

BCU Music News

Dear Alums and Friends,

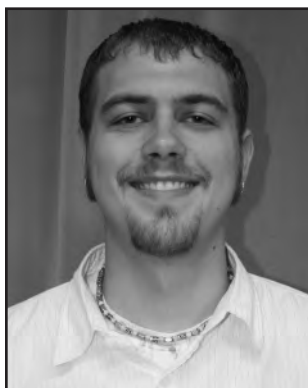
It's almost "Lilac Time" at Briar Cliff. Bushes are beginning to leaf out and green has definitely taken over on the Cliff. Graduation is earlier than usual this year, May 9, so the year is starting to wind down.

Senior Projects

Katie Lehmann: This spring Katie has been working on her Senior Project, by creating three original compositions under the supervision of Dr. Sean Burton and Dr. Richard Steinbach. The project includes a four-part unaccompanied choral ensemble arrangement; a string quartet with sections based upon a familiar chord progression by Pachelbel; and one solo work for piano. Katie writes: "Creating a variety of original works in ten weeks is not easy, but I will be calling upon the knowledge and skills learned in Music History and Literature, Music Theory, String and Choral Methods, Midi-Technology."



Jason Jensen: Jason performed a senior piano recital as his final project. He writes about his experience: "I worked on this recital for the past year. It was sometimes difficult because I came back to the music department in spring 2008 after a long hiatus. I thank Dr. Steinbach for asking me if I would be interested in taking lessons from him again when I returned, as I had to get pieces memorized fairly quickly. I enjoyed the recital because it was the first time many of my friends and family heard me play in that kind of setting. I felt a great sense of relief that I had finally finished something that I sought after for 10 years. It has been a long journey, but one that means a lot to me and has taught me many valuable lessons."



Justin Ranek: Justin was student teaching during Term III. He reports: "My project consisted of an annotated anthology of approximately 35 choral works which are relevant for junior high and small high school music programs. In my annotations, I am looked at the instructional challenges, rationale for educational programming and exploration of intrinsic and extrinsic musical values. While working on this project, I contacted several veteran music educators including Briar Cliff graduates John Flanery and Brian Johnson. I also worked on composing a four part choral piece to be included in my anthology. I have enjoyed this project and have gained many valuable insights from my research."



Tina Simons: Tina has been preparing for her senior vocal recital. She also played keyboard for the Jazz Ensemble, accompanied vocal and band students, played for Saturday evening liturgies at BCU and also helped out at Sacred Heart Church. She writes: "Managing my time around planning a recital is difficult with homework and papers to write and other school work to do. It is exciting to see my recital continue to grow and develop. It will be fun to see that I did this myself after the recital is finished."





Cliff Singers

During the February break, the Cliff Singers kicked off the "Pride of Iowa Tour" with a pre-tour concert in the Chapel of Our Lady of Grace. The group headed to Dubuque where a visit to the River Museum introduced the students to the area before a concert at Clarke College. On Sunday, the Dubuque segment of the trip was completed with Mass, a concert and brunch at Mount St. Francis.



The group then traveled to Mason City, where they joined "Una Vocis," a community choral group in a Sunday afternoon concert. Monday's schedule included performances at Iowa Central Community College in Fort Dodge and an afternoon assembly at Garrigan High School in Algona. Then it was off to the Mall of America in Minneapolis and a concert at Spencer High School in Spencer on the way home. After four busy days, there was still time for students to spend a few days at home before classes resumed.

Looking Ahead

In Sioux City on Friday, May 8, Baccalaureate will be held at the Cathedral of the Epiphany at 6:00 p.m. Commencement ceremonies will be held in the Sioux City Orpheum at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 9.

Briar Cliff will host the annual Pre-All-State Camp Aug. 2-5, 2009. Dr. Sean Burton, assistant professor of music and director of choral activities will conduct with assistance from BCU Music Alumni Brian Johnson, John Flanery, Jake Delfs, Chris Miller and Jayne Fredrich Koch.

