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Students Share Their Talents At The Annual YHS Idol Competition



BY
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As always, a large crowd of students, community members and relatives of performers turned out to enjoy YHS Idol on Mon., Jan. 12.

YHS Idol is an opportunity for high school students to showcase their singing ability and instrumental skills. It is also a chance to honor friends and family or to publically declare a crush through song dedications.

YHS Idol is sponsored by Parents for a Safe Prom and the YHS Competitive Cheer Team. Bailey Franzen, a senior representative of the Cheer Team, was the Mistress of Ceremony. YHS Idol is almost entirely student driven; the student head this year was senior Hailey Baugh. For judges, unfortunately Keith Urban, Jennifer Lopez, and Harry Connick Jr. were unable to attend the event; therefore, Kim Velk, Scott Luken, and Angie Luken stood in.

The 17 talented performances this year ranged from solos to ensembles. Each act had seven minutes to set up and perform. The contest typically consists of mainly choir students, but Hailey Baugh says, "It is nice to see others outside of choir participate. For example, Rachel Orton has done



PHOTO BY ERIN OLSON

Cody Geary performs the piece that earned him first place in YHS Idol.

it since freshman year, and she is phenomenal."

Baugh has also been involved since freshman year, and she explains that her favorite part about the competition is that "It's great to have a chance to perform without limitations."

The night began on an interesting note and continued on with many surprises.

The first act was a vocal duet with Cody Geary and Taylor Wesseln. Apparently Taylor's previous partner was unable to attend so she asked Cody at 4:00 that afternoon to sing with her. Because of the late timing, Cody had to read the lyrics from his phone which was

strapped to his arm. In true teenager fashion, Cody and Taylor managed a fantastic performance despite the last minute switch.

For the second act, Hailey Baugh performed a unique rendition of the popular song "Hallelujah" by Jeff Buckley. She chose that song because it was the first song that she performed at YHS, and now it will also be the last. She performed without a microphone, and put her own twist on the well-known melody.

Ms. Velk's comment on the performance was, "That song is very near and dear to me, but your rendition was brilliant."

A popular choice, that song was sung twice more.

Hailey Baugh and Rachel Orton are not the only senior veteran performers.

Olivia Hudson, Sam Carda, and Cody Geary have also participated at each grade level. To commemorate their dedication, they teamed up and all sang together. They chose "Wake me up" by Avicii because it represents their future plans after graduation. Ms. Velk gave the advice, "Seniors, always have fun with what you pursue."

Juniors Rachel Wood and Ashley Schweitzer sang a duet together, and they also each had a solo vocal. Their

song choices, which included "Game Over" and "Believe Me," were original compositions.

Much cousinly love was present during Casey Thomas's performance of "King of the Road."

Senior Andi Sprakel says she is Casey's biggest fan, and she let the auditorium know through her vocal support. During the judges critique Ms. Velk said, "Obviously Andi knew you had it in you."

Cody Geary secured the competition and won over the crowd with an emotional performance of, "One Tin Soldier." That song has a very special meaning to Cody; it is the first song his mom ever taught him to play on the piano. Cody's mom passed away five years ago, and this song has held a special place in his heart ever since. Upon completing his performance, Ms. Velk had no words; she could only go up on stage and give Cody a hug.

To determine the winners, each judge scored every act out of 100 points based on stage presence, talent, audience response, and accompaniment for a total score out of 300 points. Third place went to Maddie Smith with 265 points, 2nd place to Joseph Kelly with 266, and Cody Geary was crowned champion with an outstanding score of 297 points.

Y's Words On The Rising Use Of Drones



BY
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LATTEA

From recreation and research to military surveillance and airstrikes, the term "drone" is used to describe a large group of unmanned vehicles varying widely in construct and purpose. The idea of having these machines overhead at any moment scares many and excites some. Those who are scared recall the U.S. government's use of drones for anti-terror based bombings in the Middle East, and fear the possible invasion of privacy that would arise from constant drone-based surveillance. Others grasp the huge potential for drones in research, recreation, and business.

First, a bit of a clarification: The drones used in airstrikes, the large, plane-like UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles), are MUCH different than the small, publicly available "quadcopters."

The military variety of drone has been used throughout recent history for reconnaissance as well as devastating strikes delivered from afar.

These uses have raised a serious question of morality. In some cases, the shots fired by these drones, meant to decimate groups of terrorists, kill civilians. Is killing few justifiable when the implications may turn out to be the safety of many? Or, on the other hand, is it never right to sacrifice the innocent to stop the guilty?

On a much lighter note... drones can be fun! The camera-equipped quadcopter drones are meant to be extremely easy to fly, and allow the user to see the world from a different perspective.

From photography, to the filming of sports events, to harassing your buddies, drones are all-around awesome.

Drone use is important for research as well. Where people cannot go, drones can. They're light, small, and versatile, able to be equipped with a multitude of instruments and tools. Universities and other research institutes have been able to make leaps and bounds in their scientific pursuits with the use of these unmanned vehicles.

Bad guys? No problem for the police department with drones. From tracking criminals to search and rescue, drones are awesome for missions needing stealth, safety, speed, or surveillance without a man or woman in the field.

Finally, believe it or not, drones can be awesome tools for businesses as well. Aerial imagery is a breeze with an unmanned, four-rotor, self-stabilizing camera in the sky. Moreover, delivery could quite possibly be revolutionized using these bots as couriers. Amazon has already proposed this idea, and research is currently underway.

Drones just aren't so scary when you realize how cool they really are. Sure, there are some moral concerns, and, right now, the cost is a bit high... but drones are here to stay.

