



Photo submitted

Students in grades 5-8 practice for the upcoming Verona Area Community Theater performance of "42nd Street." First row, left to right: Jasmine Connor, Aria Johnson, Natalie Kleine, Isabella Mancusi, Sydney Steidl and Ella Waxenberg; second row: Rylie Heilmann, Nathan Heil, Coen Faber, Tyler Hrabina, Maddi Moll; third row: Emily Nunn, Riley Grzybowski, Emma Collins and Hannah Kirk.

VACT to put on children's shows

Children from kindergarten through eighth grade will step into the spotlight next weekend with three different Verona Area Community Theater productions.

From Thursday, April 11, to Saturday, April 13, the theater group will produce "Three Nanny Goats Gruff" for children in kindergarten and first grade and "Disney's The Aristocats KIDS" for grades 2-4, which will be shown together. Following those two shows, children grades 5-8 will perform "42nd Street."

The "Three Nanny Goats Gruff" and "Disney's The Aristocats" duo will run at 6 p.m. Thursday, April 11, and Friday, April 12, and at noon and 3:30 p.m. Saturday, April 13. "42nd Street" will be performed at 7:30 p.m. on April 11 and 12, and 1:30 and 5 p.m. April 13.

All three shows will be performed at the Verona Area High School Performing Arts Center, 300 Richard

St. General admission for "42nd Street" and the pair of younger children's shows are \$7.50 each.

According to a news release from VACT, the 20-minute production of "Three Nanny Goats Gruff" features 73 children in the story of three hungry nanny goats who see grass across the bridge - which is unfortunately guarded by a troll who loves to eat goats.

Kendra Johnson is directing the production, and is being assisted by producer Alyssa Dvorak, music director Amanda Reichhold and choreographer Katie Monk.

The production of "Disney's The Aristocats KIDS" features 119 children in grades 2-4, who are split into two casts that will rotate between performance times. The 30-minute show is directed by Dee Baldock, with Sara Ward-Cassady producing, Anya Holland-Barry in charge of music and Lindsay Carr and Eva Gliszinski choreographing.

If You Go

What: 42nd Street Youth Performer's Edition

When: 7:30 p.m. April 11-12; 1:30 and 5 p.m. Saturday, April 13

Where: Verona Area Performing Arts Center, 300 Richard St.

Cost: \$7.50 for general admission

Info: vact.org

If You Go

What: "Three Nanny Goats Gruff" and "Disney's The Aristocats KIDS" shows

When: 6 p.m. April 11-12; noon and 3:30 p.m. Saturday, April 13

Where: Verona Area Performing Arts Center, 300 Richard St.

Cost: \$7.50 for general admission

Info: vact.org

The hour-long "42nd Street" show features 105 children in grades 5-8. Based on the Tony award-winning Broadway musical about a chorus girl who finds herself in the spotlight in a big show after the lead actress breaks her ankle before opening night, this is the first youth show VACT has produced that includes tap-dancing, the release states.

The shows have been rehearsed on Sundays for

the past three months, the release states.

"We are so fortunate to have an amazing team of volunteers who come every Sunday to help make these productions run smoothly and successfully," Dvorak said in the release.

For more information, visit vact.org.

- Kimberly Wethal

VAHS Kids Carnival returns with crepes, tractor races April 6

KIMBERLY WETHAL
Unified Newspaper Group

If You Go

What: VAHS Kids' Carnival

When: 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, April 6

Where: Verona Area High School, 300 Richard St.

Info: verona.k12.wi.us

On Saturday, April 6, children ages 3-10 can race a tractor, get their face painted, do soccer drills and enjoy crepes - all in the Verona Area High School commons and gymnasium.

The annual Kids' Carnival, coordinated by VAHS Student Council and featuring 30 high school clubs and sports, will be held from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. that day.

Sarah Domres, the faculty member helping the students put together the event, wrote in an email to the Press that the idea of the carnival is two-fold: they want younger children to make connections with high school students, while also teaching children the importance of "giving back."

Domres wrote when children are admitted to the carnival, they receive a ticket, and can place that ticket in a box representing a nonprofit that the proceeds will be given to.