Around the Department

The final Sioux City Symphony concert of the year featured Orff's "Carmina Burana." The chorus consisted of singers from Briar Cliff, Morningside, the University of South Dakota, Dordt College and the Siouxland Master Chorale.

In March, "Broadway Cabaret," under the direction of Sister Mary Day, OSF, celebrated the music of Irving Berlin, Frank Loesser and Andrew Lloyd Webber. An enthusiastic audience crowded around the Stark Center Stage on campus to enjoy an evening of entertainment. Nearly 20 students, including small group of instrumentalists, provided the variety of songs and dances.

In March, many of the students performed at the National Federation Festival where BCU students served as room/corridor monitors and Sister M. Arnold was an adjudicator.

The Jazz Ensemble provided entertainment for the third annual Rhythm and Improv Fest in the Bishop Mueller Library during National Library Week on April 17. The group also performed at El Fredo's Pizza during the last week of April. A number of graduating seniors will be missed in next year's ensemble.

Piano Prep teachers presented their students in a spring recital on May 3.

Save the Date

"Christmas at the Orpheum" - December 18, 2009

Holy Hawaii Choir Tour - February 19-26, 2010

Dr. Burton announces preliminary plans, however, all are "subject to change/adjustment."

Faculty Notes

Dr. Richard Steinbach will return to Quito, Ecuador, during the first week of June to perform in the annual International Music Festival. He will perform with flutists Martha Cuncell Vargas and Sergio Palotelli. Dr. Steinbach's children (Shauna, Ryan, and Ryan's wife Ann) will join him following the festival to tour Ecuador and to visit the northern Amazon jungle and the Galapagos Islands.



Dr. Richard Steinbach and Howard Helvey will be featured artists on the Sioux City Symphony's 2009-10 concert season. They will perform Francis Poulenc's "Concerto for Two Pianos" with the symphony at the Orpheum Theatre on Saturday, October 24, 2009.

In January, **Dr. Sean Burton** conducted the Nebraska Children's chorus Bel Canto at the North Central Division Convention of the National Association for Music Education in Indianapolis (MENC).



Dr. Burton also presented an interest session entitled "French Connections: An Examination of Six Motets by Maurice Durufle, Olivier Messiaen, Francis Poulenc, and Pierre Villette" at the National Convention of the American Choral Directors Association in Oklahoma City in March. He adjudicated the District Music contest at South Sioux City High School in South Sioux City, Neb., in April, and will lead choral clinics at several high schools in Iowa and Nebraska in May.

Sister M. Arnold played an "anniversary program" of organ music in the Chapel of Our Lady of Grace celebrating 50 years since the Moeller organ was installed. The BCU Chamber Choir sang a shape-note version of "Wondrous Love" alternating with variations by Samuel Barber. The choir also performed the German chorales introducing several Brahms pieces which were played at the dedication recital of the organ 50 years ago.



In Memory

Mary Helen McElroy '51, passed away after a short illness early in February. Mary Helen was well-known in Sioux City's music circles. She was a long-time organist at Blessed Sacrament Church and St. Joseph's Church and also helped out whenever asked to do weddings and funerals around Siouxland. Mary Helen maintained a piano studio in her home. Eight of her children attended Briar Cliff and the McElroys received the BCU Alumni Family Award in 1967 and in 1998.

Sister Margaret Ann Willging passed away at Holy Family Hall in Dubuque just a month short of her 90th birthday. Sister Margaret Ann taught music classes and piano lessons at Briar Cliff from 1967-1980.

May Mary Helen and Sister Margaret Ann, rest in peace.

It is always wonderful to see alumni and friends of the Music Department at concerts at home, in the Sioux City area, or on tour. Thank you for your continued interest and support of the musical efforts on the Cliff. We wish God's blessings to you and yours as this academic year comes to an end.

Peace and All Good!

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