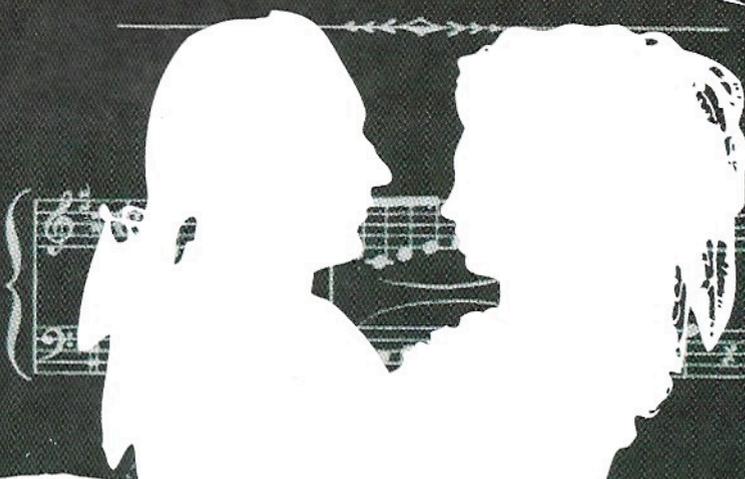


Muddy
River
Opera
Company
presents



W.A. MOZART



“The Marriage of Figaro”

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Friday, February 28, 2014 at 7:30 P.M.
Sunday, March 2, 2014 at 2:00 P.M.

At Quincy Community Theater
300 Civic Center
Quincy, IL 62301

*For twenty-one years of friendship
and support to the Muddy River Opera,
we dedicate the 2014 opera season to*



Lela "Lee" Lindsay



presents

The Marriage of Figaro

By Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
English Translation by Ruth Martin

Friday, February 28, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 2, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.

Quincy Community Theatre
300 Civic Center Plaza
Quincy, Illinois

This production is partially sponsored by a grant from the
Arthur O. Lindsay & Lela B. Lindsay at the Community Foundation
Serving West Central Illinois & Northeast Missouri

The Dennis R. & Barbara L Williams Fund for
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Invites you to attend

The Opening Night Party

Following the
Friday, February 28, 2014
performance of

The Marriage of Figaro

in the lobby of the Civic Center

A variety of delicious foods will be served

Admission is free to Muddy River Opera members & donors.

Attendees at the performance who are not members of Muddy River Opera may purchase a ticket to attend at \$5.00 per person. Tickets will be on sale prior to performance and during intermission in the lobby.

OPERA ETIQUETTE

- ☞ Smoking, eating and drinking are not allowed inside the theater.
- ☞ Cameras, tape recorders, cellular phones, or pagers are not allowed inside the theater.
- ☞ Please refrain from conversing during the opera.
- ☞ Those who arrive late will be seated during a pause in the opera.
- ☞ You may applaud at the end of an aria during the opera.
- ☞ Students are welcome at the opera, but make certain that etiquette is part of their experience.
- ☞ If you enjoy the opera, we appreciate your applause, standing ovations, and shouts of "Bravo".

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OPERA TERMINOLOGY

Aria: A solo piece written for a main character, which focuses on the character's emotion. In Italian, aria contextually means "air," "style" or "manner."

Pronounced: [ah-ree-ah]

Baritone: The most common category of the male voice; lower than a tenor, but higher than a bass.

Bass: The lowest male voice. Many bass roles are associated with characters of authority or comedy.

Bravo: Literally, a form of applause when shouted by members of the audience at the end of an especially pleasing performance. "Bravo" is for a single man, "brava" for a woman, and "bravi" for a group of performers.

Composer: The person who wrote the vocal and/or orchestral music (score).

Conductor: The leader of the orchestra, sometimes called Maestro. This person leads all the musicians (instrumentalists and vocalists) in the performance of an opera.

Mezzo-Soprano: The middle female singing voice, similar to an oboe in range, extending from the A below middle C to the second A above middle C. Composers often use the mezzo-soprano voice to portray a mother or caretaker, a villainess or a seductive heroine.

Libretto: The text of the opera. In Italian, it means "little book."
Pronounced: [lih-breh-toh]

Soprano: The highest female singing voice, with a range extending from middle C to the C two octaves higher.

