

Community Choir to perform a rendition of Handel's Messiah in Wauneta/Benkelman Dec. 8

Written by Wauneta Breeze

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Pictured above is the combined choir. In no particular order their names are as follows: Anika Adams, Sara Behrends, Janet Keiser, Lana Skelton, Darla Windholz, Angela Crouse, Nickole Sis, Crystal Darling, Laura Nelms, Nicole Kent, Miranda Behrends, Deb Echols, Sharon Holmes, Kaitlin Howard, Liz Noler, Annie Pursley, Diana Rehn, Tina Richardson, Andra Roberts, Sharlane Jones, Tammy Will, Kathy Reid, FayeLee Sanford, Natalie Kent, Maggi Hardwick, Michelle Myers, Sally Hudson, Erin Perrigo, Beth Kollmorgen, Del Rehn, Ron Singer, Mike Brown, Rita Crose, Greg Loghry, Sye Tecker, Aaron Behrends, Terry Lytle, Harold Nordhausen, James Skelton, Tom Jones, Bert Leffler, Richard Bartholomew, Fr. Tom Wiedel, Elmer Case, Tony Ham and Diane Hughes. (Courtesy Photo)

The Community Choir has been preparing since September for its annual Christmas performance, which will be a rendition of Handel's Messiah. This year they will be, for the first time, in a combined choir of area communities, Benkelman, Wauneta, Hamlet and Stratton.

Rehearsals have taken place in Benkelman and Wauneta under the direction of Diane Hughes of Benkelman with assistance from Aaron and Sara Behrends from Wauneta.

Because of the distance between the communities, two performances will be given. One will be in Benkelman on Dec. 8 at 2:00 p.m. MT/3 p.m. CT. The second performance will be in Wauneta on the same day at 6:30 p.m. MT/ 7:30 p.m. CT. Both concerts will be held in the high school gyms.

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This will be the ninth year that organizers, Diane Hughes and Nickole Sis of Benkelman, have put together the event.

Over the course of their history, they have not only done Christmas performances, but have also sung during 4th of July festivities and Veterans Day programs as well as caroled during the Chamber activities downtown.

The Wauneta performance will be held in the Wauneta-Palisade High School gym.

From the beginning in 2005 Diane Hughes, who also serves as vocal instructor for Dundy County Stratton High School, has been the director of the choir, and Elmer Case of Stratton has guest directed on a variety of songs. Julie Shillington of Benkelman and Tally Case of Stratton have served as accompanists throughout the choir's history.

Lisa Fox of Stratton, Mary Baney and Janice Whetstone, both of Benkelman, have also acted as accompanists during rehearsals. This year, Tally Case and Bev Singer will accompany the choir.

Over the course of its nine-year history, the choir has performed many different works, including Festival of Carols and Silent Night, Holy Night. The latter achieved the highest number of vocalists they have had yet, with 42 singers.

In the past, the choir has utilized a bell choir, under the direction of Beth Kollmorgen, in some of their pieces, and a youth choir has also participated at one point in some community choir performances.