

Guest Commentary

Public art, private grief: saving Tyler's grave

By Kent Nerburn

"Mr. Nerburn," the message began, "This is Carrie Henry. They've taken everything down." I didn't need to hear more. The frantic, desperate tone in the voice told me everything I needed to know.

Several years ago I had written a book entitled, *Calm Surrender: Walking the Hard Road of Forgiveness*. It had included a chapter called, "Candles on the Grave" that had been inspired by Ms. Henry, though I didn't know her at the time. The chapter referred to the grave we have all seen as we drive down Irvine Avenue past Greenwood Cemetery - the one with the pinwheels and toys and multi-colored banners and ribbons. I had once seen a woman sitting on that grave reading a children's book aloud, and it made my blood chill. That woman turned out to be Ms. Henry.

As a father, I could imagine no greater horror than the loss of a child, and I realized at that moment that any book I wrote on forgiveness had to begin by addressing the question of how to forgive a world that rips your child from your arms and leaves you staring into the face of a seemingly senseless universe.

As I worked on the book, I continued to visit the grave, to look at the miniature trucks and McDonald's toys, the picture of young Tyler Henry, the ever changing seasonal themes, the impeccably maintained and lovingly decorated plot of earth that had become Ms. Henry's homage to a lost child. It became a source of meditation and consolation to me.

When the book was completed, that chapter became the centerpiece. Ms. Henry's story, and her daily vigil and ever-changing shrine touched a nerve and articulated an inexpressible sorrow shared in silence by thousands of readers. "Candles on the Grave" became the book's most quoted chapter, and was reprinted in publications around the world.

Now this phone call was telling me that the living memorial to young Tyler had been removed. Ms. Henry's lifelong journey toward healing had been stopped by an administrative decision of the Greenwood

Cemetery Board, and her grief had become a scream frozen in time.

I understand Greenwood's decision. Such decorations make maintenance difficult and can, I suppose, get out of control. But there is something deeper here. What Ms. Henry, and those like her were doing (and, yes, there were others decorating graves in Greenwood, perhaps inspired by her), was to articulate and free their grief through art. They were using their own creative efforts to immortalize the memory of someone who will forever live in their heart.

This is a time-honored tradition, and one of the highest purposes to which art can aspire. Art is not only about entertainment or aesthetic pleasure. It is not only about professionally trained artists. It is about ordinary people striving to express the inexpressible, to articulate through metaphor that which can be given voice in no other way: Go to any of a hundred cultures throughout the world and you will see graves as living, breathing, memorials to those we have lost. Go to museums and you will see art displays consisting of creations by ordinary people to celebrate the Mexican Day of the Dead.

The Greenwood Cemetery Board needs to think about this. Our community needs to think about this. We want flowers and photos and objects of importance at funerals to celebrate life, yet we deny people the right to carry that feeling of life forward once the casket is in the ground. If we believe that the dead live on, we should, perhaps, allow those who wish to memorialize those lives the right to do so. They are bringing the immediacy of artistic creation —real artistic creation born of spiritual urgency —into the heart of our community. Their creations are true public art, because it is the art of the people, created to express our deepest yearnings and most inexpressible feelings.

I dream of the day when Tyler's grave can again be a living, breathing experience for passersby like me. I dream of the day when the young children who still

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Public art...continued from page 1.

come there, leaving hockey pucks and toys, will once again have a chance to confront death as growth and celebration rather than as dark subterranean terror. I dream of the day when we, as a community, see that our friends and neighbors, creating these shrines as living memorials to their loved ones, are giving us our most heartfelt and sacred public art.

Far from being seen as inconveniences, these eloquent personal creations should be seen as a source of community pride. There is nothing written anywhere that says that our grief must be embodied only in cold stone.

Kent Nerburn is the author of eight books, including the award winning, *Neither Wolf nor Dog: On Forgotten Roads with an Indian Elder*, and the recently published, *Road Angels: Searching for Home on America's Coast of Dreams*, which was chosen as one of the top summer reads of 2002 by the American Independent Booksellers Association. He is the chair of the board of Schoolcraft Learning Community, Bemidji's public charter school. He lives with his wife, Louise Mengelkoch, and their son, Nick Nerburn, in Turtle Lake township.

