

Voices

WESTSIDE
VOCAL MUSIC

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September 29, 2015

Vol. VI, No. 1



Letter from the President

Welcome Parents/Vocal Music Fans,

At Westside, we often hear the phrase “tradition of excellence.” Over time, an expression of this nature becomes so familiar, we tend to disregard its significance. Yet our vocal music program exemplifies the phrase in so many ways. Take a look at the calendar on the back of this newsletter and you will note that there are over 30 scheduled vocal music events for the 2015-2016 school year. Among them are 10 competitions plus numerous free performances to showcase our students’ voices. These events are possible thanks to the talent and dedication of music directors Doran Johnson and Kyle Avery who will enrich the lives of over 340 vocal music students this year.

While music is not *yet* an official core subject in the U.S., music education has been scientifically proven to boost students’ brain development in myriad ways. This fact is well known to Westside’s music educators whose programs have been recognized for excellence locally as well as nationally. As parents and supporters, we are also important contributors to the ongoing growth of our students through their vocal music experiences.

We urge you to become active members of the Vocal Music Parent Association (VMPA) whose financial contributions cover the cost of highly qualified guest clinicians, musical arrangements, annual musicals, and scholarships that are awarded to students in the spring. In addition, Hall of F.A.M.E donations are critical in supporting the needs of our three award-winning show choirs. Whether your student participates in a choir, show choir, or both, your help is needed to staff our three key fundraising events: Cabaret, the Competition of Excellence and Evening of Show Choirs. Proceeds from these events directly benefit the vocal music program.

Thank you for your help in creating and maintaining a true tradition of excellence in vocal music at Westside.

Sincerely,
Natalie and Eric Petersen

Acknowledgments

The editors of Westside’s *Voices* newsletter, Julie & Paul Trivilino, thank:

- Elizabeth Tape for her many outstanding photos of choir and show choir students.
- Natalie Petersen for contributing the article *Fiddler on the Roof* with help from Kyle Avery and Jeremy Stoll.
- Paul Trivilino Design for professional design/layout services.
- Westside Print Services for newsletter printing.
- Julie McMullen for Hall of F.A.M.E. donor tracking.

Special thanks to Doran Johnson, Kyle Avery and Denise Millard for the extensive time and talent they devote to providing our students with so many opportunities to grow not only as vocalists, but as young leaders.

SAVE THE DATE

December 11th & 12th

Westside Rising Stars Show Choir Camp

Come Join In The Fun For Elementary & Middle School Students!!

Registration Forms online:

www.westsidechoirs.com

VMPA Board Members

President Natalie & Eric Petersen
Vice President Wendie & Scott Grogan
Secretary Cathy & Steve Haney
Treasurer Kim Wear
Advisor Ann & Scott Hofmann

VMPA Committee Chairs

Hospitality Amy & Phil Cosimano
Voices Newsletter Julie & Paul Trivilino
Hall of F.A.M.E. Julie McMullen
Rising Stars Camp Lori Farwell & Stacie Brodkey
Bulletin Boards Sue Frerichs
ATSC Retreat (2015) Molly & Mike Wallace
ATSC Picnic Cindy & Brad Hammitt
Senior Posters Chrisi Hughes & Sue Frerichs
Cabaret Shannon Hoy
COE Sue & Steve Seline
Courtney & Jason Hellman
Backstage Doug Frerichs
Evening of Show Choirs Angie Bekins & Stacy Simon
Scholarships Wendie Grogan
Equipment Transport Brett Thomas

Meet the Westside Vocal Music Staff

Doran Johnson is in his 28th year of teaching choral music. For the past 18 years, he has been the choral director at Westside High School where he also serves as Chair of the Performing Arts Department. Mr. Johnson holds a Bachelor of Music Education degree from the University of Northern Iowa and a Master of Music degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He has served as Chair of Choral Affairs for the Nebraska Music Educators Association. In 2012, the Nebraska Music Educators Association honored Johnson as Educator of the Year. Mr. Johnson received the NSAA 2014 Outstanding Service Award for his work as District Music Contest Coordinator. He has been married to his wife, Jolon, for 28 years and is proud of his two children, Jordan and Jaylee.



Doran Johnson

Kyle Avery is in his 12th year as Assistant Choral Director at Westside. His assignments at Westside include directing Concert Choir, Simply Irresistible and both Chamber Choirs, teaching voice class, directing music for the school musical, and assisting with the 8th-grade choir at the middle school. Mr. Avery holds a bachelor and masters degree in Music Education from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and has previously taught at Logan-Magnolia Schools in Logan, IA. He has also performed at local community theaters and with Opera Omaha, and the Nebraska Wind Symphony.



