

GBN Choir and Theatre Parents Organization Meeting

April 7, 2015

The meeting was held in the Green and Gold Conference Room at Glenbrook North High School. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 P.M.

Present at the meeting:

Chad Davidson, Julie Ann Robinson, Maria Doughty, Cynthia Nadig, Esther Kelly, Sally Norlie, Jeannie Chang, Ellen Westel, Nancy Frese, Patricia Dolins, Christine Hultman, Elyssa Siegel, Tracy Meyer, Kathleen Weinberg, Lisa Raufeisen, Julie Snyder, Cheri Kates, Alison Whitlock, and Carol Currie

I. Welcome and Introductions

CTPO President, Maria Doughty welcomed everyone. Kathleen Weinberg (parent of Isaac) was introduced as a new member. She commented that Sharon Cohn will also be attending in the future but could not make the meeting tonight.

Maria said that she would like to invite parents of both current freshmen and incoming freshmen to our May CTPO meeting. Everyone agreed that this was a good idea.

During introductions, Julie Ann Robinson commented that she recently purchased a home in Northbrook and she was also successful in selling her current home. Hooray!

II. March Meeting Minutes Approval

No corrections were offered for the March 2015 meeting minutes. Esther Kelly moved that the minutes be approved and Elyssa Siegel seconded the motion. We voted and the motion was unanimously approved.

III. GBN Faculty Reports

Julie Ann reported that Group Interpretation (GI) "trounced" at sectionals and took second place in the state competition. The presentation of "Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children" was a crowd favorite. 7 of the 12 students involved with G.I. were recognized as "All Sectional" and "All State" as follows:

Sectionals -	Ryan Goldsher
	Emma Pfaff
	Cami Tokowitz
Sectionals and State -	Camilla Kaplunov
	Brooks Whitlock
	Isabella Andrews
	Sebastian Garzon

Several newspapers, including Pioneer Press ran nice articles about the G.I. You can read one of them here:

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/northbrook/news/ct-nbs-gbn-theater-improv-tl-0402-20150330-story.html>

You can also see this article at the end of these minutes.

The GBN Freshman / Sophomore play, *James and the Giant Peach*, will be performed the weekend before the Glenbrook Musical. The dates are April 23, 24, and 25. Performances will likely start at 6:30 P.M. to accommodate the younger crowds. There will be a matinee on April 24th that will have over 1,000 kids in attendance. Schools who will be visiting GBN for the performance include Westmoor, Greenbriar, Meadowbrook, Wescott, and several more.

The G.I. piece will be performed again tomorrow, Wednesday, April 8, 2015, from 7:00 – 7:30 (approximately), after the Tri-M induction. This additional performance is being added so that the performance can be video-taped.

Chad Davidson reported that the Glenbrook Musical (*How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying*) practices at GBS are going well. Tickets are now on sale to the public through the GBS website.

The “Techny” concert went well and there were many positive things about the concert being held at GBS this year but the plan for the 2016 is to return to the venue at Techny Towers.

For the Spring Concert on May 14, 2015, Andy and Chad will be combining all of the choirs to perform *African Sanctus*. This is a complicated piece that includes pre-recorded indigenous music from Africa. An international opera star will be joining the GBN choirs as the soprano soloist. Her name is Jonita Lattimore and she has sung all over the world including at the Metropolitan Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, in Europe, and in South America. She is on the voice faculty at Roosevelt University in Chicago.

2.5 weeks after the Spring Concert, the Concert in the Park will take place and that will feature more traditional “pops” types of music. There has been a time change for Concert in the Park. It will begin at Noon on June 6, 2015 instead of 12:30 P.M. The reason for the change is that we have to be done by 2:00 P.M. due to another event being held at the Village Green Park. Chad is aware that there is SAT and ACT testing scheduled for June 6th but he does not feel there will be a problem since most of the kids who will be testing will be older

and are scheduled to sing later in the program. The call time for everyone who is not testing will be 11:30 A.M.

