

Neptune Beach Elementary raises funds for new music program with 'May the 4th Be With You'



photos submitted

(Left) Neptune Beach Elementary special education students form a drum circle during music class; (Right) NBE student Dante Demuth plays the keyboard.

Neptune Beach Elementary School is hosting a “May the 4th Be With You” fundraiser event to benefit Connecting Thru Music, a new music therapy program to enhance the school’s existing special needs music program.

The event will be held Friday, May 4 on the track at NBE from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Entertainment for the fundraiser will be provided by bands Firewater Tent Revival and Can’t Never Could. The night will also include food, a silent auction, raffle, children’s activities and a children’s Star Wars costume contest. Event attendees may bring gently-used instruments to donate to the music program if they wish, such as drums, guitars, keyboards, ukuleles or cymbals.

“We have had incredible success with the music program we started a year and a half ago, which provides weekly music education for special needs students from seven different classrooms,” said Karen Demuth of NBE. “We expose them to music from Bach to rock to Kindermusik and have noticed increased learning and joy as a result. Adding a music therapy program, which is conducted by a certified therapist who can access, document and use the behavioral results of music and instruction, is a natural extension of our current program. Music therapy for children of special needs has a powerful and healing effect, especially for those with limited physical and cognitive skills.”

NBE is currently conducting a 10-

week pilot program with a certified therapist to obtain quantitative data to support the future initiative and the school is working to secure assistance through sponsors, grants and donations.

Tickets for May the 4th Be With You are \$5 per person or \$15 per family (up to 6 people). Tickets may be purchased on Eventbrite or at the door. Sponsors and auction item donations are also being sought for the event and those interested may contact Karen Demuth at 305-299-9247 or Karendemuth@yahoo.com. Those unable to attend the event but would still like to contribute can make a donations to the program at www.gofundme.com/22gz5rjr.