

Voices

WESTSIDE VOCAL MUSIC

Inside This Issue

Cabaret 2014: Broadway Magic	1
Westside Wins NebraskARTS Award	3
2014 All-State Chorus	4
Former Student Teachers Give Back	5
Westside Choirs Website	6
Hall of F.A.M.E.	7
2014 - 2015 Vocal Music Calendar	8

December 9, 2014

Vol. V, No. 2

Cabaret 2014: Broadway Magic

Upon entering Westside High School, visitors were transported to a "theatre district" with large Broadway posters on display. Tickets were going fast, and the concession lines were moving quickly. All this set the stage for a Broadway Cabaret Thriller!

The action never slowed. The matinee featured a clever mingling of solos from shows including *Anastasia*, *Bring it On*, *Les Misérables*, and *Catch Me if You Can*. The evening show featured *Shrek the Musical*, *Newsies*, *Aida*, *Dreamgirls* and *Kinky Boots*.

Choral performances included the Freshman Choir offering songs from *Wicked* and *The Wiz*; the Warrior

Choir singing tunes from *A Chorus Line* and *The Phantom of the Opera*; the Concert Choir shared selections from The Who's *Tommy* and from *Closer Than Ever*; Decibelles dazzled the audience with their rendition of *Mamma I'm a Big Girl Now* from *Hairspray*; and the Chamber Singers captured hearts with *Seasons of Love* from *Rent*.

Seven very talented masters of ceremonies were dressed in theatre costumes, which they changed at intermission. They kept the shows moving with their crazy theatre antics.

Chrisi Hughes, Cabaret Chairperson, had nothing but praise for all the volunteers, committee chairs, and do-

nors who helped make this two-show fundraiser a huge success. "We felt very fortunate with all the outpouring of help, not just financially but for all who gave their time to bake for the concession stand, or worked outside directing traffic, or babysitting, etc. The feedback has been excellent and everyone's generous support is what makes this work so well."

Video recordings of *Cabaret 2014: Broadway Magic*, can be purchased by downloading the order form from www.westsidechoirs.com. Fill out the form and mail it to **Moran Recording Services, Inc.**, 15119 Redwood Street, Omaha, NE 68138; phone: (402) 894-0017.



COE 1/2-Page Ad

COE 1/2-Page T-shirt Ad

Westside Wins NebraskARTS Award

Westside High School was an obvious choice for the 2014 NebraskARTS award because it has the whole package - passionate teachers, dedicated students, committed school leaders and supportive community partners, said Doug Zbylut, executive director of Nebraskans for the Arts.

The award honors schools for their commitment to quality arts education, including media arts, visual arts, music, dance and theater.

The voices of Westside's chamber singers echoed through the state capitol building's rotunda October 14 as they performed at the awards ceremony in Lincoln. Jennifer Ahn, first violinist in WHS's orchestra, also performed; and art students displayed pottery, paintings and drawings. Westside teachers for band, orchestra, vocal music, and pottery attended to accept the award. York Public Schools also received the award this year.

Zbylut said judges were impressed by WHS's application that highlighted the passion and energy of Westside teachers to give students a variety of ways to integrate arts education into their high school experience. Judges

also were impressed with WHS's requirement that all students must complete a "creative expression proficiency" in order to graduate, and that students often showcase their accomplishments not only at state level, but at regional and national competitions, Zbylut said.

In addition, WHS has business and

The award honors schools for their commitment to quality arts education.

community partners supporting its arts programs, he said. While those partnerships help with resources, they also bolster the mission of arts advocacy in Nebraska, he said.

Jeremy Stoll, WHS theater teacher, submitted the application in which he explained that teaching theater at Westside was his "dream job" when he graduated from college. "From a young outsider's perspective, it seemed like the

best place in the state for an arts education professional in the state," Stoll wrote.

Stoll's application stated that Westside's administration has maintained its commitment to arts education despite declining tax revenues that threatened to cut faculty and programs at WHS. The administration found creative ways to sustain funding that not only kept arts education a priority, but has allowed teachers to be innovative, he said.

That commitment has resulted in a "good problem" of large enrollments, Stoll said. WHS has 1,200 students enrolled in visual arts classes, 400 in vocal music and 500 in band and instrumental music, he said.

