

“Sweeney” hits high note

By JACINTA MARIA CARTER
In anticipation of my February 15, 2009, viewing of “Sweeney Todd,” I feared that I might be disappointed. After all, I’d seen the movie numerous times and already had a set idea of what I wanted to see. My fears were only increased when I received my program. Upon flipping through it, I discovered that director Michael Spicer had cast his wife in the role of Mrs. Lovett. Worrying that this Salina Community Theatre performance was going to prove to be mediocre, I settled back in my seat and waited.

I was far from disappointed. When Mrs. Lovett, played by Victoria Spicer, started singing as she pummeled her pie dough, it became clear that this woman knew her role. Mrs. Spicer brilliantly showed the audience the contrast between her character’s sweet loving side and her slightly sinister craziness. The song “God, That’s Good,” was by far her shining point. She managed to fit more words in that three-minute song than many of her cast mates sang throughout the entire show, and every word was easily understood. She never once broke character, but instead brought to Mrs. Lovett a kind of naivety that made her more likable, and easily forgiven for her foul deeds.

Her co-star Sweeney Todd, played by Bob Jones, left a little more to be desired. He was suffering from a cold at the time of his performance, which prevented him from hitting many of his notes, but this may have helped him to pull off Sweeney’s rough, growly voice. Mr. Jones didn’t possess quite as much energy as Mrs. Spicer, but he was still able to pull off a convincing Sweeney Todd, except he was a bit shorter and rounder than the character is normally portrayed. His kindly face behind his scruffy beard also made it a bit difficult to believe that this man was capable of cold-blooded murder.

Sweeney’s long lost daughter Johanna, played by Jill M. French, literally rose above the rest of the cast. Not only did she spend most of the show on a balcony, but she also sang her part in an amazingly high, clear soprano voice. When she sang with an ensemble, she was always heard above everyone else because she was often singing and octave higher than the rest of the cast, and her voice never broke. Mrs. French also showed the emotional turmoil Johanna experienced as she was

kept from the man she loved by the cruel Judge with inappropriate intentions. Mrs. French easily found the spotlight and made herself the true star of the show.

The beggar woman, played by Kate Williams, also managed to steal the spotlight whenever she made an entrance. Whether she was lurking in the dark under the balcony, screeching, “Don’t I know you?” at Sweeney, or shrieking “City on fire! Mischief! Mischief!” Mrs. Williams made the audience believe that she really was a half-crazed old woman with nothing left.

This show did not include choreography with the exception of the chorus moving in the same direction at the same time, and there weren’t actually fight scenes, but there was death. These deaths left a lot to be desired. When Sweeney Todd would slice a customer’s throat, instead of blood spewing from the wound, Mr. Jones would drape a piece of red cloth around their throat. This seemed to be a rather clever way to portray the blood, until he turned the barber chair around. His “victim” would then stand up and walk down the stair and off the stage, right in front of the audience. There were definitely better ways to do this, such as have something blocking the chair so the audience couldn’t see the person exit.

The type of chair used was also confusing. Sweeney’s barber chair was a big, cushioned armchair that blood would have soaked into and stained. The cast should have either gotten an actual barber’s chair, or just used a regular wooden chair.

Mrs. Lovett’s death, though, was the most disappointing. Towards the end of the show, when Sweeney discovers she’s been lying to him, he throws her into her own bake oven. Instead of having a tall box to represent the oven, the characters just pantomimed opening an invisible oven and a red light would shine on them. This would have been all right, except no one pretended to open the oven before Sweeney tossed her in, so she actually would have just hit the door and bounced back off. Instead, she screamed, ran straight for the red light, then turned and ran backstage in plain view of the audience. Despite its minor shortcomings, the Salina Community Theater’s production of “Sweeney Todd” was very well done, and I highly recommend viewing it.

Review of Sweeney Todd

By JACINTA CARTER
On February 15, several Decatur Community High School Drama Club members went to watch “Sweeney Todd” live at the Salina Community Theatre.

The musical is about Benjamin Barker (aka Sweeney Todd) who returns to London after being sent away for a crime he did not commit. He finds his wife dead and his daughter now the ward of the man who sent him away, Judge Turpin. Sweeney Todd opens a barbershop at the top of Mrs. Lovett’s pie shop. He wants his revenge on the Judge, and together he and Mrs. Lovett work an evil plan. He slices the throats of the unsuspecting public while giving them a shave. These bodies are then turned into Mrs. Lovett’s new meat pies. With this plan being successful, all Todd needs to do now is try to convince the Judge to sit in his chair.

