

WESTWIRE

Short Circuits

Fall concerts scheduled

w Hillary Lindwall
News/Wire Editor

The Niles West Fine Arts Department will conduct its fall concert series during the month of October.

"I love conducting our first concert," orchestra director Steve Katz said. "The music is a lot of fun, and it will be a great opportunity to see all the work that the orchestra does to prepare."

The beginning strings, concert, philharmonic and symphonic orchestras will perform on Thursday, Oct. 16, at 7:30 in the Robert L. Johnson Auditorium. Selections include "Allegro from Concerto Grosso" by George Frideric Handel, "St. Anthony's Chorale and Variation" arranged by Deborah Baker Monday and "Symphony No. 4: IV. Finale" by Tchaikovsky.

"The orchestra has been working really hard to prepare for this concert," junior Spencer Love said. "Our performance is going to be great, and we hope that everyone appreciates how hard we have worked and enjoys the music that we will make."

The Niles West Band will perform on Thursday, Oct. 23, at 7:30 p.m. in the Robert L. Johnson Auditorium.

The Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Symphonic and Concert bands will perform. Pieces include *October* by Eric Whiticor and *Vesuvius* by Frank Tichelli.

"Band gives you a really great rush," senior Mark Wozniczka said. "It is great to be able to perform in front of a crowd who enjoys the music that we make."

The choir will perform in a joint concert with Niles North on Thursday, Oct. 30, at 7:30 in the Robert L. Johnson Auditorium.

"The choir concert is going to feature some really fun music," junior Becca Goldberg said. "I am really excited about the concert. It is going to be great!"

The Choraliers, Concert, Chamber, and Advanced (Masters) Choirs will perform along with the Jazz Vocal groups, Guys and Dolls from West and Take One from North. Selections include "Penny Lane" by the Beatles, "Little Shop of Horrors Medley" by Mac Huff and "I Am in Need of Music" by David L. Brunner, to name a few.

"This will be our first combined concert. I'm really excited about the music we are going to be making before Halloween!" choir director Amy Branahl said.

English department offers two new, specialized courses

w Helen Salamanca
Staff Writer

Niles West welcomes two new specialized English courses this year for freshmen and sophomores, F19 and S19, respectively.

According to director of English and reading Sanlida Cheng, these double-period classes were created to emphasize and boost better reading and writing skills for freshmen and sophomores. F19 and S19 were both formed after numerous meetings and workshops conducted by teachers, administrators and reading specialists from both Niles North and West.

Cheng said that she is "very excited to watch these new programs aid students" and believes that the Literacy Center will play an important role in the process, as F19 and S19 teachers encourage students to "tap into" such resources.

Kim Barker and Jason Schmitt will teach S19, while F19 teachers include Paul Bellwoar, Ellen Foley, Kristen Jackson, Evelyn Lauer, Susana Lee, Erin Linklater, Blake Magnuson and Mary Rapp.

Banned books week decries censorship

w Christine Mahoney
Copy Editor

Banned Books Week (BBW) kicked off nationally at West Sept. 27-Oct. 4.

BBW was celebrated in the Information Resource Center (IRC) during the national week. Coordinator Penny Swartz believes that BBW is an important way to encourage students to exercise their right to choose. The IRC had special events all week in celebration of BBW. During lunch periods and study halls, students were able to observe the books "in jail," that have been banned or challenged in the past. Trivia questions about banned books in the West curriculum were announced in homerooms for students to answer.

"Students are asked questions such as: 'what is the title of S.E. Hinton's famous novel that was banned or challenged in some libraries?'" Swartz said.

According to www.ala.org, BBW was created in 1982 to

encourage Americans to value their democratic freedom. BBW celebrates the freedom to choose or the freedom to express one's thoughts although those thoughts could be considered "unorthodox" or may express "unpopular" beliefs. Books that are banned are challenged for numerous reasons. Swartz explained that some books are challenged because the reader believes that the audience might not understand the humor or sarcasm. Parents, students and government are all able to challenge books, provided they fill out the proper paperwork and have a valid reason according to the library.

"Many countries' governments dictate what the people can or cannot read. So we have BBW, where libraries over the country can celebrate the freedom to read," Swartz said.

The American Library Association (ALA), the McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum and the Chicago Tribune hosted a BBW read-out featuring popular banned or challenged authors on Saturday, Sept. 27, 12-3 p.m. at 401 N Michigan Ave. in Pioneer Plaza. This marked the 27th anniversary since the American Library Association began this tradition.

Fall play production will not abridge humor of play

w Daniel Blazek
Staff Writer

This year's fall play, a satire titled *The Complete History of America: Abridged*, will take place Oct. 17-18 at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. in the Black Box Theater.

According to their website, the play was originally created by the Reduced Shakespeare Company, which has made numerous comedy plays that have been shown all over America and have obtained great reviews.

Political topics lampooned in the play include the representation of the signing of the Declaration of Independence as if it were a frat party, the George W. Bush presidency and even more recent events, such as the Obama and McCain presidential race, which were included in script changes requested by the Niles West theater department to the playwrights of the show.