This is the second year the NebraskARTS Award has been offered. Zbylut said the award is intended to raise awareness of how a strong arts education program is linked to overall higher academic achievement. Studies show students involved in arts programs have better critical thinking and problem solving skills, score better on standardized tests and are more likely to graduate and continue their educations, he said.



Westside students and faculty pose with the 2014 NebraskARTS award.

2014 All-State Chorus



Pictured above, and listed below, are the Westside students who were selected for the 2014 Nebraska All-State Chorus.

Chorus Members:

Natalie Day — Soprano 1
 Samantha Thomas — Soprano 1
 Abbie Turman — Soprano 1
 Kristin Udhus — Soprano 2
 Reilly Christensen — Alto 1
 Olivia Coulter — Alto 1
 Rebecca Erdman — Alto 2**
 Ciara Seward — Alto 2
 Alli Vester — Alto 2
 Hosea Briggins — Tenor 1
 Isaiah Langworthy — Tenor 1
 Jacob Thomas — Tenor 2**

Zane Watanabe — Tenor 1
 Ian Wear — Tenor 1
 Zach Bowen — Tenor 2
 Ben Mordhorst — Tenor 2
 Ethan Stark — Tenor 2
 Sam Vazzano — Tenor 2
 Isaac Henson — Bass 1
 Jacob Hershiser — Bass 1
 Nathan Wallace — Bass 1
 Nick Gross — Bass 2
 Patrick Sawyer — Bass 2***
 Ben Volberding — Bass 2

Alternates:

Being named an alternate means you were ranked, but fell just below the quota for your voice part.

Kathryn Shehan — Soprano 1
 Ellie Kroeger — Alto 1
 Savana Nawojski — Alto 1
 Kate Hammitt — Alto 2
 Kate Hughes — Alto 2
 Tyler Gregurich — Tenor 2
 Connor O'Doherty — Bass 2
 Jacob Frazier — Bass 2
 Dominick Wardian — Bass 2

*** Indicates two year member *** Indicates three year member*

Former Student Teachers Give Back

Over the years, Westside's Vocal Music Department has hosted many student teachers. Though some no longer live in the area, three remain not just geographically close, but supportive-close to Westside. Doran Johnson appreciates how these former



Tyler Gruttemeyer

student teachers—now professionals—continue to give back to Westside. He said, "Tyler helps with scoring for COE and runs sound for events like Cabaret. Megan is choreographing at the middle school and created choreography for the Rising Stars Show Choir Camp next weekend and Nick keeps his hands in things." Having former student teachers willing to help is particularly beneficial because they know exactly what needs to be done and how to do it. Of course, the students also enjoy seeing them. And vice versa.

When asked why he continues to help out at Westside, **Tyler Gruttemeyer** said, "While student teaching in the fall of 2013, I worked mostly with the Freshman Choir and sometimes with Concert Choir. I really loved my time with those kids. They are all incredible, and I love seeing how much they've grown from when they were freshman and sophomores to being junior and seniors now. I also made a promise to them when I left that it would be hard to get rid of me, so I'm trying to keep that promise alive by coming back now and again."

Students have equally fond memories of Gruttemeyer who is now the Director of Vocal Music at Omaha

South High School. Senior Chris Rothe recalled when Gruttemeyer devised a clever technique to coax him to smile during ATSC rehearsals. "I can say now that I was really afraid to step outside of my comfort zone and actually express genuine passion on stage. He (Gruttemeyer) noticed that my expressions weren't as good as they could be, so he began using a red glove. Whenever he held it up, it meant that I wasn't smiling enough. Although it was kind of embarrassing, Mr. Gruttemeyer and the red glove really opened my eyes. I began smiling and performing with passion a whole lot more. He's a great teacher and person, and I can say he definitely had a positive impact in my life."