Workshop Funding Available

The Region 2 Arts Council invites individuals and organizations from our five-county area (Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, and Mahnomen counties) to propose workshop ideas for direct funding. The workshop is funded with no financial risk to you.

The workshop must focus on learning experiences for adult artists and be open to the public. Any group that wants to bring in an artist to do a workshop is eligible, as are regional artists who wish to present a workshop themselves. Proposals are considered on an ongoing basis, but funds are limited. The sooner you contact us, the better.

Contact Terri Widman, R2AC Executive Director, at 218-751-5447 or 1-800-275-5447 if you have questions or wish to request an application.

September Showcase**Artist:****Deborah Carlson**

(See page 4)

"Winter Storm 2000"

36" x 24"



NORTHERN ARTS NEWS is a free publication of the Region 2 Arts Council, published 10 times per year, with a current distribution of over 1,600.

Funded by a grant from the McKnight Foundation, *Northern Arts News* provides news and information to artists in Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, and Mahnomen counties of north central Minnesota.

We welcome:

- topics of story ideas;
- guest commentary topic ideas;
- invitations to other artists;
- collaboration and registration notifications.

To submit information and/or to be added to our mailing list, contact the R2AC office:

Call: 751-5447 or 1-800-275-5447

FAX: 218-751-2777

Email: r2arts@paulbunyan.net

Web site: www.r2arts.org

Northern Arts News
Region 2 Arts Council
426 Bemidji Avenue
Bemidji, MN 56601

**Fiscal Year 2002
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Permission to reprint *Northern Arts News* items is granted (excluding Guest Commentary) so long as Northern Arts News is credited as the source.

GUEST COMMENTARY inquiries are invited at any time. Submit your topic idea to Terri Widman by telephone, FAX, or email. Selected works must be previously unpublished and fit within the space allotment. Compensation for a selected work is \$60.

Due to the advanced print deadlines of this publication, we suggest that you call to confirm dates, times, and other pertinent information about events and opportunities listed here.

Region 2 Arts Council Grant Opportunities

Sept. 18, 2002	Arts Project Grants
Oct. 9, 2002	Individual Artist Grants
Oct. 16, 2002	Anishinabe Arts Initiative Grants
Jan. 15, 2003	R2AC/McKnight Grants for Arts Organizations
Feb. 5, 2003	Individual Artists Grants
March 19, 2003	Arts Project Grants
March 19, 2003	Anishinabe Arts Initiative Grants

To request an application form, call Terri Widman at 218-751-5447 or 800-275-5447. Staff assistance is available to all applicants to discuss ideas, select artists, or to assist in completing the application form.



Region 2 Arts Council Seeking Council Members for Anishinabe Arts Initiative

Those who feel that the visual, performing, and literary arts are an important contribution to the quality of life in north central Minnesota, and to the Anishinabe people, are encouraged to consider serving on the Anishinabe Arts Initiative Council (AAI) of the Region 2 Arts Council.

The Council is seeking AAI Council members from its service area which includes Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, and Mahnommen counties and from the nearby counties of Becker, Cass, Itasca, and Roseau to fill Council vacancies for a two-year term **beginning November 1, 2002.**

The AAI Council is responsible for planning, setting policy, and reviewing and awarding grants. The Council meets two times per year in Bemidji in November and April. Members are reimbursed for travel and paid a \$125 stipend IF they attend both meetings.

The Region 2 Arts Council is one of 11 such councils in Minnesota and awards \$10,000 annually for arts activities in the Anishinabe Arts Initiative program. The Council operates with funds from the Minnesota State Legislature along with a generous grant from the McKnight Foundation. To receive an application form, write to: Nominating Committee

• Region 2 Arts Council • 426 Bemidji Ave. • Bemidji, MN 56601; or call the R2AC Executive Director, Terri Widman, at 218-751-5447 or 1-800-275-5447. Applications due by Sept. 30.

Be a part of the Governor's "Postcard Campaign"

Dear (Candidate for Governor),

The arts make Minnesota a great place to live. With \$1.3 billion a year in economic impact, and well over 30,000 artists at last count, the arts are vital to Minnesota. As one of your constituents, I ask you to support the arts when you become Governor: Voters will respond if you make support for the arts and culture part of your campaign's agenda. Minnesotans value and need the non-profit arts. Please support the arts.