YHS Nonfiction Students Present Projects With Meaningful Topics



BY
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"Twenty Percent Time" is a concept of which many have not previously heard. This approach allows kids to spend each Friday (twenty percent of the school week) researching a topic of their choice. Studies have shown that if teachers allow students one a day a week to research matter of their own liking, then the students would be more willing to learn the mandated material during the other four days.

Mrs. Pietz, a Yankton High School teacher, decided to take a new approach to her Non-Fiction class this school year. After reading an article over 20% time and doing more research, she took it upon herself to modify this teaching method for her classroom.

Mrs. Pietz implemented this new learning style during the first semester of the 2014-2015 school year. She designated class time on Fridays to allow students to have the opportunity to research a topic or career that interested them. At the end of the semester each student then presented information on their topic for a final grade.

The students showed initial excitement, and, even as the semester came to a close, there was an overwhelming enthusiasm for the project. This 20% time had given the students the opportunity to explore hobbies, careers, and other interests that they would have not had time to research otherwise.

As the semester came to a close, the students prepared a four to seven minute presentation that was presented in the YC Alumni hall. This offered the students a more realistic speaking experience than one would face outside of the classroom. Many friends and family members attended these presentations which offered the students an audience that expanded beyond just their peers. With 20% time, the students were able to explore topics which may benefit them beyond high school.

Rachael Eskins, one of the seniors that enrolled in the Non-fiction class, dedicated her 20% time to photography. Through this opportunity, she said she was able to learn "a lot of new things about the camera and what it entailed to work with the camera." In preparation for her final presentation, she decided to take a photography class and photograph her cousin's four-year pictures. Rachael took advantage of this 20% time to learn more about an activity that had always interested her. Other students also benefitted from this time and learned about their interests, including baking, painting, the military, and a variety of professions.

Since Mrs. Pietz experienced success with this approach the first semester, she decided to continue with the 20% time in the classroom the second semester as well. She stated that "after seeing how it went first semester, I made adaptations to make it work better in the classroom". She found this teaching technique to be a great way to prepare the students more for the "real world" and help them find out what they want their careers and majors to be.



Students Volunteer To Give Computer Lessons



BY
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LIPEPRT

When many people think of our public library, the first thing that comes to mind is books, magazines and even DVDs available for borrowing. With the changing times and increasing technology, libraries are adapting accordingly.

The Yankton Community Library is no exception. While the library already offers many technology services such as computers, printers, scanners, microfilm machines, general research databases, and genealogy research databases, soon the library will offer an educational technology program. Starting on Sat., Jan. 17, the Yankton Community Library will partner with YHS's National Honor Society to provide tutoring for those unsure of how to use ever-changing technology.

The librarians recognized a need for technology education, and one of the librarians, Susan Lippert, pointed out in a staff meeting that the National Honor Society would be a good match for the project, because the students were looking for community service opportunities, and they have grown up exposed to technology.

Mrs. Lippert is excited at the opportunity this experience offers older people who didn't grow up with lots of technology and are adapting to a more technology based society. She states, "I really just feel compassionate for them. All of their lives they have worked hard and followed the rules and now as they're getting ready to retire and relax, the rules have changed on them. More and more tasks, such as checking their personal accounts, have shifted to the internet, and I'm glad we can equip them with the knowledge to feel confident and independent."

National Honor Society student Haylee Worm agrees that high school students are the ideal choice for such tutoring. "I think high school students spend the most time [of any age group] using different types of technology, and because we use it so often, we have become familiar enough to figure out how to teach it in simple ways or even more complex ways."

Haylee Worm is also familiar with using technology frequently in her own life, and feels that many National Honor Society students will feel comfortable sharing their knowledge with others. "I personally use a lot of technology for things like social media, research, and other things because it is all so similar. Figuring out basic stuff should be no problem at all."

Mrs. Kathy Wibbels, Yankton Community Library Director, states that there has

been an increasing need in the recent months for informational technology sessions for library patrons. "Especially after the Christmas season, people bring in their devices that they were given, but they don't understand how to use them."

In the past, there have been basic computer classes offered at the library, but the lack of flexibility for individual questions in a class setting left many people's questions unanswered. That's where the National Honor Society becomes helpful. Instead of holding a formal class, students will be available at the library throughout designated days and patrons can register for 30 minute time slots for individual assistance from these students.

Mrs. Wibbels believes this one-on-one approach will "leave people open to ask their own specific questions." She also believes a 30 minute time slot will be an effective amount of time, because people will have enough time to go into detail on their questions, but it will not run so long that people become overwhelmed and leave more confused than when they came in.

As patrons sign up for the program, they are able to list what programs and technologies they wish to understand better so that the students can be best equipped to help them.

Some of the subjects of help frequently requested include help with Windows 8 operating systems, basic computer skills, help with personal devices such as iPads, Kindles, andaptops, computer clean-up skills, Java issues, and how to navigate social media set up. Basic technology questions are also frequently asked, such as how to turn on computers, how to use copiers, and how to connect to wireless internet.

Even though the participants who sign up are sure to gain some knowledge, perhaps the National Honor Society students will gain the most from this experience. Julie DeWitt, an NHS senior, looks forward to the opportunity to interact with others in the community. She states, "I hope to gain a better perspective on life [from others.] Being a volunteer is a very humbling experience and knowing that you are helping another person in some way is one of the most rewarding aspects of National Honor Society."

The staff of the library hopes that people of all ages will participate in this unique program.

Currently, all slots for the first session are full, and the librarians and National Honor Society students are excited to start this program.