

# Silent guitars revolutionize classroom learning process

Staff Writer

After three years, countless meetings, and enough fundraising to raise \$23,000, it's finally happening. The LVA guitar department has bought 36 Yamaha "Silent Guitars," and is revolutionizing how high school guitar programs work in the process.

The guitars are designed to be both functional and applicable in everyday playing situations. Using a non-resonating solid fret board, the guitars give off almost no sound, similar to an unplugged electric guitar. Mr. Swick, guitar teacher, believes the new technology will be well worth all the effort it took to bring it to LVA. "It's really cutting edge," he says. "We are the first high school in the country to implement this kind of program."

The ability for guitarists to play without disturbing others brings a number of new opportunities to every aspect of the guitar department.

Students can now practice while their peers take individual examinations. This doubles the amount of playing time in class from 40 to 80 minutes on average. Students will now have more time to practice and enhance the already expansive repertoire that the program demands.

In addition to being played in class, the guitars will also be used in concert. The guitars are the highest quality instruments that the department has ever purchased retailing at \$1,000 a piece, and will bring a new level of clarity and sound quality to the group's performances.

The decision to purchase these guitars has been in the works for quite some time. The department does not participate in more traditional fundraisers such as selling cookie dough or magazines. Alternatively, the majority of the department's money comes from ticket sales at concerts and sales of their cd's.

Guitar students are eagerly



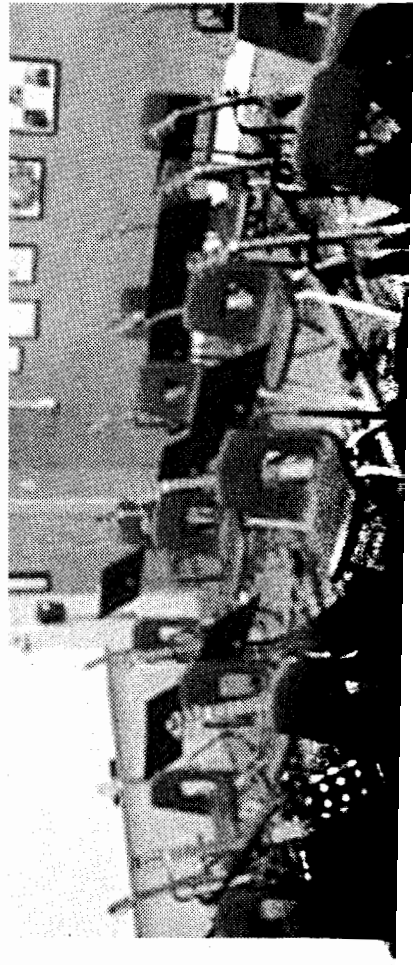
anticipating using the innovative guitars. Will Crumpacker, sophomore, second year guitar major, is eager to start playing the new instruments. "It's really going to change things. Everyone is very excited," he says.

Each guitar comes with its own headset which includes a microphone although students can plug in their iPod ear buds if they choose. Using the "Studio" that comes with the guitars, the instructor can separate the class into groups of two, three, or four, thus allowing the students to play in small groups and communicate with one another. This allows students to build upon the vital skill of playing in a group.

The arrival of the guitars has already drastically changed the entire set up of the guitar classroom. Wooden

The entire process of preparing the room took several weeks because there were many construction ordinances that a project like this must adhere to. Things like electrical cords, space in between aisles, and various other safety concerns had to be taken into account.

The president of the LVA guitar club, senior Louis Syrovoy, has played a large role in bringing the whole project to fruition. "It's something that is truly neat. Everyone who is involved should really be proud," he says with a grin on his face. His sentiments add to what seems to be the over-bearing collective thought in the guitar department: silence, in this case at least, is most definitely golden.



Sources: