

CELEBRATIONS



Merton Wenner
ST. PETER - An open house is planned to honor Merton Wenner of St. Peter for his 80th birthday on February 8. The open house will be held from 1:00 - 4:00 pm, Sunday, February 12 at the Church of St. Peter, 1801 West Broadway, St. Peter.



John Lienke
PEMBERTON - A card shower is planned to honor John Lienke of Pemberton for his 95th birthday on February 12. Greetings may be sent to: 28696 28th Street, Pemberton, MN 56078.



Bill and Joan (Schimek) Jirik
NEW PRAGUE - A card shower is planned to honor Bill and Joan (Schimek) Jirik of New Prague for their 50th wedding anniversary on February 10. Greetings may be sent to: 402 2nd Ave. N.W., New Prague, MN 56071.

Edna Maidl

NEW ULM - A card shower is planned to honor Edna Maidl of New Ulm for her 90th birthday on February 5. Greetings may be sent to: Edna Maidl, 1314 8th St N Apt 104AST, New Ulm, MN 56073-1554.

Anniversary, wedding and engagement policy

Engagement announcements should be to us at least one month prior to the wedding. Engagement, wedding and anniversary announcements may be formatted in the style of those published in The Free Press and email to classified@mankatofreepress.com. Photos may be scanned, saved as a JPEG and sent electronically and email to: classified@mankatofreepress.com. Forms for wedding, engagements and anniversary announcements are available on The Free Press website by going to www.mankatofreepress.com and clicking on the "contact us" box at the bottom of the home page. Those forms can be submitted electronically on that page. In addition, printed forms for wedding, engagements and anniversaries are available for anyone preferring to use them. They may be obtained by stopping in The Free Press or writing to The Free Press Marketplace, PO Box 3287, Mankato MN 56001. There is a \$27.50 charge for wedding, engagements and anniversary announcements. Five copies of the newspaper will be provided with the order and newspapers must be picked up within five days of publication. For more information, call 507-344-6395. Photo graphics submitted through mail with wedding, engagement and anniversary stories will be returned if a self-addressed, stamped envelop is included, or they may be picked up at The Free Press.

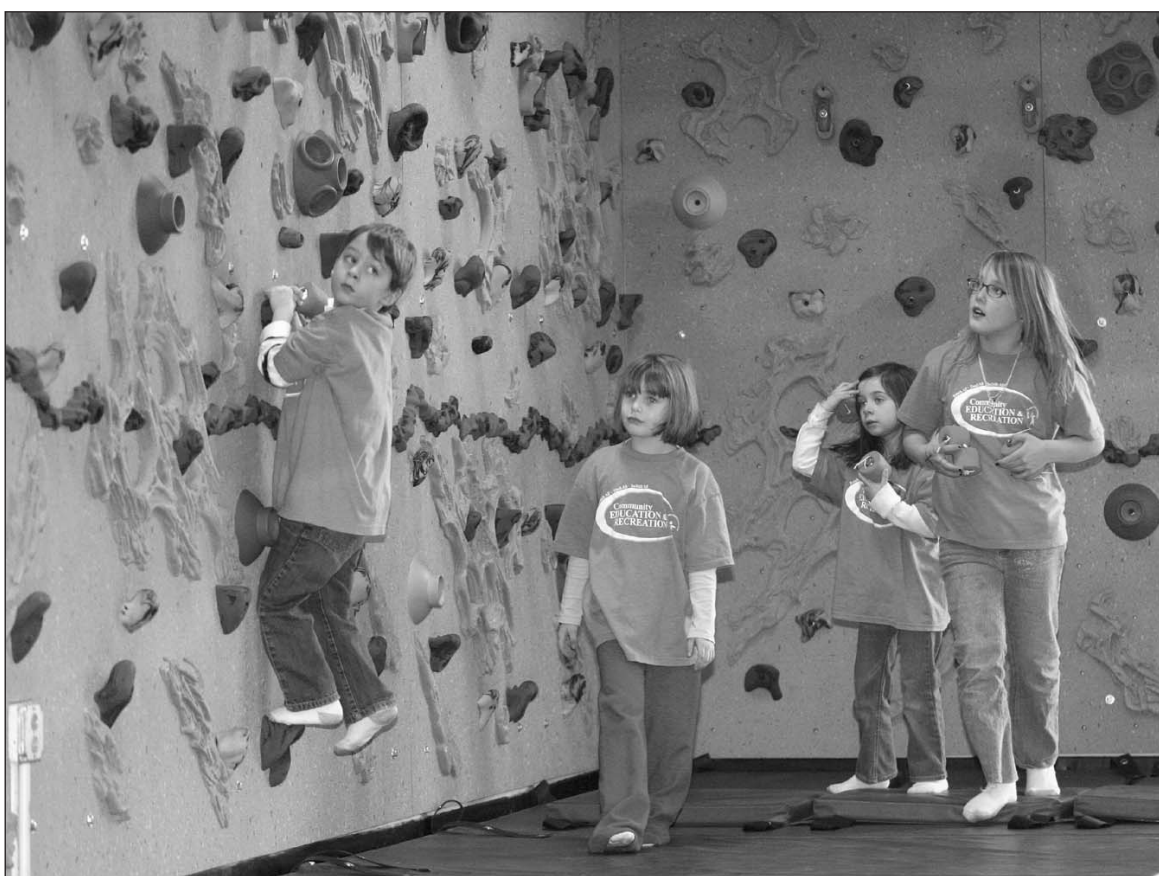
Judy Garland musical drama to open at Guthrie

The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — A musical drama about the last days of singer Judy Garland makes its U.S. premiere at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis. "End of the Rainbow" opens Friday night for a five-week run at the Guthrie before heading to Broadway this spring. Two-time Olivier Award winner Tracie Bennett portrays Garland in London in 1968 as she prepares to

make another comeback. Bennett originated the role of Garland in London. The play features Garland's well-known songs, including "Over the Rainbow." Garland was born Frances Gumm in Grand Rapids, Minn. She starred as Dorothy in "The Wizard of Oz" and sang in other classic movies such as "Meet Me in St. Louis" and "A Star Is Born." "End of the Rainbow" runs through March 11.

NAMES & NOTABLES



The rock climbing wall was one of many activities available for children at the Lake Crystal Rec Center during Santa's Fun Day.

SportPix

Iowa State University
The following students were named to the fall 2011 dean's list at Iowa State University: Blue Earth — Chelsea Janice Johnson; Mankato — Kiersten Laurie Lee; Mapleton — Laura K. Gerdt; New Richland — Brandon Tyler Espe; New Ulm — Arielle Elizabeth Glawe and Kevin J. Kauffman; North Mankato — John Patrick Fleming, Elizabeth Joan Holmgren, Gregory David Vose, Janee Shantae Wise; St. Peter — Andrew Darin Doherty, Tanner John Jaeger; Springfield — Amanda Joy Wells; Vernon Center — Joshua Dean Sonnabend; Winnebago — Kirsten E. Johanson.

Region V KCACTF
Minnesota State University's Department of Theatre and Dance received some top honors in the Region V KCACTF gathering at Iowa State University during festival week, Jan. 15-21 by participating with almost 1,400 registrants, representing 80 colleges and universities. Anthony DePoto partnered by Larissa Schmitz advanced to the final round of the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival's Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship competition. Anthony also took the Best Classical Actor in the Semifinal Round award and placed as Second Irene Ryan Alternate (or 4th place out of 300 competitors).

MSU had four other students in the semifinal round: Ceara Dowell partnered by Amanda Forman; Morgan Mallory partnered by Carter Allen; Lindsay Overgaard partnered by Emily Jansen; and Laura Otremba partnered by Tim Gagne. Thomas Fagerholm took the 1st Place Regional Technical Project award for the Technical Direction of Rent. Sam Juhnke won the 2nd Place award in Regional Lighting Design

for The Shape of Things. KCACTF Certificates of Commendation for productions at MSU were awarded to: Sam Juhnke for Production Stage Management for Dracula; Jordan Green for Lighting Design of Wait Until Dark; Kim Steffen for Musical Direction of Altar Boyz; Lauren Looby for Choreography of Altar Boyz; Steve Smith (faculty) for Lighting Design for Altar Boyz; Naoko Ishizuka for Scene Design for Altar Boyz. Costumes from The Producers, designed by David McCarl (faculty), were invited to the juried Costume Parade, which was co-hosted by Ceara Dowell by virtue of her work in the Ryan Semifinal round.

South Central College
Daniel J. McClain of Mankato was named to the South Central College fall 2011 president's list.

Minnesota State University
Kristy Meyers of Mankato was named to the fall 2011 dean's list at Minnesota State University.

Bethany Lutheran College
Leah Mees of North Mankato of graduated in fall 2011 from Bethany Lutheran College.

Rockhurst University
Allison Streich of Janesville was named to the fall 2011 dean's list at Rockhurst University.

Grand View University
Austin Pinke of St. James was named to the fall 2011 dean's list at Grand View University.

Southeast Technical
Jessica Mae Peitsch of Madelia, Brianna Marie Pagel of Mankato, Hannah Elizabeth Moe of New Richland and Joslyn Ann Sutton of Waseca were named to the fall 2011 president's list at Minnesota State College-Southeast Technical.

Hy-Vee
The Mankato Hy-Vee donated one SMART Board interactive whiteboard to

Fitzgerald Catholic Schools and one to Risen Savior Lutheran School. Hy-Vee held a SMART Points promotion from Oct. 1 through Dec. 30. Shoppers that purchased certain products would earn points that could be donated to the school of their choice. The schools with the highest average point scores were awarded a SMART Board.

UCare
UCare health plan donated 25 pairs of of Tubbs snowshoes, poles and carrying bags to VINE Faith in Action. This donation will allow the Summit Center to offer older adults in the Mankato area the opportunity to participate in its snowshoe gatherings at no cost.

St. Cloud State University
The following students graduated in fall 2011 from St. Cloud State University: Delavan — Jessica Allevan, Jessica Allevan; Lake Crystal — Nicholas Lenz; Mankato — Abdou Kabore, Toussida Kabore, Matthew Kasten; New Ulm — Kayce Wendland; Sleepy Eye — Cassandra Windschitl; Springfield — Tianna Salonek; Waseca — Kevin Bauleke.

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
The following students were named to the fall 2011 University of Wisconsin-La Crosse dean's list: Blue Earth — Julia Jo Meyer; Courtland — Carly R Windschitl; Janesville — Krista K Conlon, Katherine Rae Malterer, Katrina K Schuch; Mankato — Riley Patrick Buley, Jacob Isaac Nienow, Megan Ann Richmond; Mapleton — Stephanie Marie Irene Smith; Minnesota Lake — Mackenzie Joyce Volz; New Richland — Brett Charles Hagen; New Ulm — Marissa Klimmek; North Mankato — Brianna Rose Christiansen, Danielle Lynn Sukalski; Saint James — Scott Jeffrey Mueller; Waseca — Katie M Kiesler, Bethany R Lecocq; Wells

— Danielle Jo Koestler, Sarah Rose Schultz, Lauren F Schuster; Winnebago — Kelsey Danae Sackett.

