

# Longtime music teacher writes ‘uplifting’ memoir

By Karen Kreworuka Special to the Sun Journal

Silver Linings: Edward Judd of Auburn taught for 46 years, including stints in Lewiston, Auburn and Lisbon.



Edward Judd of Auburn taught music to students in Lisbon, Auburn and Lewiston. His latest addition to his collection of instruments is a 1911 mellophonium. Daryn Slover/Sun Journal

AUBURN — When Edward Judd was preparing to conduct his final high school concert before retiring, students blocked the door to the music room.

Something “top secret” was happening, and they could not let Judd enter the room, one student said.

“At the beginning of the concert, I found out what the students had been up to earlier,” Judd said in a recent interview. “The front apron of the stage was lined with all of the trophies from the trophy shelf in the music room that my groups won during the 15 years that I had taught at the school, from one end of the stage to the other, all 51 of them. I was quite touched.”

Judd, now 70, retired a couple of years ago from Newfound Regional High School in Bristol, New Hampshire. Before that, he taught music for 22 years in Lisbon schools, served 10 years on the marching band staff at Edward Little High School in Auburn and directed music instruction at the Promise Early Education Center at Hillview in Lewiston.

His memoir, "View from the Podium," tells the story of his 46-year career as a music teacher from elementary school through college levels.

Since its publication in October 2019, the book has been used in music education classes at the university level, including Dartmouth College in New Hampshire and Castleton State University, Vermont.

Thomas Lizotte, a Maine Music Educators Association Hall of Famer, called the book "an uplifting story told in a straightforward way."

Lizotte wrote in an Amazon review the memoir is a "warm, honest story of the career vicissitudes of a longtime music teacher. It is the story of having one's love for teaching being tested, learning the craft the hard way, working through how hard the workplace can be, crushing disappointments from unknowing administrators, the joy of working with young people, and ultimately, professional triumph."

During his long career, Judd served as president of the association and as the Maine delegate to the International Symposium for Music Education.

His love of teaching began when he was a student, he said.

"Before I even began teaching in public school, I instructed drum and bugle corps while I was a college student," Judd said. "During that time, two of the groups I instructed won state titles. Once I began teaching in school, I continued to teach drum and bugle corps, and two more of my groups attained state titles."

He said the most memorable of these was the 20th Maine Regiment Drum and Bugle Corps, based in Oakland. The group won fourth place in the Class A division at the Drum Corps International World Championships.

"I was not the sole instructor, but part of the instruction staff," Judd said. "But it was still a very proud moment for me."

Other moments were not so great.

As he was writing the book, "it was clear that I needed to call people to account who refused to acknowledge the value of what I teach," he said.

Judd said he encountered board members and administrators who "talked the talk, but wouldn't walk the walk; were fairly ignorant of what is necessary for a music program to succeed; or actively engaged in practices meant to limit the growth and success of the music program."

A "vast array of research" shows the value of music education, he said.

"So many times, I would see a student that was struggling in school, and the only thing that was a

positive experience for them, that kept them going to school, was music class,” he said. “For many students, it very well may have played a part in fostering success in whatever endeavor they might have decided to undertake.”

These days, Judd writes customized arrangements for other band directors.

“Commercial band arrangements are written for bands numbering anywhere from 40 to 80 players,” he said. “When a small band of, say, 20 players attempts to perform a commercial band selection, it is likely to sound like a musical jigsaw puzzle with many pieces missing.”

He does not charge anyone for the work.

“I consider it giving back to the profession,” he said.