

Teen musician wins radio talent contest

By **TABITHA GOODLING**
Sentinel correspondent

Music has a way of defining people's lives when they do not have the words to speak.

Sixteen-year-old Dexter Ehrenzeller is not one for a lot of words. But he has the heart for music. Dexter was named winner of the WGRC Radio Junior Division Talent Contest on April 24, 2011, — his 16th birthday which also happened to be Easter Sunday.

"I just love music," he says. It only made sense such an exciting part of his life was granted to him on his birthday.

The judges of the competition and the announcers did not plan it that way. The results came to him on April 24. His mom, Penny, videoed him as he received the call. He smiled and accepted the news with a thank you.

The East Juniata High School junior has been singing since the age of 5. His first appearance was on stage at church with his older sister. However, it wasn't until age 11 when he began to take voice lessons that he really felt the desire to continue singing.

Having taken guitar lessons at age 9, he said he didn't spend much time thinking about lending a voice to his music. One Sunday he had the opportunity to perform special music at church.

He belted out "Who Am I?" by contemporary Christian music group Casting Crowns.

As the teen years arrived, Dexter became a presence on the school stage, acting and singing in performances such as "South Pacific," "Annie Get Your Gun," "The Wizard of Oz" and "The Sound of Music." He will also appear in the EJHS spring musical "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers."

"Theater is a lot of fun," he



Sentinel photo by TABITHA GOODLING

Music is a way of life for Dexter Ehrenzeller, who took guitar lesson at the age of 9.

says.

And even though he is on the football team, participates in track, plays guitar in the school's jazz band, sings in the chorus and admittedly tinkers at the piano, he says he would rather be singing.

Dexter, who is also part of his church's youth praise team, first took part in a singing competition with WGRC in 2010. His mom heard about the contest that highlights area youth's talent, and she encouraged him to enter.

That spring he performed before a panel of four judges at Rainbow Bookstore in Lewisburg. At age 14 he made it to the final round. He then was able to sing on the air as listeners voted for their favorite in each division.

Dexter lost "by just a few

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"A lot of my friends heard me on the radio. I'm glad they were listening to it."

— Dexter Ehrenzeller

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