

Script, lights, action!

First annual 24-hour theatre festival a success

By Nathan Countryman
Nathan.Countryman@wcinet.com

There might have been minor technical hiccups to start the show off, but the first annual Highway 30 24-hour theatre festival was seen as a success by many students who participated.

Cedar Rapids Prairie student Ethan Laud worked on the technical details for many of the shows.

"It was fast paced theatre for us technical directors," Laud said. "We had to make decisions quickly on lighting or blocking or other elements that we had to stick with, as each show had roughly half an hour on stage."

Just like writers and actors, the technical directors had roughly 12 hours to come up with plans for each of these shows.

Laud said he worked with Freeman when he was director at Prairie last school year, and when he heard of this festival he was excited to sign up.

"It was a rewarding and challenging theatre project, that was fast paced and an opportunity I've never experienced before," Laud said.

Laud noted there were some technical details early in the show, where microphones were tried to use directly over the sound board, but after that, the show went very smoothly from light cues and microphones for the rest of the performers.

Mount Vernon senior Ty Panos said it was a very enjoyable experience as an actor.

"I made new friends and connections with students from Lisbon and Cedar



Natalie Koopman and Kayleigh Kirton perform in "Renaissance and Birds," a play written by Rena Niec and directed by Faith Miller.

Rapids Prairie in this festival," Panos said.

Panos, who was an actor, said that learning lines, even for a 10-minute play, took a lot of that 12 hours of time working together.

"We received that script early this morning and had to perform the show the same day," Panos said. "I completely loved the chaos of this at times and spending a whole day working on one piece so intensively."

Panos highly recommends others come out for the festival when it returns next year, as he'd like to return if he has the opportunity.

Lisbon Samarah Cooley also enjoyed the ability to work and get to know other students from other schools.

"I really enjoyed working with students from other schools," Cooley said. "We had to work together and build a new show in 24 hours. Some of these were very large in scale."

Lisbon's Gavin Reinken said that he would 10 out of 10 recommend people try out for the festival next year as well.

"Even though these plays were 10 minutes in length, that's still a lot of lines and blocking to remember and memorize in 12 hours' time frame," Reinken said. "This

was such a fun experience."

Lisbon's Faith Miller directed her first show as part of the festival.

Miller said she had been nervous about signing up for the festival, but was convinced by fellow classmates and director Grant Freeman to sign up.

"I had such a great email from Grant encouraging me to sign up, and knew I was going to be okay," Miller said.

Miller said there were a lot of decisions as a director she had to make in 12 hours, but working with other students on the technical details and coming up with a plan and having access to her script writer helped over the next 12 hours.

"Everyone was just tremendous to work with," Miller said. "I really enjoyed this whole experience."

Grant Freeman said that some productions had to deal with a number of people who had signed up coming down with illnesses, which meant actors who had not previously signed up were drawn in for a few productions to help the show go on.

"All the good parts of this festival, that's all the students," Freeman said. "Anything that people dislike, that is all my fault."



Nathan Countryman | Staff photo
Kaitlyn Silver, Sarah Topka and Chris Ricke perform in "Tell Me Where the Nearest Sunset Is?" written by Nathan Ricke and directed by Ava Cossolotto. Chris was placed in the role when he came to photograph for the school newspaper.

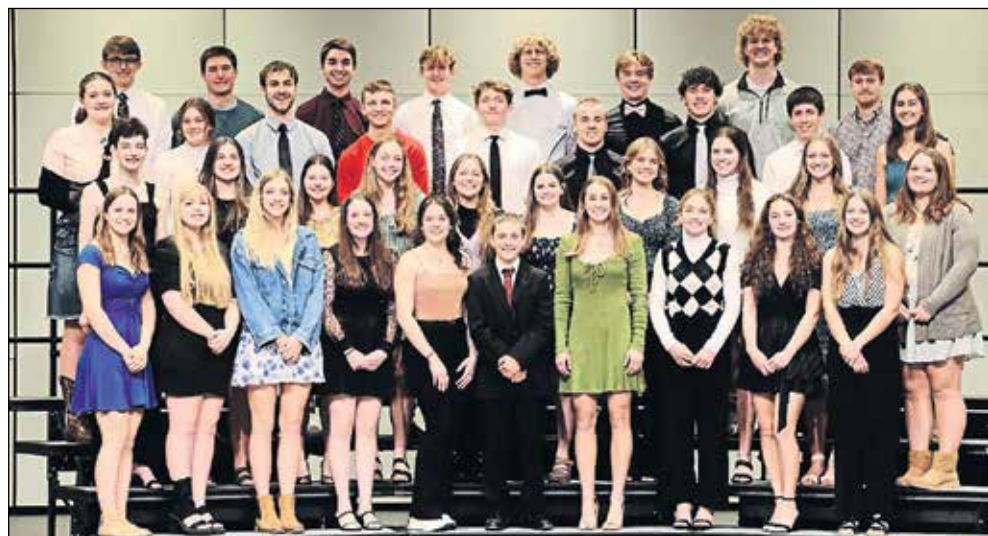
Freeman explained in comments introducing each piece the one prop that writers knew and had to work into the show, a line from speech practices that had to be incorporated in the show, the genre and one character

that was part of their show. Everything else was up to the students to design.