Tenor: The highest common adult male singing voice, with a range from one octave below middle C to the A immediately above middle C; in opera, a tenor is usually the hero and or romantic interest.

CAST

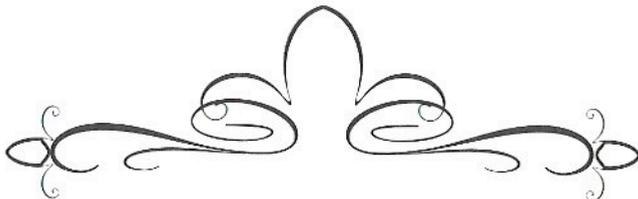
COUNT ALMAVIVADavid Dillard
COUNTESS ALMAVIVA Joy Boland
SUSANNA (Countess' maid affianced to Figaro) Victoria Botero
FIGARO (valet to the Count) Todd Von Felker
CHERUBINO (the Count's page) Elise LaBarge
MARCELLINA Cecelia Stearman
BASILIO (music master) Phillip Touchette
DON CURZIO (a judge) Anthony Heinemann
BARTOLO (a doctor from Seville) Aaron Stegemöller
ANTONIO (the Count's gardener & Susanna's uncle) Allen Means
BARBARINA (his daughter) Lacey Phillips

Two girl singers (Act III) Nicole Conetskey & Emily Freier

The Chorus of country men & women, Court attendants & servants

Linda Bellamy	Brian Bellamy
Nicole Conetskey	Marlon Melendez
Camber Flick	Allen Means
Felicity Eward	Anthony Heinemann
Emily Freier	Jacob Schumacher
Lacey Phillips	Gerard Wagner
William (Bill) Winn	

The scene is the castle of Count Almaviva, about three leagues from Seville



ORCHESTRA

Conductor..... Scott Schoonover
First Violin Brian Gehrich
Vicki Daggett
Rachel Hunzeker
Second Violin Pat Kuhn
Adam Scott
Robin Walden
Viola Chad Ensinger
Kae Blecha
Cello Mari Hauge
Christina Cane
Bass..... Frank North
Flute Kristen Angulana
Oboe..... Lana Anderson
Clarinet..... Jean Murray
Alan Nichols
Bassoon..... Cathy Flick
Horn..... Michael Saul
Cristina Werling
Trumpet..... Keith Wiemelt
Percussion Rebecca Gray

SYNOPSIS

The Marriage of Figaro is one of the few examples of a successful literary sequel. The original play by Beaumarchais was a follow-up to his previous hit, *The Barber of Seville*. The first audiences of Mozart's opera knew that play — and we still know it through the operatic version by Rossini. So for many people, this opera's characters are already quite familiar. But their circumstances have changed. In *The Barber of Seville*, a young nobleman named Almaviva won his lover Rosina away from her lecherous guardian Dr. Bartolo — with considerable help from his friend Figaro. As *The Marriage of Figaro* begins, it's three years later. The young lovers are now the Count and Countess Almaviva. Figaro is the Count's personal valet, and he's engaged to marry the Countess' maid, Susanna.

ACT I

Figaro and Susanna are preparing for their wedding. He and his bride are slated to occupy a room between the private chambers of the Count and the Countess. Figaro thinks that will work out just fine. Susanna thinks otherwise. She tells Figaro that the Count has been making advances toward her. In their new room, all he'll have to do is lure Figaro away on some errand, and the Count will be right next door to press his lecherous demands. Figaro hesitates to believe that his old friend the Count could have anything so nefarious in mind. But when Susanna convinces him, Figaro begins to display the same cunning and confidence that were his trademark in *The Barber of Seville*.

We then meet Figaro's old nemesis Dr. Bartolo, and his housekeeper, the aging Marcellina. Figaro has borrowed money from Bartolo, but he had no collateral. To secure the loan he agreed to marry Marcellina if he couldn't pay his debt. The debt is due, and Bartolo demands Figaro fulfill that obligation.

With Susanna alone in her room, the young page Cherubino rushes in. He's in the throes of adolescent ardor, and says he's desperately in love with the Countess. But he has also been caught with one of the servant girls, and the Count is hot on his heels. Cherubino hides when the Count appears, then eavesdrops on the Count's latest proposition for Susanna. When the Count finds him, he banishes Cherubino to the army.

