

Performers introduce students to songwriting

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PANAMA CITY — About 1,600 fifth-graders spent Thursday morning singing, learning how to write songs and hearing about “Taylor the Latte Boy.”

Professional songwriters and performers Marcy Heisler and Zina Goldrich of “The Marcy and Zina Show” teamed up with Broadway tenor Scott Coulter to show the students that singing isn’t the only musical career available.

“A lot of kids are out there studying music, and it’s not just about being a singer, a violinist or pianist,” Goldrich said. “I don’t think half of them know that you can be a songwriter. We want to open that door for

them; some of them may walk through.”

The songwriters said they usually do shows for older students, but after the fun they’ve had with younger students like the ones attending the Panama City show, there will be more interactive shows like this one.

“It was so thrilling to have them participating so much,” Goldrich said. “They’re very creative at this time and they don’t really censor or judge themselves. It’s a great time to be talking to them about expressing themselves through music.”

Heisler, Goldrich and Coulter taught the students not only how to create songs, but what makes them memorable.

“People love certain songs, but they don’t know why they do,” Heisler said. “They don’t realize that a hook is really catchy in your head because the point of view is so clear. Maybe they don’t have to, but when you talk about the construction of songs this early on, you create more educated listeners.”

They had an interactive show for the students, encouraging them to provide subjects and catchy phrases for songs created during the show. They also talked about using things that happen in everyday life as inspiration for songs and stories.

“It was really exciting for us and I really believe one of these kids will go home and write a song tonight,” Heisler said. “And that’s what is really important.”

In addition to the children’s show, vocal workshops were held in the afternoon and cabaret shows Thursday and Friday night. For the cabaret shows, go through the Marina Civic Center’s backstage door with your tickets.