Anyone of the current candidates for Governor could win the race this fall. You have the opportunity to ensure the next governor of Minnesota is an "arts governor."

It is imperative that all candidates understand the importance of the arts in Minnesota. For this reason, the Minnesota Citizens for the Arts (MCA) has printed 30,000 postcard sets to arts advocates across the state. The postcards have pre-printed address labels to current candidates Moe (DFL) and Pentel (G).

If you want to receive the preprinted postcards, MCA has cards available at the Region 2 Arts Council Office at 426 Bemidji Avenue in Bemidji. Or you can call the MCA at 651-0868 or email: mca@mtn.org.

"Art is the most intense mode of individualism that the world has known."

Oscar Wilde

OPPORTUNITIES

Bush Artist Fellowships award

\$44,000 to artists to further their work and increase their contribution to their communities. Fellowships may be used to explore new directions or continue work in progress. Artists must be at least 25 years old at the time of application. **Categories and their deadlines are:**

- Oct. 18: Scriptworks
- Oct. 18: Film/Video
- Oct. 25: Literature
- Nov. 1: Music Composition

The **BAF Informational Meeting** will be held at the Bemidji Public Library on September 26, 7 p.m. in the community room. Call the R2AC office at 218-751-5447 or 1-800-275-5447 for more information. Visit the Bush Web Site at: www.bushfoundation.org.

Sept. 6 Deadline People's Art Festival, Bemidji. Show open to all artists and crafts. Applicants submit five slides for jurying. Festival Nov. 2 & 3. Contact Bemidji Community Arts Center, 426 Bemidji, Ave. NW, Bemidji, MN 56601. Email: bcac@paulbunyan.net Visit: www.bcac-mn.org.

Minnesota State Arts Board Grant Opportunities

The Minnesota State Arts Board offers a variety of grants to individual artists. Detailed information is available in an "Opportunities for Artists" booklet at the R2AC office, or by calling 800-866-2787.

FELLOWSHIPS:

Photography: deadline Sept. 3, 2002.

Film & Video (includes screenwriting): deadline Sept. 3, 2002.

2-3-Dimensional: deadline Sept. 3, 2002.

Theater Arts (including playwriting): deadline Sept. 16, 2002.

Music: deadline Sept. 16, 2002.

Dance/Choreography: deadline Sept. 16, 2002.

Poetry: deadline Oct. 1, 2002.

Prose: deadline Oct. 1, 2002.

CAREER OPPORTUNITY GRANTS: Deadlines: Nov. 1, 2002; Feb. 3 & May 1, 2003.

VIDEO DOCUMENTATION GRANTS: Deadline Feb. 14, 2003.

FOLK ART APPRENTICESHIPS: Deadline Dec. 2, 2002.

CULTURAL COLLABORATION: Deadline: Feb. 14, 2003.

PERCENT FOR ART PROGRAM: Deadlines Nov. 15, 2002; May 16, 2003.

About the Showcase Artist

Deborah Brewer Carlson

Realism has piqued my interest and held my attention for seven years now; the work of the Old Masters fascinates me.

I am inspired by their craftsmanship and the process those artists went through to learn the techniques. The challenge of painting realism with contemporary subjects is what keeps me painting.

The Obvious Child of Poverty 16" x 20"



MORE OPPORTUNITIES

CLIMB Theatre travels throughout the country providing affordable plays and drama classes on topics such as violence prevention, acceptance of differences, health, environmental issues, harassment, conflict resolution, gender equity, substance abuse, and more. Residencies, work-shops, inservices, presentations, and other programs available. Contact: Shirley Johnson, CLIMB Theatre, 6415 Carmen Ave. E. Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076; Call: 1-800-767-9660; Email: shirley@climb.org or visit: www.clinrb.org.

Deadline Sept. 16 HOW

Magazine announces the International Design Competition. Fifteen categories offered for designers. Winners published in HOW, with the Best in Show invited to the 2003 HOW Design Conference. Entry fees vary. Entries must be received by September 16, 2002. Call: 513-531-2690 ext. 1328. Web: www.howdesign.com
Email: competitions@fwpubs.com.