Figaro then turns up with a group of peasants, who want to thank the duplicitous Count. He has recently announced that he's forgoing his "feudal right" to be with any woman in his realm on her wedding night. When the Count accepts their praise, Figaro suggests that he and Susanna should be married immediately. The Count puts him off. Considering his designs on Susanna, and his renunciation of the feudal right, he's better off if Susanna is single. The act ends as Figaro teases the lovesick Cherubino about his impending military service.

ACT II

Rosina, the Countess Almaviva, is upset about her marriage, which is on the rocks. Her husband is not only scheming to prevent the wedding of their servants Figaro and Susanna, but is also planning to have Susanna for himself. Yet, despite his behavior, the Countess still loves her husband, and her unhappiness colors the opening number of Act 2.

She's joined by Susanna and Cherubino. Together, the three hatch a plan. Cherubino will dress up as Susanna. The Count will be lured to a meeting with this phony Susanna by a trumped up letter, and the Count's duplicity will be exposed.

As the two women are dressing Cherubino for his role, Susanna leaves to find a ribbon. Then the Count knocks on the door. Rather than be found alone with the Countess — and in drag, no less — Cherubino ducks into a closet. When the Count enters, Cherubino knocks something over. The Count hears this, and demands to know who is hiding in that closet. The Countess tells him it's Susanna, but refuses to let him see for himself. He angrily leaves to fetch a crowbar, to force open the locked closet door, and the Countess follows to try and calm him down. When they're both gone, Susanna slips back into the room — and into the closet — while Cherubino has no choice but to leap out a window into the garden.

When the Count and Countess return, they are both amazed to see that it actually is Susanna in the closet. The Countess is confused — but relieved. The Count is embarrassed and begs forgiveness for his unseemly suspicions. When the gardener appears in a tizzy, saying someone has just jumped out the window, Figaro comes to the rescue. He says he's the one who took a flying leap into the nasturtiums. He also takes advantage of the Count's confusion to renew his demand that the Count allow his marriage to Susanna. But Bartolo and Marcellina join in. When they produce evidence that Figaro has actually agreed to marry Marcellina, the Count gleefully cancels Figaro's wedding.

ACT III

Susanna hatches her latest scheme. She pretends that she's finally willing to go along with the Count's lascivious suggestions, and proposes a meeting later that night — which was to be her wedding night! — in the palace garden. The Count eagerly agrees. But as she leaves, he overhears her talking to Figaro and realizes the two have something up their sleeves.

Next there's a hearing to determine exactly who it is that Figaro is legally bound to marry. When it looks like he's going to be stuck with Marcellina, he claims that he can't marry her because he's actually a nobleman, stolen from his parents at birth. He displays a distinctive birthmark on his arm. Marcellina recognizes the mark, and nearly faints. It turns out that she is Figaro's mother — and his father is his old nemesis, Dr. Bartolo. Figaro can hardly marry his mother, so Susanna and Figaro can be married at last — much to the Count's chagrin. Everyone leaves to prepare the ceremony.

The Countess is left alone, wondering what happened to her formerly happy marriage. Susanna joins her, and the two write a letter to the Count, inviting him to meet Susanna later, in the garden. They send it off, sealed with a hairpin, instructing him to return the pin as confirmation of the meeting. Figaro's wedding finally gets under way, and during the confusion of the act's final ensemble, the Count is handed the fateful letter from Susanna.

ACT IV

That night, in the garden, the servant girl Barbarina is searching for something in the dark. Though she's barely a teenager, she has already been the object of the Count's attentions. Now she's acting as a courier between the Count and her older cousin Susanna, who has just been married. She's looking for the hairpin that sealed Susanna's letter — the Count has sent her to return it. Her brief, opening number suggests a young woman who is disturbed at the adult world of amorous schemes that she's just now discovering.

As she searches, Figaro confronts her. When he discovers she's a messenger between Susanna and the Count, he's devastated. Figaro is convinced that Susanna is plotting to betray him, especially when he hears her nearby, singing about her "lover" — though she's really singing about Figaro.

Meanwhile, the Count is due any time for his assignation with Susanna. To fool him, the Countess and Susanna have agreed to exchange clothes for the evening. That way, when the Count goes into his seduction routine, he'll be romancing his own wife without knowing it.