Directing his first play at Niles West, theater director Andy Sinclair expresses hope that the show will be a big success. "It is without a doubt the funniest play I have read in years," Sinclair

said. "I expect it to be fantastic, mainly because it is not like normal scripted theater. I believe the best way to describe this show is to compare it to something along the lines of *The Daily Show* or *Saturday Night Live*," Sinclair added.

According to Sinclair, another feature in the show is that audience participation will be included in the routines. For example, the audience will ask questions to George W. Bush (played by senior Jason Suran), and he will think of remarks to try and keep everyone laughing on the spot.

"We basically feed off the audience's energy," sophomore Aleks Krapivkin said.

Joining Suran and Krapivkin is a cast including seniors Owais Ahmed, Benjamin Cormalleth, Parfait Kanam and Becky Lang; juniors Sean Buckley, David Fisch, Alyssa Jutovsky, Alicia Peake and Fiona Stephens; sophomore Jane Kim and freshman Lauren Langer.

"I like the fact that it is a funny show, but it is also smart," Stephens said. "It takes a big spin on normal plays, but it is still easy to get and really funny."

Fisch agreed, "I think it is going to be a great show. It is flat out hysterical," he said.

Lauer and Graham return after leaves of absence

w Christine Mahoney
Copy Editor

This year, teachers Sally Graham and Evelyn Lauer were welcomed back to Niles West after their leaves of absence. Both Graham and Lauer took the time away from school to dedicate their time to personal goals and family.

During Lauer's three-year hiatus, she attended Texas State University for her master's degree in fine arts in creative writing (poetry). Over the years Lauer's works have been published in numerous literary journals such as: *42opus*, *Blood Orange Review*, *Denver Syntax*, *Conte*, *Boxcar Poetry Review*, *Prick of the Spindle* and *After Hours* and are forthcoming in *Sentence*.

As a part of her master's degree she was required to compose a master's thesis, a book of her own original work titled *Letters on Glass*, which she plans to publish in the near future. Her absence from teaching allowed her to draw her attention to writing poetry.

"I have always wanted to publish a book of poetry. This break allowed me to really focus on my writing," Lauer said.

During her absence, she was fortunate enough to teach college freshman English. Lauer noted the similarities and differences between high school college students.

"My high school students and college students are close in age, but in high school you are able to see the class dynamics.

That is what makes teaching high school fun," Lauer said.

For the time Graham was away, she concentrated on raising a family. She added an additional member, Gracie, whom they adopted from Guatemala, to create a family of five. Additionally, in 2006, she was fortunate enough to work with the judges from Oprah Winfrey's essay writing contest to help rank essays.

Graham was also able to put her creativity to use and has been working on a children's book series entitled *Neighborhood Tales* which has not yet been published.

She also stayed busy tutoring English students. Her tutoring sessions allowed Graham to understand scholars' problems from a different perspective. Graham was able to apply what she learned while being away to her teaching style today.

"Tutoring gave me the chance to see what kids have problems with when they go home. It helped me understand the workload that kids have; now, I feel like I assign work that is more useful for understanding, as opposed to busy work," Graham said.

Aside from the change in staff members and administration, Lauer expressed that West has not changed much since she left.

"Besides Pinnacle and slight change in rules, everything is basically the same," Lauer said.

Graham agreed that the school has not endured any major changes besides technology and simple schedule changes.

"Before I left, homeroom was first thing in the morning, we had mods, and the school day started at 7:30 and ended at 2:30. Now we have Epsons in every room," Graham said.

Homecoming activities to complement West's 50th anniversary celebration

w Adriana Zalloni
Staff Writer

A plethora of activities planned by the Homecoming committee continues this weekend as West welcomes back alumni on the school's 50th anniversary.

Homecoming week kicked off with the homecoming king and queen coronation assembly on Monday, Sept. 29, in the Robert L. Johnson auditorium during homeroom. This year's homecoming queen is Nicole Rusek and king is R.J. Dilay. Both juniors and seniors were present at the coronation, while

sophomores and freshmen watched the assembly broadcast live in their homerooms.

The annual Powder Puff football game was played Wednesday, Oct. 1, at 5 p.m. in Basrak Field, followed by the students vs. staff flag football game.

Today's festivities began at 7:30 a.m., when judges evaluated parade floats. The theme for the floats is "That Was Then," in keeping with the 50th anniversary celebration. The pep assembly will begin at 12:20 p.m., followed by the parade down Oakton St., beginning at 1:40 p.m.

Later tonight, the gridiron Wolves will play Glenbrook South

on Basrak Field at 7:30 pm. The game will feature fireworks after every Wolves touchdown.

The week's activities will culminate tomorrow on Saturday, Oct. 4, with the annual Homecoming Dance in the Contest Gym.

The Homecoming dance, the theme of which is "Celebrate Tonight," will begin at 7:30 p.m. Music will be provided by Boom Entertainment, featuring the same disc jockey who mixed tunes at last year's Homecoming

dance and Spring Fling.