Kyle Avery

Denise Millard is starting her fifth year as Vocal Music Department Accompanist. She has extensive experience as a pianist, having played in churches in California and Omaha for over 36 years. She has also taught private piano lessons for more than 18 years. When not playing piano, Millard enjoys hanging out with her three grown children, when their schedules permit. She also loves to travel with her husband, Mark.



Denise Millard

Proper Concert Audience Etiquette

The WHS Vocal Music Department is proud to showcase our students at concerts. While everyone may have different reasons for attending this evening's concert, please keep in mind that the most important reason is to watch and listen to the performers. Good concert etiquette helps the singers perform more effectively and improves the audience experience. Please respect and set a good example for our students by observing the following rules of etiquette. Thank you!

- Remain silent during the performance. Please turn off all electronic devices before the concert begins. Refrain from making verbal contact with anyone on stage.
- Remain still during the performance. Please refrain from waving to anyone on stage, or in the audience, to allow the performers to focus.
- Show respect for all of the performers by staying for the entire concert. Students are responsible for staying for the entire duration of the concert as part of their performance grade. Please stay seated during the performance. If you must leave your seat, please exit and re-enter only during times of applause.
- Show your appreciation to the performers by clapping appropriately at the end of each selection. You will know that a selection has ended when the conductor's hands are lowered to his/her sides. Please refrain from cheering, whistling or yelling. Wait until a number has finished before acknowledging any soloists. When the applause has faded away, return to quiet mode so the performers can focus on the next selection. Also, please refrain from talking while choirs enter and exit the stage.
- Younger children are always welcome at our performances and should remain seated with their parents for the entire performance. Children should also remain with a parent at all times before and after a concert.
- Courtesy to the performers and other audience members is appreciated. Anyone coughing excessively, or any parent who is accompanied by a crying child, should exit quietly and return during the applause.
- Please do not use flash photography. Flashes can disorient the performers and detract from their focus on the conductor.
- Remember that most performances are recorded by professionals. Please avoid any disruption that would negatively impact the quality of their recording. Likewise, audience members who are using video recording equipment should position themselves in a manner that does not obstruct the view of others.

Visit WestsideChoirs.com for up-to-date program dates and information.

Westside to Stage *Fiddler on the Roof*

Fiddler on the Roof first appeared on Broadway in 1964 and set the record for the longest-running musical in its day. It earned 10 Tony Awards and inspired four Broadway revivals for a grand total of 4,484 performances. During intersession, Westside will perform this extraordinary show at 7:00 p.m. in the high school auditorium on October 15th, 16th and 17th, and at 2:00 p.m. on October 18th.

In many ways, WHS's *Fiddler* production is epic in its own right—from the size of the cast, to the grandeur of the set. Like the original *Fiddler*, it has required collaboration among many talented individuals. Once again, **Kyle Avery** and **Jeremy Stoll** are teaming up to lead the production and have secured some valuable help from the community. Stoll explained that he and Avery selected *Fiddler* because it supported a large cast with a good balance of roles and songs for males and females, but soon discovered other benefits as well. "It has a great message for a modern audience and also has great potential for students to learn about the Jewish faith, customs and traditions," Stoll said.

Appropriately honoring Jewish culture was extremely important throughout the process. "To that end," Stoll said, "we've hired some really incredible, knowledgeable people. Michelle Garrity, our choreographer, has choreographed the show several times and is familiar with all of the traditional dances. Esther Katz, Cultural Arts Director at the Jewish Community Center, is serving as a researcher and consultant to ensure we're not missing any details or misrepresenting any part of the Jewish culture. Finally, our Production Assistant, Kim Clark-Kaczmarek, who has worked on other *Fiddler* productions, is on board as head costumer and is helping with scene design."

The scenery, in fact, has a story of its own. Last summer, a handful of students traveled with Avery and Stoll to Red Oak, Iowa and loaded a 26-foot moving trailer with pieces of scenery that were largely from a 2009 Omaha Community Playhouse *Fiddler* production. Stoll said the scenery is beautifully made and that they "...are doing some very interesting things with the set to make it a uniquely Warrior Theatre production."