The members who went to see the show were Jacinta Carter, Makenzie Nelson, Jay Wessel, Nolan Henningson, Amanda Marshall, Joe Hirsch, Jaxen Alstrom, Tim Larson, Annamarie Larue, Alyssa Rippe,

Heather Ploussard, Susan Nelson, and Leigh Davis.

Jacinta Carter, the Drama Club President, wrote a review of her experience with “Sweeney Todd.”



BAND BUDDIES Kade Grafel, Joe Hirsch, Chris Larson and Keagen Blau play their instruments during a high school basketball game.

— Dictator Staff Photo

Band Buddies meet

By KYLE HUNTLEY

Since the fall, the high school band members and the fifth grade band students have been writing back and forth. The high school students encourage the young band members and give them advice. Some of the high school students also help with after-school practices at the grade school.

This is the second year for the “Band Buddies” program, which was started by band director Sarah

Bricker. Mrs. Bricker pairs the students together based on their instruments.

Last week, the fifth graders got to play with the high school pep band during a high school basketball game. The students met in the band room before the game, ate some pizza, practiced, and just hung out.

Then the students played together from the half time of the girls’ game to the half time of the boys’ game.

Speech team places second at Oakley

By LAKIN BROWN

The Decatur Community High School Speech Team took second place at the Oakley Invitational Tournament on Feb. 17. Thirteen schools competed.

Oberlin had eight events qualify for the finals. The freshman team of Nolan Henningson and Amanda Marshall placed first in duet acting.

Joe Hirsch in Prose and Jacinta Carter in Humorous Solo Acting, both placed second.

Placing third were Amanda Marshall in poetry, Laysha Medina in serious solo acting, and Jordan McHugh and Jacinta Carter in improvised duet acting.

Ethan Merrill and Joe Hirsch placed sixth in improved duet acting, and Laysha in poetry.

Others competing and helping the team earn second place were Miranda Shelton, prose; Jasmine Pearson, poetry and serious solo acting; Tim Larson and Jay Wessel, improvised duet acting; Nolan Henningson and Miranda Shelton, improvised duet acting; Jay Wessel,

serious solo acting; Ethan Merrill, humorous solo; Chris Larson, extemporaneous speaking; and Tim Larson, original oration.

Voice of Decatur Community High School

Decatur Dictator

By the DCHS Dictator Staff

Senior Feature

Ryan McEvoy
By ASHLI SAMSON

Ryan McEvoy is a seventeen-year old-senior at Decatur Community High School. He was born on May 20, 1997. He is the son of Lonnie and Mary McEvoy, and has a younger brother, Shane, who is fourteen years old.

During high school Ryan has worked at Oberlin Automotive. The activities he has been involved in include football for two years, basketball for one year, National Honor Society, and FFA.

Ryan’s favorite movies are “30 Days of Nights” and “Without a Paddle.” His favorite songs are “Every Rose Has Its Thorn,” by Poison and “The Crimson,” by Ateyu. His

favorite book is “Faccen Angeus,” by Walter Dean Meyers. For fun, Ryan likes to ride motorcycles and work on engines.

After high school Ryan is planning on going to college at the Northwest Kansas Technical College in Goodland to study Automotive Technology. Ryan hopes to graduate from college with an associate’s degree. In ten years Ryan sees himself living fairly close to Oberlin.

Ryan’s favorite quote is, “You only live once.... WATCH THIS!” When asked if he had any advice for underclassmen, he said, “You have to respect the upperclassmen to earn their respect and to give your best effort at all times.”

School Menus

March 9 - 13

BERLIN SCHOOLS
Fourth grade classes submitted lunch menus for March

Monday: Late Start. No Breakfast. Lunch: hot dogs, baked beans. (Madison Macfee and Samaria Vilar)

Tuesday: Breakfast: bagel pizza. Lunch: chicken legs, mashed potatoes, green gelatin, dinner roll (Max Diederich and Dayton Kempt)

Wednesday: Breakfast: ham pattie, pancake. Lunch: ham and cheese sandwich, chips, pears,

carrot sticks. (OES sack lunch)

Thursday: Breakfast: apple or cherry turnover. Lunch: egg rolls, fried rice, apple slices. (Dante Robertson and Evan Shobe)

Friday: Breakfast: french toast sticks. Lunch: pizza, green beans. (Mason Ahlberg and Cade Wurm)

Fruit served with all breakfasts; choice bar served with all lunches. Milk served with all meals.