This year's beneficiaries are the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, My Good Neighbor and Environmental Ambassadors.

"One of our favorite parts of the event is watching where kids choose to send their 'money' by way of their ticket," Domres wrote.

There is no limit to how many activities children can do during the carnival, Domres added.

Student Council will be selling food at the event starting at 11 a.m., including hot dogs, chips, pizza, fruit snacks, juice and water.

Domres said she enjoys watching the students interact with children and demonstrating what it means to be a good role model.

"My favorite part of the event is sitting back and watching high school students giving back and interacting with kids for no other reason than to give back," she said.



File photo by Kimberly Wethal

Senior Hariharan Jayaraaman, a member of the Math Team, helps Devyn Hanson complete a puzzle with shapes during the 2018 event.



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Canadian Brass coming to performing arts series

BILL LIVICK
Press correspondent

Jeff Nelson, French horn player for the Canadian Brass, can't seem to get enough of the quintet.

He's been a member of the brass chamber ensemble three different times since 2001 and said in a phone interview last week that performing in Canadian Brass is "still my dream."

Nelson and the rest of the five-piece ensemble will demonstrate the allure when they perform in the Verona Area Performing Arts Series at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 5.

The Canadian Brass is widely recognized as one of the world's premier brass ensembles.

"They are the gold standard," VAPAS Board of Directors co-president Carolyn White told the Press last year.

The group formed in 1970 in Toronto and has recorded more than 100 CDs and DVDs since 1975, according to its website.

Nelson initially joined the group in 2001, left in 2004 to further develop his career, rejoined the group three years later and left again after a few years to begin raising a family. He returned to the ensemble last year.

"I was home for 8 years, and one day my wife looked at me and said, 'It was great having you home,'" the father of two young kids said, with a laugh, during a phone interview last week.

"We're on the road about a third of the year, and every year we do long tours of Europe and Japan," he explained. "That makes it hard to be home much."

Nelson explained that with his family established and growing, he was ready to return to the Canadian Brass, which he had dreamt of joining since first seeing the group perform when he was 12 years old.

"It's still my dream," he said. "The first time I saw the group, I fell in love with the idea of performing classical music on stage before an audience."

Tuba player Chuck Dalenbach and trombonist

Gene Watts formed Canadian Brass in 1970. Watts retired in 2010, and the ensemble now consists of trumpeters Chris Coletti and Caleb Hudson, Achilles Liarmakopoulos on trombone, Dalenbach, and Nelson on French horn.

The group has been described as one of the most popular brass ensembles in the world by the Washington Post.

Nelson said their show here will consist of music "from Bach to the Beatles and everything in between."

"We like to mix it up, so we'll play a wide variety of styles, including Dixieland jazz," he added. "But Bach, and particularly 'Little Fugue in G Minor,' is at the center of our repertoire."

Another favorite is "Flight of the Bumblebee," composed by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Nelson noted.

He observed that after almost five decades, Dalenbach "sets the tone" for the ensemble as its leader and most experienced musician. He said Canadian Brass shows are filled with fun, spontaneity and audience interaction. Its members are friends who share camaraderie on stage, he added, but they never compromise the quality of the performance.

"I think our approach is the best way to share a stage," Nelson said. "Chuck sets the tone for the ensemble, and the camaraderie has become part of the group's culture."

"We have a lot of fun and like to have a sense of humor on stage," he continued, "but we never make the music the joke. We have reverence for the composers and the music, and we're able to strike a balance between being relatable and performing the music, which really is high art."

The show will be held at the Verona Area Performing Arts Center, 300 Richard St., and costs \$32 for general admission. Seniors receive a discounted rate of \$30, and tickets for students 18 and younger are \$10.

For information about the performance, visit vapas.org.

Thank You

to Miller & Sons for the luncheon, Pastor Mark Yurs & the Women's Guild at Salem United Church of Christ, Ryan Funeral Home, and Agrace HospiceCare for everything you have done for our family. We'd also like to thank everyone who sent cards, flowers and gifts of money.

The family of Alice Handel