In total, Westside's production of this iconic show involves 76 students—as cast, crew or members of the orchestra. Each

group is challenged in unique ways. The 42-member cast rehearses two hours every weekday and longer on weekends. However, only four rehearsals were devoted to learning the vocal music. "Beyond that," Avery explains, "we have to perfect vocal performances individually and in small groups. It's definitely a lot less time than these students get to work on music in choir or show choir. We really depend on having smart performers who are willing to learn a lot of it on their own."



Kyle Avery works with Emily Hammans who will perform in the play as the fiddler.

The crew has its own set of challenges due to the number of logistics to be managed. For example, Avery said, "We put body mics on actors who have lines or solos in the show so they can be heard over the pit orchestra. A play without singing/music typically doesn't need amplification, but musicals are different." Since it would be too expensive to rent microphones for all 42 cast members, they put a student crew member in charge of assigning and trading mics to actors throughout the show.

Another challenge the team faced was directing the title role. Avery said, "The fiddler plays an important part in the show, but the role isn't described well in the script, so we are figuring it out for ourselves. In many productions, the violin music is played from the pit orchestra and an actor fakes it. Fortunately, we have a very talented student violinist, Emily Hammans, who will actually be playing the fiddle on stage."

The show benefits from many talented instrumentalists. Avery said, "There are 19 orchestra members, and 11 of them are WHS students. We are very grateful for these student performers since they are so busy with marching band, show choir band, school orchestra, community ensembles, etc. They get a total of 10 rehearsals to perfect over two hours of music—and it isn't easy music. It was written for Broadway professionals! The other eight musicians are adults from the community and even some Westside teachers!"

Of course, the bottom line is that Westside's *Fiddler on the Roof* is not to be missed. "It's an iconic show that a lot of people have been in or seen, and it's exciting to become a part of that Tradition! (get it?)" Stoll jokes.



Students help Kyle Avery and Jeremy Stoll move set pieces into a moving van to transport to Westside High School.

Handel's *Messiah*: A Collaborative Event

This year's Choral Collaborative involves choirs from Omaha Benson, Creighton Prep, Bellevue East, Lincoln Southwest, Papillion La Vista South and Westside. They will perform in partnership with the Omaha Symphony in the Holland Performing Arts Center under the baton of Ernest Richardson. This year's "Master Work" is GF Handel's *Messiah*, which is perhaps his most famous oratorio. Handel composed nearly 30 oratorios and close to 50 operas. Written in 1741, and first performed in Dublin in 1742, the *Messiah* is Handel's most renowned work. The Choral Collaborative performance is Sunday, November 15th at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are currently on sale through the Omaha Symphony and Ticket Omaha. This event is expected to sell out quickly. If you have a student in Warrior Choir or would like to purchase tickets, go to <http://www.westsidechoirs.com>. There is a link on the home page that will take you to an order form.

2016 European Tour

Want a fun way to spend the summer of 2016? The Midwest Honor Choir trip to Europe still has space available. The choir will be visiting France, Spain, Monaco, Italy, Austria, Switzerland and Germany. This is a great way to expand your musical experience and increase your cultural awareness. Interested students or parents should contact Mr. Johnson for more information.



The 2014 choral ensemble.

Visit WestsideChoirs.com for up-to-date program dates and information.

Cabaret 2015

Just \$10 Buys a Reserved Seat to:



**Sunday, November 1st
3 PM & 7 PM**

Freshman Choir performs at 3 PM
Concert Choir performs at 7 PM
Warrior Choir and all Show Choirs
perform at both shows

**Watch for advanced ticket
sales mailing Oct. 21st**

Soloist tryouts: October 21st
(all choir students are eligible)
Soloists announced: October 22nd
Raffle tickets will be sent home with students.

Proceeds Benefit ALL Vocal Music Programs at WHS!
Thank you for your generous support of this
important fundraising event.

Westside High School Presents

Fiddler on the Roof

October 15th – 17th

7:00 p.m.

and

October 18th

2:00 p.m.

Westside High School
Auditorium

Tickets:

\$6 for Students/Seniors,
\$10 for Adults

Tickets can be purchased
at www.warriortheatre.org

About Westside's Hall of F.A.M.E.

Since 2002, the Vocal Music Hall of F.A.M.E. (Fund for Attaining Musical Excellence) has provided funds to help Westside's show choir program become one of the best in the country. Join today and help continue the tradition! Make checks payable to Westside Foundation. Mail to: **Vocal Music Parents Association**, Westside High School, 87th & Pacific Streets, Omaha, NE 68114. Donations can be made online at: <http://www.wcsfoundation66.org/support/hall-of-f-a-m-e/>. Though donations made online do cost us a small transaction processing fee, we encourage you to share this link with friends and family who might be willing to support Westside show choirs.