South Dakota State University
The following students were named to the fall 2011 South Dakota State University dean's list: Belle Plaine — Daniel Thomas Cates, Kaitlyn Michelle Kuske; Blue Earth — Marie Elizabeth Olson, Amy Jo Arends; Butterfield — Marissa Nicole Romsdahl; Comfrey — Kelli Marie Johnson; Elysian — Izak Russell Domonoske; Hanska — Jenna Elizabeth Sieve; Lake Crystal — Erin Nicole Leiding; Le Center — Marcus David Traxler; Mankato — Adam Paul Gaspar, Jamie Lynn Streich; Montgomery — Olivia Kay Marcussen; Mountain Lake — Megan Sharon Johnson, Eric Joseph Mathiowetz, Lacey Lynn Janzen; New Richland — Katie Lauren Walstrom, Anthony Lane Wacholz; New Ulm — Valerie Jo Mohr, Brittany Ann Jones, Andrew Jeffrey Boyce, Ashley Kay More, Leah Jane Eckstein; North Mankato — Nicholas Gene Oliver; St. Peter — Sevyron McLean Brandt, Cortney Rae Norell, Skylar Nicole Anderson, Ryan Le Rossiter; Sleepy Eye — Kahley Elizabeth Pelzel, Angela Margaret Sellner, Jacan Peter Simon, Ryan Edward Tauer, Jared Paul Gilliland, Megan Elizabeth Gilliland, Thomas Scott Gehrke, Brandon Allen Palm, Melissa Ann Tauer; Springfield — Kevin Roger Hauth, William Marvin Krueger, Mitchell Scott Johnson; St. James — Lily Ann Jaclyn Berg, Hannah Lynn Reuter; Truman — Jordan Jacob Fast; Waseca — Katie Michelle Wollenburg, Mackenzie Kay Byron; Wells — Stephanie Marie Herman, Felicia Mae Niebuhr, Robert Guy Geesman; Winnebago — Kiley Jay Hyland; Winthrop — Curtiz Paul Begeman, Mollie Regien Sloat.

ROCK OPERA: Met weekly for almost three years

Continued from Page E1

"Honestly, I wasn't sure right away that it was a great idea," he said. "I told him, 'You're crazy.' ... But eventually I said, 'You're crazy. Why not?'"

Going way back

The trio has a long history of inspiring each other musically. In junior high, Schwartz was in awe of Martin — who was the first person he knew with an electric guitar — and Walcott, who taught himself to play Rush tunes on his drumset. They were just teenagers when they started jamming together, even booking a gig for their high school graduation. In college at St. Thomas, Martin bought Schwartz a bass guitar and they formed their first band. During the summer, they'd return to St. Peter to play with the local musicians. One jam session even got recorded and treated to some airplay at the Macalester College radio station.

"It was all stream-of-consciousness type stuff," Martin said. "Even now, it doesn't sound terrible." Following college, Martin moved to Boston to follow his eventual wife — a place where he played with "serious musicians" who "lit a fire in me to get better." His roommate's boyfriend played in the Mighty Mighty Bosstones and another friend married a guitarist from The Pixies. But all the while, Martin was still writing music and sending it Schwartz, anticipating the day when they would play together again. Their future together was cemented when Schwartz sent Martin \$100 with instructions to buy a bass amp and haul it back to Minnesota. "I credit my friend Ted (Martin) for seeing something in me that I didn't ever see," Schwartz said. **Time to play**
Once Martin and Walcott were in the fold, Schwartz sought other collaborators:

John Hile, longtime director of the "Jesus Christ Superstar" production at First Avenue, and a host of others. For almost three years, the group met every Wednesday night in Hile's Minneapolis basement to rehearse. The project became a complex collaboration with each investing a part of themselves in the final product. "There is a lot of who I am in this thing, and a lot of the other artists, too," Martin said. "There are always arguments in that kind of process, but Robb (Schwartz) was open. ... He believed he could do it and that we could do it, too." The project was bolstered by a nearly \$4,000 fundraising campaign coordinated through Kickstarter, an organization devoted to funding art projects through public donations. Schwartz said that generosity propelled the project forward, even when creative challenges and long odds threatened its completion.

"We couldn't have done this the way we wanted without (the Kickstarter campaign)," Schwartz said. And now, after 30 years of friendship and 30 months of practice, all that's left is to perform. "I want it to be gameday," Schwartz said. **Tickets**
Performances will be held at 8 p.m. on Feb. 17 and 7 p.m. on Feb. 18 at the Southern Theater in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at www.dyingtomakeit.com.

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