Within a year of Gruttemeyer winning student fans at WHS, **Megan Tantillo** was doing the same at Westside Middle School where she helped with the choirs and Westside Connection show choir. Freshman Libby Bekins remembers Tantillo as "such a nice person and a teacher who really made class fun!" Kyle Trivilino who, like Bekins, is now a member of Warrior Express, remembers Tantillo's strong commitment to making Westside Connection a winning show choir. He said, "She continued correcting and perfecting our performance and was really

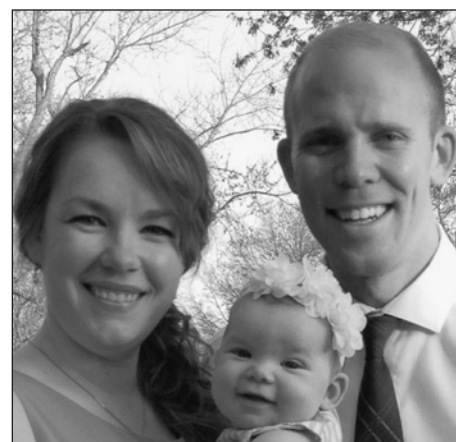


Megan Tantillo

positive about it." As for Tantillo, she often reflects on her work with Westside Connection as well as her seventh-grade students, stating "I was so very proud of them by the end of the year,

that during the final concert, I actually teared up." Tantillo is now Assistant Vocal Music Director and Director of Show Choirs at Millard South.

Nick Djernes, who was a student teacher at WHS in the spring of 2009, has stayed even closer to home. He carries on Westside's tradition of excellence as Swanson's and Westgate Elementary's music teacher, a job he loves. Djernes credits Doran Johnson for teaching him "how to imagine excellence and relentlessly strive to achieve it through hard work. I was immersed in a culture of high expectations and



Nick Djernes with his wife and daughter.

standards. Watching him strive for perfection influenced the way I work today." For the past five years, Djernes has continued to help the Warrior Express (WE) show choir and travels to competitions as often as possible. Senior Skylar Ricceri remembers Djernes helping WE warm-up for performances when she was a freshman. "He always had a special routine for us. One thing I particularly remember was he had us massage our throats before every show to relax our vocal chords." Djernes said, "Show choir to me is like the Disney World of music. It inspires the imagination and hope of everyone involved with it."

Westside students continue to benefit from the talent and dedication of these three former student teachers. Fortunately for the teachers, it has been mutually rewarding. As Djernes described, lending a hand at the high school, "... is just my way of saying thank you to show choir."

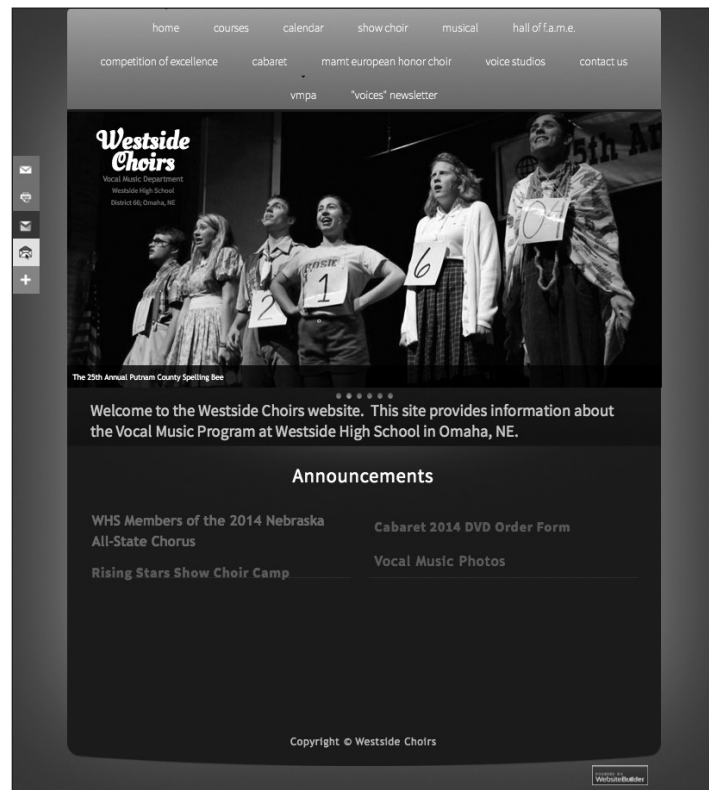
Westside Choirs Website

The Westside Choirs website has recently received an update. Mr. Avery spent time this summer moving all the information to a new forum—GoDaddy. “We like how it turned out, and it’s still a great way to provide info to students, parents, and the community about our vocal music program.”

A new feature this year is having the *Voices* newsletters posted for anyone who missed them at the concerts. The names of parent volunteers and the committees they chair are also listed. This provides parents with a contact name should they decide to help with one of the choral programs, or if they have any questions.