Deadline Oct. 31 Call for Entries from Child Artists.

Arts Olympiad, organized by the International Child Art Foundation, promotes art competitions for children ages 8 to 12. This year's theme is "Me in the New Millennium." Email: program@icaf.org, or visit: www.icaf.org / Adults / Competition.htm

Deadline Nov. 1 Arts Grants Support At-Risk Youth.

The Handspring Foundation makes grants to nonprofit organizations that focus on issues related to children and youth at risk. Funding is for programs serving high risk youth that utilize the arts. For information: www.handspring.com / company / foundation

Jerome Foundation Media Arts

Grants serves film and video arts in all genres. Call 1-800-995-3766 or visit www.jeromefdn.org.

Arts opportunities for or related to people with disabilities. Contact V SA Arts of Minnesota, 528 Hennepin Ave. Suite 305, Minneapolis, MN 55403. 612-332-3888 or 1-800-801-3883. Email jon.mn@Vsarts.org. Web site http://mn.cvsarts.org.

Preschool Arts Education

Partnership Grants available. Steps to Art has grants of \$5,000 available for local preschool arts education initiatives by local art agencies and organizations. Steps to Art seeks to encourage new arts programs. They may be in visual arts, music, theatre, dance, literary arts, or any combination. Web: www.artsusa.org / issues / artsed / steps .asp

Free Technical Theater Training is available for tech crew volunteers at A Center for the Arts. Learn lights, sounds, set construction and design, costuming, and other technical theatre skills while working with professional and community theatre directors, actors, and technicians. Contact: AC4TA, 124 Lincoln Ave. A, Fergus Falls, MN 56537; 218-736-5453.

Museums Celebrate America's Freedoms - Joining Communities in a Day of Remembrance for September 11. For innovative ideas from museums and to share your own museum's plans, visit the American Association of Museums on the Web at www.aam-us.org / mcaf.

Call for artists

Bemidji Community Art Center is booking for 2003 - 2004. BCAC is looking for **original artwork in any media** created in the last five years by artists throughout the U.S. To take a look at our exhibition space, see our Gallery Map at our Web Site: www.bcac-mn.org.

The Beautification Board for the City of Bagley is seeking an **artist to create a historic public art mural** in downtown Bagley on the south exterior wall of the Galli Furniture Building. Contact: Crystal Schmitz at 218-694-6939 for information.

The Dahl Arts Center in Rapids City, South Dakota, is asking **artists living and working in the U.S. west of the Mississippi River** to submit contemporary work that will contribute to a dialogue about the state of the western ranch in the 21st century. Cash and purchase awards. *Prospectus:* SASE to Dahl Arts Center, 713 7th St., Rapid City, SD 57701. Call 605-394-4101. Email: rcaccura@rapidnet.com.

Royal Gallery, near Nevis, is seeking **artists interested in displaying and selling their work** through cooperative artists association. For information, email: royalgallery@unitel.com. Or contact the gallery at 24025 St. 34, Nevis, MN 56467.

Rolling Plains Art Gallery

The Art of Today: Artists from Minnesota and North Dakota is a new exhibition of the Rolling Plains Art Gallery of Fargo, North Dakota. The two-year Exhibition showcases the work of artists from the two states.

The 48-foot semi-trailer converted to a mobile art gallery provides rural communities with direct access to art. Rolling Plains travels to Minnesota communities in the fall of 2002 and spring of 2003. The gallery will tour North Dakota communities in 2003 and 2004.

The gallery will travel to:

Black duck	Sept. 24-30	Backside of Black duck School
Bagley	Oct. 8-14	Bagley School

Calendar of Events

September

September 6-8 Annual Fall Harvest Moon Festival, Whiteside Park, Ely, MN. 125 art/ craft exhibitors, food, entertainment, demonstrations. www.ely.org.

September 6 Northwoods Folk Collective First Friday Coffeehouse, 7:30 p.m. at the Headwaters School of Music and the Arts, 519 Minnesota Ave., Bemidji; 218-444-5606.