Before long, Figaro figures the whole thing out, and decides to play a joke of his own. He goes to Susanna, pretends he really does think she's the Countess, and tries a few moves of his own. This enrages Susanna, but just momentarily. She soon sees through him, and they have a good laugh over it. Things come to a head when the Count finally shows up, eager for his tryst. First he tries to seduce his wife, thinking she's Susanna. Then, when he sees Figaro with a woman he thinks is the Countess, he self-righteously accuses her of infidelity. Susanna, still imitating the Countess, begs the Count for forgiveness. He refuses. At that, the Countess reveals herself, and the Count is finally humbled. This time, it's his turn to ask for pardon. The Countess generously embraces him, and the opera ends with both couples reconciled.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

DAVID DILLARD—BARITONE (COUNT ALMAVIVA)

Whether in recital, concert, or opera, baritone David Dillard's appearances have garnered critical praise. He has appeared regularly in St. Louis at Union Avenue Opera in comprimario and lead roles including *Sulpice* (*La fille du Régiment*), *Nilakhanta* (*Lakmé*), and *Oroveso* (*Norma*). With the Southern Illinois Music Festival he has played *Germont* (*La traviata*), *Escamillo* (*Carmen*), and *Basilio* (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*). In past seasons, Dillard has sung at Florida Grand Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, Tanglewood Music Festival, Dicapo Opera Theater, Lake George Opera, and Muddy River Opera among others. He has performed Schubert's *Winterreise* three times with internationally acclaimed collaborative pianist, Martin Katz. At Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Dillard coordinates the voice area, teaches applied voice, diction, opera history, and opera workshop. Previous Muddy River Opera Company productions: *Pirates of Penzance*

JOY BOLAND—SOPRANO (COUNTESS ALMAVIVA)

Joy Boland, soprano, a popular musical standards and opera singer in the St. Louis area, was last seen during the 2012 summer opera season at Union Avenue Opera as Freia in Wagner's *Das Rheingold* and as Brunnhilde in the 2013 winter production of *The Mini Ring* – a children's opera based on Wagner's Ring Cycle. Joy is currently a paid member and understudy for the St. Louis Symphony Chorus. She was the St. Louis district Metropolitan Opera auditions winner for 2004 and the Artist Presentation Society overall winner in 2008. She will appear as soprano soloist in the Bruckner *Te Deum* for the St. Louis Symphony in April 2014. She has been employed full-time in theatrical administration at The Muny in Forest Park since 1998.

TODD VON FELKER—BASS (FIGARO)

Todd von Felker's rich vibrant voice and superb acting skills are quickly taking him to the main stages of such noted opera companies as Des Moines Metro Opera, Florentine Opera, New Orleans Opera, Pensacola Opera, and Union Avenue Opera of St. Louis. Of his performances as Count Tomsky in Tchaikovsky's *Pikovaya Damo* the St. Louis Post-Dispatch wrote, "Todd von Felker, as Gherman's friend Count Tomsky, sang richly and held the state effortlessly." Recent engagements include his Wagnerian debut as Fasolt in *Das Rheingold* and Ping in *Turandot* at Union Ave Opera, as well as, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* and Warden Frank in *Die Fledermaus* at St. Petersburg Opera. In 2010 Mr. von Felker was invited to Poland to sing a series of recitals in association with the Krakow National Opera for Chopin's 200th Birthday. Last year he was a national finalist in the Bel Canto competition where he placed 3rd. He is also a past winner of the Chicago district of the Metropolitan Opera Council Auditions.

VICTORIA BOTERO—SOPRANO (SUSANNA)

Victoria Botero can be heard on opera, concert and world music stages in repertoire spanning the early baroque to living composers. The Columbian-American Soprano, with a voice described as, "clear, beautiful and thrilling," recently taped a PBS special celebrating the music of Virgil Thompson scheduled for national broadcast in 2014. She has given notable performance with such organizations as the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Owen/Cox Ensemble, Bach Aria Soloists, Union Avenue Opera, Muddy River Opera, Tulsa Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Wichita Grand Opera, and Light Opera Oklahoma. She performs throughout the Midwest as part of the critically acclaimed duo BoteroBledsoe with classical guitarist Beau Bledsoe and recently released *Un ramo de voz*. [Tzigane].