"I wanted this to be a chance for communities like Lisbon and Mount Vernon and Cedar Rapids Prairie to build connections in the

arts," Freeman said. "I've worked on shows that had Prairie actors and Mount Vernon actors this summer, and will do the same opportunity again this summer, but this was a way to highlight four great schools."

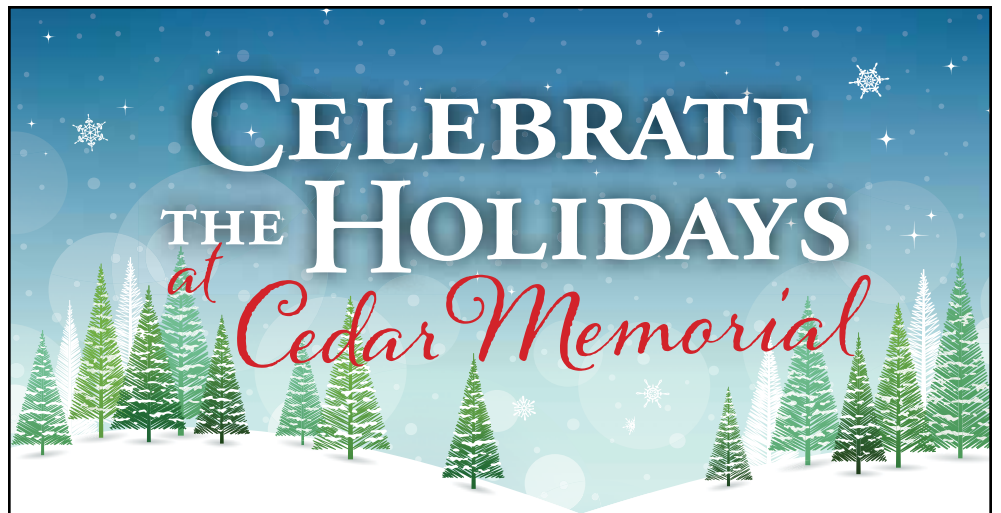
Mount Vernon inducts new members into National Honor Society



— Contributed photo

Mount Vernon named new members into the National Honor Society at a ceremony Monday, Nov. 21.

Members inducted include — Addison Gookin, Aleece Lee, Anna Vavricek, Audrey Tucker, Ava Dimmer, Benjamin Merlak, Benjamin Nydegger, Bradley Vislissel, Caleb Dausener, Ella Krob, Elsa Appleton, Emily Patten, Evan Brase, Gwen Steine, Hedy Zmolek, Henry Ryan, Jackson Jaspers, Jensen Meeker, Joseph Rhomberg, Jordan Bleile, Kaylie Kelchen, Kennedy Hunter, Kia McNeal, Klayten Perreault, Kylie Pyatt, Laila Moellering, Lawson Hasley, Lillian Bishop, Lillian Wischmeyer, Luke Stephens, Maya Carstenson, Meredith McCollum, Natalie Clark, Parker Whitham, Ryan Vig, Sadie Hanna, Seth Seale, Sierra Snyder, Sophia Bunch, Taitem Johnson, Thomas Ferguson, Tyler Reyhons and Tyler Panos.



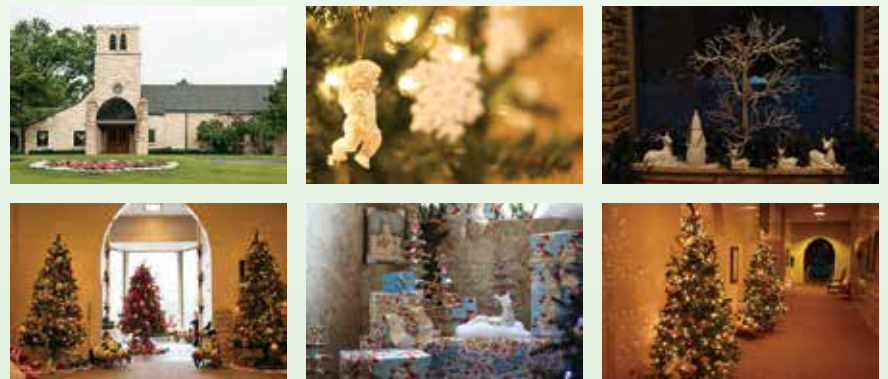
Cedar Memorial has been part of holiday traditions over 90 years.

Join us for this special one-evening event on
Sunday, December 18 from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

The Chapel of Memories Mausoleum will be filled with festive trees, wreaths, ornaments and thousands of lights. Live Christmas music will be played throughout the evening and Santa will be there, too!

If you'd like to place Mausoleum Flowers during your visit, the Chapel Flower Shop is conveniently located between the Chapel of Memories and the Chapel State Room. Come celebrate the holidays at Cedar Memorial!

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