September 6 Opening Reception at Bemidji Community Arts Center: Nancy Ehlen, Jean Mattsky, Peggy Solberg, and Bill Grossman—"Photos, Fiber and Baskets" in the Main Gallery; Celia Littlecreek, ceramicist in Gallery X2. 5 p.m.-8 p.m. Lecture with potter Bill Grossman at 6 p.m.

September 6-8 Little Falls Arts & Crafts Fair. One of the largest craft fairs. Sat. 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sunday 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Contact 320-632-5155. Email: artsandcrafts@littlefallsmnchamber.com

Bemidji Community Arts Center Lecture Series Slated 2002

The Bemidji Community Arts Center is presenting a new lecture series for 2002. Each First Friday opening reception will feature a lecture relevant to the featured exhibit. You are invited to participate in these stimulating discussions.

- **Sept. 6** Lecture at 6 p.m. with potter Bill Grossman.
- **Oct. 4** Lecture to be arranged.
- **Nov. 1** Lecture 6 p.m. with Bill Kelly.
- **Dec. 6** Lecture at 6 p.m. with Albert Belleveau.

September 13-15 Black duck Bluegrass Music Festival. Saturday events include workshops (bass, banjo, fiddle, yodeling, guitar, mandolin open stage, concert, dance. On Sunday, open stage 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Call 218-835-5241.

September 14 Arts and Craft Fair & Taste Of Pequot. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Collection of craftsmanship by area and visiting artists. Specialty foods. Call 218-568-8911. Email: chamber@pequotlakes.com.

Through Sept. 14 WoodTick Musical Theatre in Akeley. Live

entertainment with shows at 8 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday; Matinees at 3 p.m. Wednesday & Thursday. Call 800-644-6892.

September 21 -William Chapman Nyaho (piano); Bemidji State University Concert Series. Call 218-755-2915.

September 20-22 Fall Craft Festival, International Falls. During mall hours. Call 218-283-9888.

September 20-22 Call Of the Fall Festival in Cass Lake. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Call 1-800-356-8615.

Depot Days September 20-21

The Beltrami County Historical Society celebrates its 50th anniversary this fall with "Depot Day" at the History Center in Bemidji. The Friday, Sept. 20th kickoff, will feature the John and Kathy Eggers Antique Roadshow from 1 p.m.-3 p.m. Cost is \$5/item to be appraised.

Saturday, Sept. 21, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., see "Under the Big Top" with bingo, music, food vendors, children's activities, and historic demonstrations. For information call 218-444-3376.

Fly by Night Art Gallery (Bemidji)

Wanted: New works	Drop off date: Aug. 29 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Or by appointment: 218-444-5606.
Annushka Peck	Showing at the Headwaters School of Music Performance Hall opening Sept. 11 through end of October. Reception Sept. 11, 6 p.m.-9 p.m.
All FBN Salon Show	November through December.
Paula Swenson	Featured Fly By Night artist at the Uptown Caffe through Sept. 30.
Jury Deadline	October 14, for new artists.
Holiday Sale	Specific dates to be announced.

September *continued*

September 20 Creative Words Coffeehouse, 7:30 p.m. at the Headwaters School of Music and the Arts, 519 Minnesota Ave., Bemidji; 218-444-5606.

September 21-22 Fall Arts Festival at Runestone Community Center, Alexandria. Juried show. Contact Chris Volz & Sherron Thein, 320-967-4691. Email chrisvolz4@hotmail.com.

Sept. 26 Bush Foundation Informational Meeting, 7 p.m. Bemidji Public Library, 509 America Avenue NW. For information, call R2AC at 218-751-5447 or 1-800-275-5447, or see page 4.

Sept. 28 "Grand Derangement" at the Greenway Auditorium, Coleraine. 7:30 p.m. Contact Reif Arts Council at 218-327-5780 or visit www.reifcenter.org.

Grant writing workshops

Baudette September 4 Lake of the Woods School
Arts Project Grant & Individual Artist Grant Workshop

Red Lake September 24 Tribal Council Headquarters
Anishinabe Arts Initiative Grant

Cass Lake September 26 Division of Resource
Anishinabe Arts Initiative Grant Management Fisheries Bldg.

