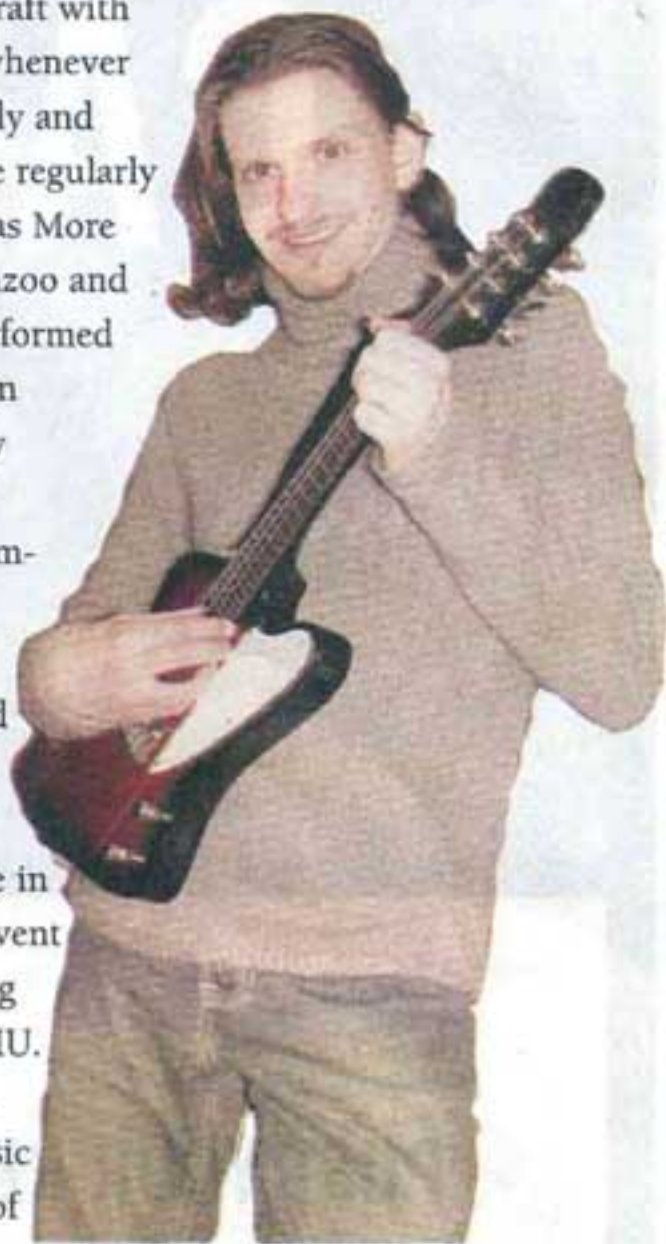
approach for bringing my message to people," he said. "All of my music is focused on that."

Weaver plays several types of mandolins including acoustic and electric. He practices his craft with other musicians whenever he can, both locally and internationally. He regularly plays at St. Thomas More Church in Kalamazoo and last August he performed during the Bolivian Independence Day Festival.

In 2006 he completed his first album, *Mandocentric*, and held a release party at Ravenwood Coffee in Kalamazoo. The event benefited the living wage cause at WMU.

Weaver is currently writing music in Spanish, some of

which will appear on his next album. He is planning a local performance this month. More information can be found on his Web site, www.brendanweaver.net.



Classroom connection:

Anthropology is the study of different cultures in which people live or used to live. Look in today's newspaper and find a group of people whose culture is different from your own. Use the internet to research more about this group of people to learn what types of music they listen to and what instruments they play.

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