Members of Westside's 2015-2016 Amazing Technicolor Show Choir pose for a photograph.

All-State Chorus

Again this year, Westside High School's choral students will be among the many students from across Nebraska who will audition for the All-State Chorus. Participating students will video record their auditions on Friday, October 9th and Saturday, October 10th. The video format allows students to audition in a familiar environment while alleviating any schedule conflicts. With over 70 Westside students auditioning this year, students will only be given one chance to create their recording. Auditioning is optional for seniors, juniors and sophomores.

All students who plan to audition must learn seven required pieces in advance. However, they will only be recording small sections of three of the pieces. They will also be required to sing scales and arpeggios as part of their audition. All participating students have received recordings of the required music, which they should be rehearsing outside of class. We wish all auditioning students best of luck in this music tradition.

Thank You to the 2015 - 2016 Hall of F.A.M.E.* Members (as of 9/21/2015)

Underwriter \$1,500 or more

Steve & Cathy Haney	Charlie & Julie Liakos	The Seline Family	Ron & Annette Volberding
Scott & Ann Hofmann	Ron Mordhorst	Bruce & Stacy Simon	
Kirsten & Stephen Hosman	& Tina Scott-Mordhorst		

Benefactor \$1,000-\$1,499

Angie & John Bekins	John & Chrisi Hughes	Eric & Natalie Petersen
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Sponsor \$500-\$999

Blue Cross & Blue Shield	Rob & Shelby Foral	Mike & Julie McMullen	The Wengert Family
Fire Protection Services, LLC	Terry & Jackie Kroeger		

Platinum Record Member \$250-\$499

The Battafarano Family	Cindy & Brad Hammitt	Joanie Lehr	John & Sara Young-In Honor of
The Conaway Family	Louie & Sandy James	Union Pacific Railroad	Joanna Young Shubart
Carol Ferate			& Andrew Young

Gold Record Member \$75-\$249

Michael Alston	Jack & Deb Gifford	Jim & Jana Rose	The Vazzano Family
Justene Bunting	Jordana & Jim Glazer	Jeff & Julie Shields	Mary Wallace
Rhonda & Cicero Calderon	Cody & Janette Karre	Mike & Lisa Smith	Joy & Gordon Watanabe
Linda Cheatham	Kent & Ann Knudsen	Patrick & Grace Tantillo	Kim Wear
Ron & Sharon Chvala	John & Tami Matousek	Tom & Elizabeth Tape	Steve & Brigid Wilkening
Suzy & Ian Crabb	Jeff & Cyndi Nelson	Brett & Kate Thomas	Risa & Dale Zimmerman
Anne Conway Day	David & Jennifer Paul	Steve & Judy Timmons	
The DeVries Family	David & Leneé Petri	Bob & Maureen Toy	

Top-Ten Hits Member \$1-\$74

Todd & Nancy Bell	Michael Erdman	Skip & Carol Legge	Dave & Cindy Rector
Kevin & Kathy Dinkel	Connie Johnson	Dan Marburg	Heather & John Russell

*Fund for Attaining Musical Excellence.

The names listed above are current as of September 21, 2015. We apologize for the omission of any donor names due to publication deadlines. An updated list will be included in the next issue of this newsletter.

Join Vocal Music Parent Association Today!

Select Your Membership Level & Tax-Deductible Contribution

Individual/Family Levels

☐ Top-Ten Hits Member \$10-\$74

Recognition in the vocal music newsletter throughout the school year and opportunity to reserve seats for WHS' Evening of Show Choirs event in May.

☐ Gold Record Member \$75-\$249

Includes all the Top-Ten Hits benefits.

☐ Platinum Album Member \$250-\$499

Includes all the Top-Ten Hits benefits.

Individual/Family or Business/Corporate Levels

☐ Sponsor \$500-\$999

Recognition in the vocal music newsletter, text listing on banner*, 2 free tickets to Evening of Show Choirs.

☐ Benefactor \$1,000-\$1,499

Recognition in the vocal music newsletter, text listing or logo (business/corporate sponsors) on banner*, 4 tickets to Evening of Show Choirs, plus free 1/2-page student ad in Evening of Show Choirs program.

☐ Underwriter \$1,500 or more

Recognition in the vocal music newsletter, text listing or logo (business/corporate sponsors) on banner*, 8 tickets to Evening of Show Choirs, plus free full-page student ad in Evening of Show Choirs program.