The website is always changing. The staff is always finding new things to post. You will see show choir competition itineraries once the travel season begins. Of course you can already subscribe to the show choir calendars, so dates/times can instantly appear on your phone/computer calendar.

When you visit the website, you will find up-to-date information about the Vocal Music Program, event photographs and more. There you will find links to program schedules, event information, even links to event photos that are available for purchase. Just grab your smartphone, tablet or computer and point your browser to ***westsidechoirs.com*** for the latest information on Westside's Vocal Music Program.



Acknowledgments

The editors of Westside's *Voices* newsletter, Paul & Julie Trivilino, Danna Barnhart and Natalie Petersen, thank:

- Jackie Kroeger for contributing the NebraskARTS story.
- Elizabeth Tape for her photographic contributions.
- Julie McMullen for the updated Hall of F.A.M.E. listing.
- Paul Trivilino Design for the newsletter design and layout.
- Barnhart Press for the newsletter printing and production costs.

And as always, we thank Westside Vocal Music staff for their dedication to the ongoing growth and development of our students, not only as vocalists, but also as team members and upstanding representatives of Westside High School.

VMPPA Board Members

President..... Ann and Scott Hofmann
Vice President..... Natalie and Eric Petersen
Secretary..... Shelby Foral
Treasurer..... Kirsten Hosman
Advisor..... Jackie Kroeger

VMPPA Committee Chairs

Hospitality	Amy and Phil Cosimano
Voices Newsletter	Julie and Paul Trivilino
	Danna Barnhart
	Natalie Petersen
Hall of F·A·M·E·	Julie McMullen
Rising Stars Camp	Jackie Kroeger
	Lori Farwell
Bulletin Boards	Sue Frerichs
ATSC Retreat (2014)	Susan Rothe
	Sandi Sawyer
ATSC Picnic	Judy Timmons
Senior Posters	Courtney Hellman
Cabaret	Chris Hughes
COE	Jackie and Terry Kroeger
	Julie and Charlie Liakos
Backstage	Tom Ricceri
	Doug Frerichs
Evening of Show Choirs	Shannon Hoy
Scholarships	Natalie Petersen
Parent Bus	Sue Seline

Thank You to the 2014 - 2015 Hall of F.A.M.E.* Members (as of 12/2/2014)

Underwriter \$1,500 or more

Fred & Melanie Clark	Jackie & Terry Kroeger	Sue & Steve Seline	Kim & Jim Simon
Scott & Ann Hofmann	Kay & Bob Owen	Bruce & Stacey Simon	Ron & Annette Volberding
Hosman Family Foundation	Liakos Family		

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

Steve & Cathy Haney	Jason & Courtney Hellman	Jimmy & Birgit Khandalavala	Eric & Natalie Petersen
John & Chrisi Hughes	Mark & Sheila Keller	Kay & Bob Owen	

Sponsor \$500-\$999

Blue Cross Blue Shield	Dudley's Pizza & Tavern	Mike & Julie McMullen	Ron Mordhorst
Dr. Ken & Kay Barjenbruch	Dan & Julie Hershiser	Blane & Marie McCann	& Tine Scott-Mordhorst
Angie & John Bekins	Jaros Family	Chris & Kim Shehan	David Sweeney & Teri Mauch

Platinum Album Member \$250-\$499

Anonymous	Conaway Family	Heather & John Russell	John & Sara Young -
Sean & Maria Akers	Carol Ferate	Adam & Sandi Sawyer	In Honor of Joanna Young
Battafarano Family	Rob & Shelby Foral	Del & Phyllis Toeppen	Shubart & Andrew Young
Todd & Nancy Bell	Brad & Cindy Hammitt	Mike & Mary Wallace	
Marc & Barbara Brey	Shannon & David Hoy	Dan & Leigh Wengert	
Sam & Deb Brower	Joanie Lehr	Union Pacific	

