

*"He's authentic as a person, and he's passionate about learning, and his value on the liberal arts is very authentic. That's who he is. When he came to Truman, it was a perfect fit." – Heather Cianciola*

# All Eyes On: James Cianciola

**Communication professor plays in local band Savage Henry outside of the classroom**

BY EMMA MUELLER  
Staff Reporter

A kindergarten boy, growing up in the New York countryside, steps onto the school bus at the start of a new day. He quickly notices the driver is not his usual bus driver. She's nice, the little boy thought. The driver introduces herself and explains how she likes to listen to music while she drives. This little boy boldly stands up and says, "Excuse me, but I'm not allowed to listen to rock music. My mom said it makes me crazy."

This boy was James Cianciola, associate professor of communication, who has enjoyed and played music for most of his life. It is the last piece of the puzzle he said he needed to complete his life in Kirksville.

Today, Cianciola is part of the three-piece local band, Savage Henry. However, music is just one aspect of his life. Family and teaching outrank music, though these aspects often overlap.

Cianciola attributes his interest in the guitar to his father. Even though their relationship wasn't always steady, guitar was a common ground for both of them. His father was a light director for local and national bands, and for Cianciola's first gig he asked his father to design the lights. One gesture his father gave him changed their relationship for the better.

"We get the three taps on the door, and that means you're on," Cianciola said. "So we get up there, and we play, and it's OK. Then it started to come together, and I felt more at home. Through the little bit of fog and lavender and magenta lights, there's my dad just giving me the thumbs up. From then on, I just had a different relationship with him. I found that place where we could both meet."

Because music was such a large part of Cianciola's life, he almost tried to make it as a musician instead of attending college. He soon realized the instability of this career and decided to try out college life at age 20. Hailing from a working class background, Cianciola

considered himself an underachiever growing up. College was different, however. The experience, at St. John Fisher college, was full of challenges and mentors.

"I was in the college classroom, and I was ready for it," Cianciola said. "I studied hard, and the reading was provocative for me. My first professor who really meant anything to me was Dr. Mary Loporcaro. I was in this magazine writing class. She said, 'Just write a story.' There were no coordinates at all. Even though I was raw and rough, she believed in me. She inspired me to write, and I ended up being the editor of our school magazine."

Cianciola is the adviser for Detours magazine. His wife, Heather Cianciola, a part-time lecturer in the English department, realizes what a big commitment her husband makes to his students and his passions.

"He takes everything he does very seriously," Cianciola said. "He's very passionate about serving students and about not just rhetoric, but also writing the written word. Something like Detours, where Truman students have the opportunity to do writing and showcase their writing in important ways, is a big commitment for him."

His wife said that, for her husband, a liberal arts education is education for the mind, heart and soul.

"He's authentic as a person, and he's passionate about learning, and his value on the liberal arts is very authentic," Cianciola said. "That's who he is. When he came here to Truman, it was a perfect fit."

James Cianciola has had many influences and mentors in his life, but he also has been an adviser and mentor to others. Senior Collin Koenig has gotten to know Cianciola in a variety of ways. Koenig has been his student and his student worker, and Koenig's band, Victory Service, has played with Savage Henry. By learning so much about him, Koenig has grown to admire many qualities about Cianciola.

"I think he does a good job of staying individual, be it on this campus or in the communication department or just around Kirksville," Koenig said. "He stays true to himself a



Amy Vicars/Index

James Cianciola, associate professor of communication, was introduced to rock music on his way to kindergarten, and it has been a part of his life ever since.

lot, and as a student observing a college professor, I can really appreciate that."

Even though Koenig switched from a communication major to a business major after taking COMM 170 with Cianciola, the professor has still taught Koenig a thing or two.

"I think he's taught me a little bit how to deal with people," Koenig said. "The way he conducts himself around people, I have a lot of

respect for. He's taught me a lot as far as how to carry yourself and how to not compromise your own values. Maybe someday, I'll learn some sweet guitar skills from him."

Now long removed from his kindergarten years, Cianciola still thinks rock music makes him crazy. Take notice, because he's the man in the Rav 4 driving down Highway 63 with Led Zeppelin blaring from his speakers.

# Lincoln celebrates 200th birthday

BY JENNIFER LEWIS  
Staff Reporter

A Truman professor will share his passion for the life and achievements of Abraham Lincoln with students and faculty using poetry, music, art and narrative during an Oct. 7 forum called "Encounters with Lincoln through the Arts."

In honor of a year-long celebration across the United States of Lincoln's 200th birthday, Tom Trimborn, professor of music education, said he put together a forum that focuses on his book "Encounters With Lincoln: Images and Words" and incorporates performances by members of Truman's Brass Choir and Cantoria. Trimborn said he thinks looking at Lincoln through the lenses of various disciplines provides a more complete picture of who Lincoln was as a person and as an inspirational historical figure.

"Historians have dealt with Lincoln for many years and told his story," Trimborn said. "To me, artists and photographers and poets and painters and sculptors and musicians have a different story about Lincoln to tell, and I think it's a rather unique one and in its own way every bit as important as the historical record."

Trimborn also said an interdisciplinary forum featuring topics from history

to sculpture to the written word demonstrates the multidimensional nature of real life.

Members of the Brass Choir and Cantoria will perform music Lincoln actually heard at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery in Gettysburg, Penn. in 1963, where he gave his famous Gettysburg Address.

The first song played by the Brass Choir will be the Star Spangled Banner, but it will be different than the version known today. Jay Bulen, chair of the music department, said the Star Spangled Banner of the Civil War era was actually closer to a Victorian waltz than the proud, militaristic version we are familiar with today. The version the brass choir will play at the forum is one played throughout Gettysburg the night before the dedication of the cemetery.

This version of the Star Spangled Banner special is that it will be played on two Civil War era trumpets, accompanied by three other Brass Choir musicians on various modern brass instruments. The historical instruments are heirlooms passed down from Trimborn's family. One of the trumpets was a gentle silver and looked like a cross between a French horn and a trumpet, its bell pointed skyward with complicated loops of piping at the keys. Jones said that hearing this instrument is

a very different experience from listening to a modern trumpet.

"Everything about the instrument, its entire construction, is different," Jones said. "It's a much lighter-sounding instrument. We play louder now than we used to, so these students have to figure out how to play light to make it sound correct. Also, that instrument happens to be in the key of E-flat, and we're used to playing in B-flat, so your ears have to adjust to it. We'll even study things like vibrato, because in the 1860s vibrato was much more common than it is now. The use of these instruments and playing with the performance style of the period is going to help give us the flavor of the time."

Members of the select choral group Cantoria will join the Brass Choir for the second musical number, which will be a dirge that was played immediately preceding Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. This dirge commemorated the lives lost in the Battle of Gettysburg, which claimed the largest number of casualties during the Civil War. As far as Trimborn and Bulen know, this dirge has never before been recorded.

The forum is free and will be held at 7 p.m. in the Ophelia Parrish Performance Hall. The music department hopes the varied disciplines represented will draw students from all areas of study, and Trimborn

**"Encounters with Lincoln through the Arts"**

\* 7 p.m. Oct. 7 in Ophelia Parrish Performance Hall

\* Featuring Truman's Cantoria and Brass Choir

\* Hosted by Tom Trimborn, professor of music education and author of the book, "Encounters With Lincoln: Images and Words"

rn said the forum is important for students no matter what their major is because Lincoln should be important to every U.S. citizen.

"I think Lincoln is us at our very best," Trimborn said. "He is representative of what we like to think of as America and Americans at our very best, and it's always rewarding to remind ourselves of the best that we can be."

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