Region 2 Arts Council Executive Director, Terri Widman, will offer free grant writing workshops for those who are interested in applying for an Arts Project Grant, an Individual Artist Grant, or an Anishinabe Arts Initiative Grant. These workshops will familiarize potential applicants with the application process, what projects are eligible, how to develop a project budget, and other tips.

The Arts Project grant writing session will be open to any non-profit organizations, schools, (Including community education offices), and units of government. These grants offer funding for a variety of art projects including production costs related to performances or exhibition, engagement of guest artists, arts publications, arts awareness projects, administration or consultation services, touring, and artists-in-residence.

The Individual Artist grant writing session will be open to artists in all art disciplines. These grants offer funding for costs associated with the exhibition, performance, or production of a creative work; purchase of materials, equipment, or space necessary for a creative work; educational opportunities; mentorships; and proposals for career - enhancing projects or opportunities.

The Anishinabe Arts Initiative Grant is open to individual Native American artists, schools who wish to bring in an Native American artist-in-residence, and communities to assist an organization in sponsoring or producing an arts project.

Advance Registration is required. To reserve a place in a free workshop, or for further information, call 218-751-5447 or 1-800-275-5447.

September 11 Memorial

A memorial honoring the victims of September 11 stands next to the Bemidji State University football field at the north end of the Education Arts building.

At the start of Fall Semester 2001, students under the direction of instructor Steve Sundahl talked of doing a collaborative sculpture. As news of the Sept. 11 attack on the World Trade Center spread across the U.S., the project took on new meaning, giving it anew focus.

Individual responses to the September 11 tragedy are expressed on the surfaces of these columns. Names of victims and images of the disaster are pictured.

The sculpture provides a place to stop and think—and to remember.

ATTENTION ARTISTS

Update your Artist Registry Entry

Region 2 Arts Council's Artists' Registry is a listing of artists in the five county region. We field lots of calls on your behalf, from people looking for particular types of art or artists. If you are not in the registry, or if your information is not current, you could be missing out on great opportunities.

Please contact the R2AC office (see page 2) to make sure your address and contact information is correct, along with your list of artistic work and interests.



Region II Arts & Humanities Council
DBA: Region 2 Arts Council
426 Bemidji Ave.
Bemidji, MN 56601

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Funded by a grant from the McKnight Foundation, Northern Arts News provides news and information to artists in Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods and Mahnommen counties of north central Minnesota.

Noteworthy

★ Mahnommen artist, **Marcia Hardy**, was selected to exhibit her painting, "Itasca Wetlands," in the Rolling Plains Art Gallery exhibition of "The Art of Today: Artists from Minnesota & North Dakota." The two-year exhibition showcases and tours the work of artists from both states.

★ Bemidji artist, **Patricia Black**, has been selected as a Minnesota State Arts Board roster artist.

★ "*Outside After Dark: New & Selected Poems*," by **Susan Carol Hauser** has recently been published by Loonfeather Press. The cover art, "Winter Sky with Comet," is by **Michael DeWitt**. Both artists are from the Bemidji area.

Art Facts

✕ Five of the top 25 Minnesota tourist attractions are arts institutions: the Walker Art Center, Guthrie Theater, Ordway Center, Orchestra Hall, and the Children's Theater.

✕ The Twin Cities recently moved from 17th to 6th place nationally, as one of the largest theater markets in the country, besides the Big Apple.

✕ Minnesota supports roughly 1,270 arts groups. Sixty percent of the state's nonprofit arts organizations are outside of the Twin Cities. Over the past two years, five million people in Greater Minnesota attended arts events, made possible by nearly 1,500 Regional Arts Council grants. Minnesota was recently name "most livable" in the nation, partly on the strength of its support of the arts.

✕ In 1998, Minnesota's five biggest museums alone (Walker Art Center, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minnesota History Center, Children's Museum, and Science Museum) had a higher combined attendance than the three local professional sports teams combined. Almost nine million people attended nonprofit arts events in 1998.

WANTED: ACTORS/DIRECTORS

The Prairie Fire Theater is seeking actors / directors to tour with its residency programs during the 2002-03 school year. Job duties include co-directing up to 80 children in a musical production, playing a lead role in the musical, travel around the Midwest, light set and costume repair, and paperwork.

Fee and per diem package based on education and experience. For more information, call 320-491-4833.