

2nd Annual Co-Ed Youth in Harmony Festival

After a year in the planning, the 2nd Annual Youth In Harmony (YIH) Festival held on January 31, 2009 at Osceola High School was another huge success. This event is hosted by the Vallee de Croix Chorus, BHS Croix Chordsmen Chorus and BHS Indianhead Chorus.

Returning Clinicians Liz Turba, Associate Director of the Vallee de Croix Chorus and music teacher in the Osseo, MN School District, and Shawn Gudmunsen, past director of the Indianhead Chorus in Balsam Lake, WI and music teacher in the St. Croix Falls, WI School District were again in “top form.” The students love these two; and being on the younger side sure doesn’t hurt, their energy is amazing. With only two Clinicians this year...they had their work cut out for them.

Pat Teorey, Choreographer for the Vallee de Croix Chorus, and member of the Region 6 Faculty also returned for her second year. The students love the choreography part of what we do, and Pat doesn’t disappoint them. This year she was assisted by Angela Blackwood, Choreographer Chair for the Vallee de Croix Chorus, who has requested to be involved in more youth events.

A first for our Festival was the addition of teaching quartets. “Espresso” 2006 Region 6 Quartet Champions and “Vocality” 2007 BHS Land “O Lakes District Quartet Champions were on hand to assist our Clinicians as needed. Their entertainment at the concert was very well received...the students **loved** them, and they definitely represented our organizations very well.

We were very honored to have several of our Regional Leaders in attendance for the day’s events: Bev Swanson-Education Coordinator, Anna Dahlquist-Communications Coordinator and Judy Olson-Director’s Coordinator and member of SAI Faculty.. Judy found some time in the day to work with the K.A.M.(L). quartet and Take 12, our two barbershop groups from Osceola High School. Marlys Bronson-Team Coordinator was there for the afternoon concert.

Now that you know the event particulars, I will let the students write the rest of the story:

“Great Idea--I definitely think this tradition should be considered again in future years.”

“I love this day. It’s the 2nd best all year!! I (heart) YIH.”

“Keep this program going, I will definitely come back every year.”

“I had a blast! Loved all the barbershop music.”

“This is a really great experience!”

“Pat ROCKS!”

“Pat rocks my socks off! She was so much fun to work with.”

“I liked the fact that somebody else other than our regular director taught us. We got to learn a new teaching style. I appreciated that.”

“I enjoyed working with the instructor, Liz Turba, and the choreographer, Pat Teorey.. This is a great thing to do and a wonderful opportunity.”

“I really enjoy youth & harmony. I plan on coming every year.”

“I LOVE BARBERSHOP!”

“What a Blast! YIH 2009 Rocked it out!”

“I love today! Great choreography.”

“The instructors were hands on with us, and we all broke down the song and it was a lot of fun and it was easier.”

“Everyone was the bomb. Can’t wait til next year.”

What did you like best about the workshop?

“Singing with professionals.” “Singing with experienced people.”

Would you attend another YIH Workshop in the future?

“100% Yes! Of Course!!”

“Thank you for letting us sing barbershop again.”

AND my personal favorite:

“I really enjoyed singing Orange Colored Sky and I love choreography...I made a new friend.!”

Very similar comments were made by the music faculty, the event planners and the audience.. I would like to close my story with an email that we received following this event which touched the hearts of all of the event planners.

“My son, Gaelan Hanlon, had a wonderful experience participating in the “Youth in Harmony Festival” this past Saturday. I just wanted to express my personal thanks for the time and efforts that you all put in to introduce Barbershop music to young people and support and encourage them in their participation. Learning and singing with you has and will continue to be a real highlight in Gaelan’s high school experience. And, from what I can tell, I think he is “hooked” for life. Thank you again!”

Pastor Amy Hessel
Bethany Lutheran Church
Star Prairie, WI 54026

In harmony,
Kathy Lucken * YWIH Coordinator
Vallee de Croix Chorus