

Insider

For November 26, 2008

By Kim Burger

This week marks the beginning of the Holiday Season and all I can say is hold onto your hats! In addition to the special gatherings with friends and families that accompany this time of year, we have access to a line-up of holiday entertainment that will throw those sugar plums in your head into a downright dancing frenzy!

Take the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center, for instance. On Monday, December 1st, the Oakridge Boys will be here to perform their Christmas Show complete with rollicking Santa songs and heartfelt standards. The following evening, Tuesday, December 2nd, Lorie Line takes the stage to share Christmas traditions and music from around the world. On Friday and Saturday, December 5th and 6th, the UNI Varsity Men's Glee Club will perform their ever-popular Christmas Variety Show. Did you know this group has performed for well over 80,000 patrons since they began doing these shows in 1978? On Wednesday, December 10th the Chimes of Christmas can be heard as the UNI School of Music Spotlight Series features choral ensembles and the Northern Iowa Symphony Orchestra. Friday, December 12th, brings Kathy Mattea, a beloved Grammy-winning singer who made "18 Wheels and a Dozen Roses" and "Where've You Been" country favorites, to the Gallagher-Bluedorn stage. The Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony Orchestra will ring in the season with old and new holiday favorites and their famous sing-along during their wildly popular Holiday Pops Concerts on Saturday, December 13th, with "buck a kid" pricing available during the 2pm matinee performance. Jim McDonough wraps up the Gallagher's holiday line up with his delightful Holiday Grande show complete with orchestra and singers on Sunday, December 14th. Tickets and additional information for all of these wonderful shows are available by calling the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center's box office at 319-273 4TIX.

Other Christmassy events include the Jingle and Mingle event in downtown Cedar Falls on Thursday, December 4th from 5-8pm, complete with trolley rides, Christmas carolers, open houses and Santa Claus on Main Street. Also downtown, *Plaid Tidings* will be performed by the Cedar Falls Community Theatre from Friday, December 5th to Sunday, December 14th. This show features 25 songs from the 1950's and promises fun for the young and old alike. Tickets can be purchased at the Oster Regent Theatre or by calling 319-APP-LAUD.

Another theatrical performance, *Christmas Stew*, can be enjoyed at the Lampost Theater from Friday, December 5th through Thursday, December 18th. This show is a light-hearted production that follows a family through the rollercoaster ride of a typical holiday gathering. Tickets can be obtained by calling 319-277-8034.

Another season staple, hosted by the University Museums, includes an evening of crafts and carols at the Marshall Center Schoolhouse, followed by a multi-cultural holiday event called "Celebrate the Season" at Maucker Union on the UNI campus.

Downtown Waterloo will brighten your holidays with a visit from Santa, crafts, entertainment and fireworks on Saturday, December 6th, beginning at 4pm; and the Waterloo Community Playhouse will offer performances of an all time American favorite, It's a Wonderful Life, from Friday, December 12th through Sunday, December 21st. Tickets may be obtained by calling 319-235-0367.

McElroy Auditorium will be rockin' on Wednesday, December 3rd, when Willie Nelson returns for an exciting performance with his friends Billy Bob Thornton and the Boxmasters. Tickets for this show are available at 800-882-4275.

Waverly is hopping too. Christmas with Wartburg, featuring the Wartburg Choir, Castle Singers and Wind Ensemble as well as members of the Ritterchor, St. Elizabeth Chorale and Symphonic Band will be performed at various locations including Neumann Auditorium on the Wartburg campus, Nazareth Lutheran Church in Cedar Falls, and the Des Moines Civic Center from Thursday, December 4th through Sunday, December 7th. Check out www.wartburg.edu/christmas for details and tickets. On Thursday, December 18th, the Waverly-Shell Rock High School Orchestra will join forces with the Boston String Quartet. Tickets for this special presentation can be obtained by calling Lori Nelson at 319-352-2087.

Hudson will welcome visitors for a horse-drawn sleigh ride through the woods of Heritage Farms and Breakfast with Santa on the Saturdays of December 6th, 13th and 20th. Reservations are necessary and can be arranged by calling 319-988-3734.

Whew! Here's hoping you'll be surrounded by those you love tomorrow as our nation observes Thanksgiving Day. What a great time to make plans to enjoy some of this fabulous entertainment together in observance of the holidays!