

Thane E. Thomas received a degree in music education from Brigham Young University in 1972 along with a commission as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the United States Army. He then spent the next five years serving his country in Okinawa Japan. Upon release from the military he joined a family farming cooperation and went to work raising three kids, building a successful business and actively participating in the community college choral and drama programs. He had the opportunity to solo with the Boise Philharmonic and the annual Messiah productions. He has participated with groups that performed at Carnegie Hall and directed countless church and youth choral groups.

With the family grown and gone he decided it was time to see what he could do with the teaching certificate he received so he sold his shares in the cooperation and in 2002 packed his bags and headed for his first teaching gig in Cordova, Alaska, where he currently teaches K-12. He had to get his saxophone out of mothballs and with the patience of his students figured out what to do with a band. The music program has grown under his leadership and in 2009; forty-nine students flew to Orlando, Florida to perform at Disney World.

He has a wide variety of musical experience he offers the students. The K-6 students sing, play the harmonicas, recorders, work in the piano lab, guitars, and dance, put on musicals and, of course, start band in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Jr. High students have only one elective so band is it for them; however, when they hit high school Mr. T gets them back. He directs the choir and band programs at that level. On the side, he has a jazz band, pep band going and splits his choir up into men's and women's ensembles Every year they perform a variety show called the Cabaret where the students get to show how really good they truly are. Mr. Thomas is in his eighth year of teaching and wonders where the time has gone.

*Music is a gift you can offer to students that will bless them the rest of their lives.*