Gold Album Member \$75-\$249

Michael Alston	Shawn & Lori Farwell	John & Tami Matousek	Paul & Julie Trivilino
William & Danna Barnhart	Mark & Kristi Frei	Scott & Terry Micheels	Bob & Maureen Toy
Justene Bunting	Jim & Jordana Glazer	Joe & Beth Pepitone	Troy & Kathleen Upton
Linda Cheatham	Cindy & Bruce Goldberg -	Doug & Lisa Peters	Michael & Stacie Vazzano
Ron & Sharon Chvala	Nelson Murphy Insurance	David & Lenée Petri	Joe & Helen Wardian
Philip & Amy Cosimano	& Investments	Mr. & Mrs. David Rector	Joy & Gordon Watanabe
Susan & Ian Crabb	Scott & Wendie Grogan	Jim & Jana Rose	Kim Wear
The DeVries Family	E. & M. Kemp	Steve & Susan Rothe	Scott & Belinda Weidner
Louie & Mary Dircks	Brian & Angelia Kerst	Jill & Scott Stocking	Steve & Brigid Wilkening
Michael Erdman	Rick & Cathy MacInnes	Patrick & Grace Tantillo	Brent & Tricia Wonder

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

Stacie Brodkey	Amy & John Hruska	Tom & Buffy Ricceri	Steve and Judy Timmons
Joe & Jennifer Davis	Connie Johnson	Kari Kratky Salem	Mary Wallace
Doug and Sue Frerichs	Deanna Langworthy	Jeff & Julie Shields	Joe & Zsa Zsa Willett

*Fund for Attaining Musical Excellence.

The names listed above are current as of December 2, 2014. 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.

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.

2014-2015 Vocal Music Calendar

Date	Event	Choirs
December 9 (Tues)	Winter Choral Concert (WHS Aud.) 7:30 PM	Freshman/Concert/Warrior
December 12 (Fri)	Westside's Rising Stars Show Choir Camp	7-8 Group/ATSC
December 13 (Sat)	Westside's Rising Stars Show Choir Camp Performance at 3 PM	4-8/ATSC
January 2 (Fri)	ATSC Rehearsal 1 -5 PM	ATSC/Band/Crew
January 3 (Sat)	ATSC Rehearsal 9 AM to 5 PM	ATSC/Band/Crew
January 6 (Tues)	ATSC Premiere Night 7 PM (WHS Aud.)	ATSC/Band/Crew
January 9/10/11 (Fri-Sun)	Viterbo 101 Show Choir Invite (La Crosse, WI) Depart 11 AM on Fri/Return 5 PM on Sun	ATSC/Band/Crew
January 16/17/18 (Fri-Sun)	Heart of America Show Choir Invitational (Kansas City)	SI
January 24 (Sat)	Ralston "Ramageddon"	ATSC/SI/WE
January 30 (Fri)	Westside Competition of Excellence (Female Division)	ATSC/SI (work/perform) WE (work)
January 31 (Sat)	Westside Competition of Excellence (Prep/Open Division)	
February 13 (Fri)	Elkhorn South "Crystal Cup"	SI
February 14 (Sat)	Elkhorn South "Crystal Cup"	ATSC/WE
February 17 (Tues)	Choral Clinic Concert 7:30 PM (Aud.)	Warrior/Concert/Freshman
February 20/21/22 (Fri-Sun)	Hastings Show Choir Invitational (Hastings, MN) Depart at 2 PM on Fri/Return 9 PM on Sun	ATSC/SI
March 7 (Sat)	Lewis Central "Clash of the Titans"	ATSC/SI/WE
March 12-17 (Thur-Tues)	FAME Orlando Show Choir Competition	ATSC
March 21 (Sat)	Mitchell Show Choir Invitational (South Dakota)	WE
March 24 (Tues)	6-12 Choral Festival 7 PM (Main Gym)	Warrior/ATSC
March 26 (Thur)	Show Choir Auditions 3:30-10 PM (Vocal Room)	
April 19 (Sun)	Metro Magic Show Choir Marathon (Holland Center)	ATSC
April 21 (Tues)	Pre-Contest Concert 7:30 PM (Main Gym)	Warrior/Band/Orchestra
April 22-25 (Wed-Sat)	District Music Contest (@OPS)	Warrior/soloists
April 24-25 (Fri/Sat)	FAME National Show Choir Finals (Chicago, IL)	ATSC
May 6 (Wed)	Spring Choral Concert 7:30 PM (Auditorium)	Warrior/Concert/Freshman
May 8 (Fri)	ATSC Picnic 6:30 PM (Courtyard/Little Theater)	ATSC
May 9 (Sat)	An Evening of Show Choirs 7 PM (Aud.)	ATSC/SI/WE

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