ELISE LABARGE—SOPRANO (CHERUBINO)

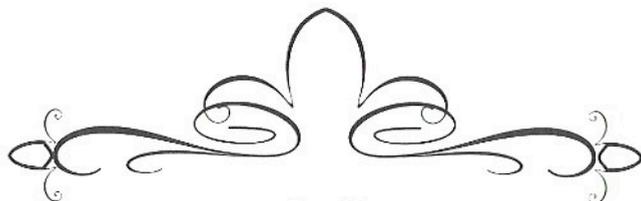
Elise LaBarge has appeared in a variety of productions through the Midwest, including multiple roles with Muddy River Opera. A Versatile actress and singer, she has enjoyed stepping on to the professional stage as all types of characters; including the Wicked Witch from the *Wizard of Oz*; Johanna from *Sweeney Todd*; Laura from *The Glass Menagerie*; Valencienne from *The Merry Widow*; Giannette from *L'elisir d'amore*; Barbarina from *Le Nozze di Figaro*; and, Jane from *Babes in Toyland*. Elise currently lives in Chicago where she appears in musical and operatic productions; creates and performs solo cabarets; and, is a teaching artist for the Lyric Opera.

CECELIA STEARMAN—MEZZO SOPRANO (MARCELLINA)

Cecelia Stearman, a Mississippi native, has performed opera, oratorio and Lieder in theatres and concert stages throughout the world. Her international career has taken her to four continents and numerous countries in venues such as Uspinov Palace of St. Petersburg, Alte Opera in Frankfurt, and the Odeon Herod Atticus of Athens. She has worked under the batons of Heidelberg Opera's Linda Horowitz, Ebehard Fredrich of the Bayeruth Festivals and David Stern. In 2003, Ms. Stearman returned home to the United States after 14 years of performing on European stages, mainly in Germany and France. Ms. Stearman resides in Kirkwood and serves on the voice faculty of Missouri Baptist College. She holds a Master's in Vocal Performance from Mississippi College, where she also served as faculty.

AARON STEGEMÖLLER—BASS BARITONE (BARTOLO)

Main stage experience includes Michigan Opera Theatre, Santa Fe Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, the Opera Festival of New Jersey, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. His vibrant voice earns praise from the press as, "A beautiful voice of maturing richness." Mr. Stegemöller has appeared with the American Opera Group, Opera Cleveland, Chicago's Light Opera Works and the Union Avenue Opera of St. Louis. He has made four appearances as King Melchior in Menotti's *Amahl* and the *Night Visitors* for Camber Opera with Francis Menotti as stage director; additional appearances have been with the Muddy River Opera in both leading and supporting roles. Mr. Stegemöller's has sung Don Basilio with Des Moines Opera's outreach production of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, touring for six months through four states. Mr. Stegemöller's made his solo debut at Carnegie Hall with the Heritage Choral of the University of Missouri, Kansas City, from which Mr. Stegemöller received a Master of Music Degree in Vocal Performance.



PHILIP TOUCHETTE—TENOR (BASILIO)

Tenor Philip Touchette is an Illinois native now residing in St. Louis. Opera Roles include Saint Brioche in *The Merry Widow*, and Dancaïro in *Carmen* for Muddy River Opera. Among other roles are Der Haushofmeister in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Marullo in *Rigoletto* for Winter Opera St. Louis; Damon in *Acis* and Galtea, Motorcycle Cop in *Dead Man Walking* and Zweiter Prister in *Die Zauberflöte* for Union Avenue Opera. In 2009 he created the role of Oscar Bergson in the World Premier of Barbara Harbach's *O Pioneers!* at University of Missouri St. Louis. Recent Educational Outreach includes *The Mini Ring* for Union Avenue Opera and *Alice in Operaland* for Muddy River Opera Company. Philip is a tenor soloist with the Chancel Choir of Union Avenue Christian Church. Mr. Touchette received his B.S. in Music Education from Quincy University and a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from Washington University—St. Louis.

ANTHONY HEINEMANN—TENOR (DON CURZIO)

Anthony Heinemann is excited to sing for his first Muddy River Production and then return to sing the upcoming children's opera, *The Frog Who Became a Prince*. Based out of St. Louis, Anthony sings regularly with Union Avenue Opera and Winter Opera St. Louis. Most recently he sang with UAO's *Madama Butterfly* (Prince Yumadori) and Winter Opera's *Tosca* (Spoletta) and *The Ballad of Baby Doe* (Old Miner). This year he also joined the roster of Madison-based Opera for the Young, singing in a touring production of *The Barber of Seville* (Count Almaviva). This Summer Anthony will sing in Union Avenue's 20th season as Gastone in *La traviata*.