Name _____
(as it should appear in acknowledgements)

Contact (corporate only) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone (____) _____

Email _____

Make checks payable to Westside Foundation and mail to:

Vocal Music Parents Association

Westside High School
8701 Pacific Street
Omaha, NE 68114

* The banner is displayed at all WHS vocal music events. For inclusion on the first banner of the season, enrollment forms and payment must be received no later than Friday, Oct. 9, 2015.

2015-2016 Vocal Music Calendar

Date	Event	Choirs
September 29 (Tues)	Fall Concert, 7:30 p.m. (WHS Aud.)	All Choirs and Show Choirs
October 9-10 (Fri-Sat)	All-State Auditions (recorded at WHS)	Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors
October 15-18 (Thu-Sun)	<i>Fiddler on the Roof</i> 7:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m. on Sun.	Interested Students
November 1 (Sun)	Cabaret @ WHS (3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.)	Freshman/Warrior (3 p.m.) Concert/Warrior (7 p.m.)
November 11 (Wed)	Choral Collaborative Rehearsal 6:15 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. (Holland Performing Arts Center)	Warrior Choir
November 14 (Sat)	Choral Collaborative Dress Rehearsal 10:15 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. (Holland Performing Arts Center)	Warrior Choir
November 15 (Sun)	Choral Collaborative 2:00 p.m. (Holland Performing Arts Center)	Warrior Choir
November 19-21 (Thu-Sat)	All-State Festival (Lincoln)	Selected Students
December 8 (Tues)	Winter Choral Concert (WHS Aud.) 7:30 p.m.	Freshman/Concert/Warrior
December 11 (Fri)	Westside's Rising Stars Show Choir Camp	7-8 Group/ATSC
December 12 (Sat)	Westside's Rising Stars Show Choir Camp Performance at 3:00 p.m.	4-8/ATSC
January 2 (Sat)	ATSC Rehearsal 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	ATSC/Band/Crew
January 3 (Sun)	ATSC Rehearsal with Dina 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	ATSC/Band/Crew
January 5 (Tues)	ATSC Premiere Night 7:00 p.m. (WHS Aud.)	ATSC/Band/Crew
January 8/9/10(Fri-Sun)	Viterbo 101 Show Choir Invite (La Crosse, WI) Depart 11:00 a.m. on Fri/Return 5:00 p.m. on Sun	ATSC/Band/Crew
January 15/16/17 (Fri-Sun)	Heart of America Show Choir Invitational (Kansas City)	SI
January 23 (Sat)	Ralston Ramageddon	ATSC/SI/WE
January 30 (Sat)	Westside Competition of Excellence	ATSC/SI (work/perform) WE (work)
February 13 (Sat)	Elkhorn South Crystal Cup	ATSC/SI/WE
February 16 (Tues)	Choral Clinic Concert 7:30 p.m. (WHS Aud.)	Warrior/Concert/Freshman
February 19/20/21 (Fri-Sun)	Great River Show Choir Invitational (Davenport, IA) Depart at 4:00 p.m. on Fri/Return 1:00 p.m. on Sun	ATSC/SI
February 27 (Sat)	Norris Fields of Talent Show Choir Invitational	WE
March 5 (Sat)	Lewis Central Clash of the Titans	ATSC/SI/WE
March 22 (Tues)	6 th -12 th Grade Choral Festival 7:00 p.m. (Main Gym)	Warrior/ATSC
March 30-April 3 (Wed-Sun)	Show Choir Nationals (Grand Ole Opry, Nashville, TN)	ATSC
April 7 (Thur)	Show Choir Auditions 3:30 p.m. -10:00 p.m. (Vocal Room)	
April 17 (Sun)	Metro Show Choir Showcase (Holland Center)	ATSC
April 19 (Tues)	Pre-Contest Concert 7:30 p.m. (Main Gym)	Warrior/Band/Orchestra
April 20-23 (Wed-Sat)	District Music Contest (@Bellevue)	Warrior/Soloists
May 4 (Wed)	Spring Choral Concert 7:30 p.m. (Auditorium)	Warrior/Concert/Freshman
May 6 (Fri)	ATSC Picnic 6:30 p.m. (Courtyard/Little Theater)	ATSC
May 7 (Sat)	An Evening of Show Choirs 7:00 p.m. (WHS Aud.)	ATSC/SI/WE

For up-to-date information, event schedules and photos, visit westsidechoirs.com.