



**Linda Feldman, shown here with two of her students, is retiring after 32 years of teaching.**

## ***Longtime Livingston Music Teacher Retiring***

Linda Feldman, a music teacher at Academy360 in Livingston and a Livingston resident, is retiring after 32 years of teaching. Academy360 is a private school for students with autism and related disabilities.

“After teaching at Spectrum360 for 32 years, I have mixed emotions about retiring,” Feldman said. “Although I know that the time is right, I will miss all my students and colleagues.”

Feldman says she had always wanted to teach. She took piano lessons for a long time and when she went to college, she majored in music education and piano.

“It was a very natural progression,” she said.

Feldman shared why she loves teaching:

“When I see my students excited to perform or even to play an instru-

ment in class, it warms my heart. Performance builds self-esteem and self-confidence. I always set my standards high and I was never disappointed. The performers always rose to the occasion to the best of their ability and I was happy and so proud. Working with these students has been a very rewarding experience for me.”

Some of Feldman’s favorite memories from her time at Academy360 are taking students to sing at the New York Stock Exchange and the New Jersey Senate. She also enjoyed producing shows like “The Lion King,” “The Little Mermaid,” “The Sound of Music” and more.

Feldman received many awards throughout her career, including two Teacher of the Year awards and an award from the National Association of Private Special Education Centers

for “Leadership and Innovation in Special Education.”

Feldman also takes pride in the Girl Scout troop she started 31 years ago. She led three groups for elementary, middle and high school students. Feldman took the groups camping once or twice a year. Four members of Feldman’s troop earned the Gold Award, which is considered the most prestigious award for Girl Scouts. Feldman has also won several awards from Girl Scouts for her leadership.

Feldman’s last show at Academy360 was on Wednesday, May 25. The show featured a special surprise to honor her.

“I felt happy, proud and satisfied that it went so well and I couldn’t believe that they surprised me with performances by my past students from other musicals that I directed and they sang songs from their respective shows for me,” Feldman said. “At the end, they gave me a huge group hug.”

While Feldman is not sure what her retirement plans are yet, she has a few ideas, including substitute teaching or giving private piano lessons. Feldman shared some final words as she embarks on this new chapter in her life:

“It has been my privilege to work for Spectrum360. To know that my music program has had a positive impact on my students means the world to me.”