WE ALWAYS WELCOME NEW PATIENTS TO OUR DENTAL PRACTICE!

The office of Dr. Gary Fredrickson was established in Oberlin in 1982. We offer the services of Robyn Rouse who has been a dental hygienist for 18 years. We also provide for visits from an orthodontist, Dr. John Haugen in our office.

Our office hours are Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. We are open during the lunch hour to offer more convenient scheduling for you. We enjoy children in our practice and recommend their first visit at the age of three.

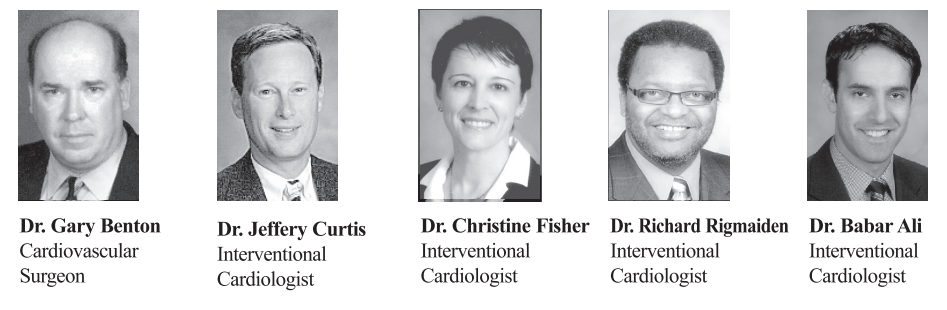
We gladly process all dental insurance for you and we are a contracting dentist with Blue Cross and Blue Shield and Delta Dental Insurance. We offer several options for financing dental care and accept Master Card, Visa and Discover cards.

Gary L. Fredrickson, D.M.D.
106 S. Rodehaver
Oberlin, Kansas 67749
after hours emergencies
(785) 475-3135
fax (785) 475-3814

FREDRICKSON FAMILY DENTISTRY
we specialize in brightening smiles

Please call us to schedule a visit for a checkup or if you need emergency dental care
Please call: (785) 475-3813

Closing the Distance



Dr. Gary Benton Cardiovascular Surgeon
Dr. Jeffery Curtis Interventional Cardiologist
Dr. Christine Fisher Interventional Cardiologist
Dr. Richard Rigmalden Interventional Cardiologist
Dr. Babar Ali Interventional Cardiologist

Between You and Cardiac Care.

DeBaKey Heart Institute regularly brings specialists in heart surgery and cardiovascular diagnosis and treatment to a location near you. Because your health is important to us, we travel so you won’t have to. The Cardiac Clinic in your area is located at:

Decatur County Medical Center - Oberlin
Dr. Jeffery Curtis

For information about dates and times, call Toll Free 1-888-625-4699, or ask your primary care physician.

DeBaKey Heart Institute at Hays Medical Center is a state-of-the art regional cardiac diagnosis and treatment center which works closely with referring physicians to meet the needs of a region where heart disease is twice the national average.

Cardiac Care for Life!



Bickle Pavilion
2214 Canterbury Drive - Hays
Toll Free — 888-625-4699
www.haysmed.com

Hays Medical Center — Doing Important Work for Important People

Is Your Job Secure?
If not, join Barlett Grain, a stable and profitable agribusiness. These are **year-round positions** with competitive pay.

Applicators
Operate spray rig. Customer service. Need CDL. Earn acreage bonus twice per year.

Yard Laborers
General duties involving fertilizer and grain operations. Will pay more for CDL. Skid steer experience a plus.

Barlett has full-benefit package with: health & life insurance premium paid 100% for employee, dental, vision, 401(k) with company match, and profit sharing for all full-time employees.

Apply in person or send resume:
Barlett Grain Company, L.P.
105 North Kamala, Yuma CO
jobs@barlett-grain.com
or Call Matt in HR **800-860-7290**
EOE/AA/DF/Drug Screen/Background Check