ALLEN MEANS—BASS (ANTONIO)

Allen teaches choir, voice, low brass and choral conducting at Quincy University. He has a Master of Arts degree in voice performance from Western Illinois University, a Bachelor of Art in trombone performance from Quincy University and a Bachelor of Music with teacher certification in choral music from Liberty University. Allen has sung professionally with Saint Martin Chamber Players in Peoria and the Muddy River Opera Company in Quincy. He performed the role of Antonio in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* in the spring of 2005 with the Saint Martin Chamber Players. For the Muddy River Opera Company he has performed many roles—most recently in *The Merry Widow*. He has appeared in nearly all of Muddy River Opera Company Children's Opera productions since 2005.

LACEY PHILLIPS—SOPRANO (BARBARINA)

Lacey has performed in many operas with the Muddy River Opera Company. In 2013, she sang soprano for Alice in *Operaland*; in 2012 she played the lead role of the Grouch in *Green Eggs and Ham*; in 2011 the role of Mable in *Pirates of Penzance*; and, sang chorus for productions of *The Merry Widow* and *Madama Butterfly*. In addition, Lacey sang the Role of Julie in Quincy Community Theater's 2010 production of *Some Enchanted Evening*. She earned a Master of Music degree in vocal performance from Western Illinois University. Lacey served as the worship minister at Madison Park Christian Church in Quincy for seven years, and on the Board of the Muddy River Opera Company while teaching piano and voice lessons. . . Lacey, her husband, Dan, daughter, Jullian and son, Nathan currently reside in Forsyth, Illinois.

PRODUCTION STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

ALLYSON DITCHEY—STAGE DIRECTOR

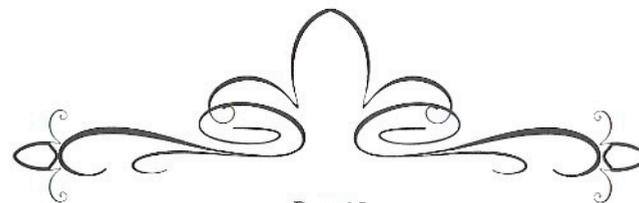
Allyson Ditchey earned her Bachelor of Arts in Music from Humboldt State University in 2003 and her Master of Music in Vocal Performance from Washington University in St. Louis in 2007. She currently is a freelance stage director, assistant stage director and stage manager for local St. Louis opera companies. Most recently, she earned accolades while attending the Wesley Balk Institute in Minnesota for performing and directing. Since then, she has directed *The Mini Ring* for Union Avenue Opera and last season's *Trouble in Tahiti*. Ms. Ditchey has had the honor of being a guest instructor for Washington University's Opera Program, Opera Theatre Saint Louis' Edward Jones Opera Camp for Kids and Spring Training programs, Mozingo Music and Humboldt Light Opera KidCo. Allyson also operates a teaching studio that focuses primarily on dramatic coaching for singers and voice training as well as the Marketing Director for HotCity Theatre in Grand Center.

AVRIL MARIE BERNZEN—ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Mrs. Bernzen's love of opera and classical music led her to focus a great deal of effort toward making professional opera a reality for the Quincy area. She tirelessly serves as President of the Muddy River Opera Company in addition to her duties as Artistic Director. She has sung with various opera companies, dinner theatre and graced many venues across the United States of America. She has also performed for our troops with the USO in Cuba where she was the director and leading actress of the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba Theatre for two years. She earned degrees from Quincy College, Notre Dame Conservatory of Music in piano and the Quincy Conservatory of Music in voice. In addition to her musical talents, Mrs. Bernzen studied Microbiology at Central Michigan University as well as St. Louis University. Along with providing direction for the Muddy River Opera Company, Mrs. Bernzen teaches voice and piano lessons in her private home studio located in Quincy.

SCOTT SCHOONOVER—CONDUCTOR

Scott Schoonover has conducted several past Muddy River Opera Company productions including favorites *L'elisir d'amore*, the world premier of *Abe the Musical* and *The Pirates of Penzance*. Along with being an active conductor, pianist and coach in the St. Louis area, Scott is also the founder and Artistic Director of Union Avenue Opera where he still offers his unique musical insight and dedication to providing performances true to the intentions of the composer. Under Scott's leadership, Union Avenue Opera has achieved critical acclaim over the past 16 seasons where he has conducted more than 40 productions and 125 performances. Scott has served as the Music Director of the St. Louis Women's Chorale and appeared with the Bel Canto Chorus, Gateway Men's Chorus. Currently he is serving as the Director of Music at Union Avenue Christian Church.



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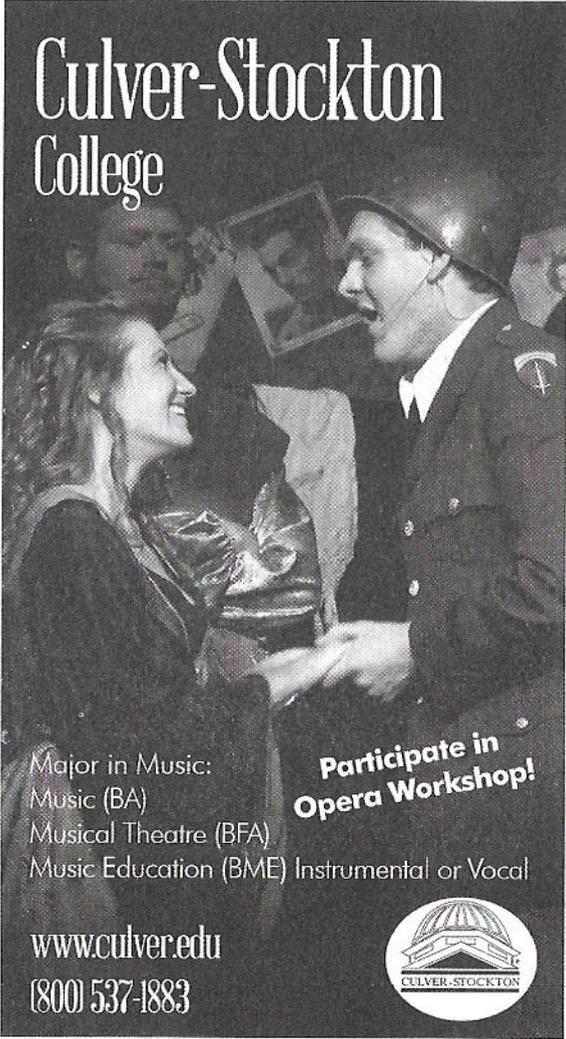
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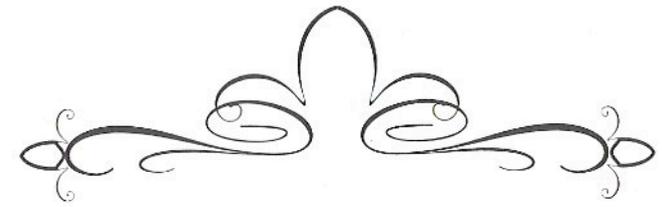


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Bruce Kruse

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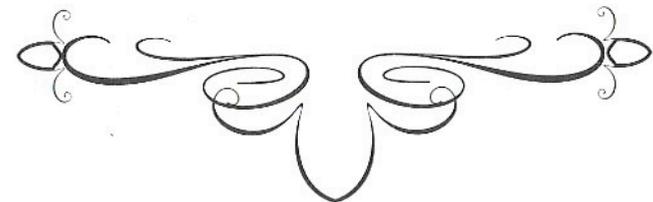
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Christine Richardson

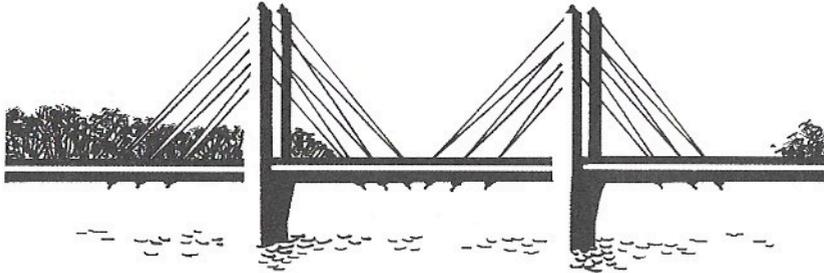
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