Chad has begun working with Kris Orticelli at Brightspark to look at tour options for Spring Break 2017. Choir and Theatre students from all class levels at GBN (Frosh – Senior) will be invited on the tour, as was the case with the trip to Italy in 2013.

Sing Strong will be held this weekend (April 10 - 12). It is a national A Capella Festival to be held at Niles West. Ow! and Fermata Nowhere will be performing. The main day for high school choir performances will be on Saturday but there will also be things to do and see on Friday and Sunday. Please check out this link for more information:

<http://chicago.singstrong.org/>

IV. Treasurer / Fundraising / EFA Reports

Patricia Dolins reported that there are still checkbooks available for sale. They are not being discounted yet. Please let her know if you want to purchase a book. She also asked if we felt that having another Butter Braid sale before the end of the school year was a good idea and the consensus was to not have an additional sale this year.

Patricia needs the name of one remaining student who used EFA funds to pay for TheatreFest. Julie Ann will provide her with this information ASAP.

A question came up regarding use of the EFA to pay for the banquets. Can the EFA be used to pay for students only or for students and their parents as well? The issue was discussed and it was agreed that the EFA could be used to pay for both the child and parent(s) for the choir and theatre banquets. To use EFA funds, the student MUST fill out a form and submit it by April 30th. EFA balances will be posted by Chad, Andy, and Julie Ann so that kids will know what their fund balances are. The EFA request form will be posted on the www.gbnchoir.com website soon. In addition, Maria will forward the EFA request form to the whole group via email.

Sally Norlie reported the following account balances:

Choir	\$11,051.58
Theatre	\$12,924.66
Money Market	\$21,765.19

Sally brought up the question of whether or not we should have people shop at Costco and pay tax. We would subsequently reimburse for tax at Costco only. Costco requires that we have a business account (at a cost of about \$100 per year) in order to use our tax exempt letter for purchases. We will evaluate whether our purchases at Costco have over \$100 per year in tax associated with them. If so, it makes sense to get the business membership.

Student Activities has a Costco account but a teacher must be present for the purchase to use the account and the teacher must sign for the purchase. We decided that it would be a hassle to try to always have a teacher with us at the point of purchase and that most people would probably just cover the tax out of pocket rather than try to coordinate to have a teacher present at Costco. For now it was decided that we will reimburse people for tax but only at Costco, since other places will accept the tax exempt letter. We need to make sure that the By-Laws will allow for reimbursement of the taxes at Costco.

V. Refreshments Report

Cheri Kates reported that One Acts had minimal concessions sales. We discussed that the large size candy that is remaining might be too much to have on the tables at the banquets so she will try to sell at *James and the Giant Peach* and see how that goes. She will not buy more water. We will just sell candy. Julie Ann will provide Cheri with the emails of the parents of kids who are in the Peach cast so that they can be recruited to help with concession sales.

There were no refreshments sold at Techny this year, which might account for some of the candy that we have left over.

Maria gave a plug for the Glenbrook Foundation dinner and musical. A GBN graduate who is now a cast member of the show, "Chicago Fire," will be speaking at the foundation dinner. Here is the information:

TV Star / GBN Alum Comes Back to See Glenbrook Theater!

Ticket sales for the 3rd Annual "Night of Glenbrook Theater" Dinner Theater Event featuring *How to Succeed at Business without Really Trying* are going fast, and you won't want to miss it! GBN graduate Yuri Sardarov, NBC star of the hit show "Chicago Fire," will be at the event! He plays Brian "Otis" Zvonecek, one of the lead firefighters. Mr. Sardarov will also be the special guest speaker at the dinner, sharing how Glenbrook prepared him for his successful career. He will add some good memories of his days at GBN, as well as some fun facts about life on the set of "Chicago Fire."

VI. Chaperone Report

Traci Meyer reported that everything went well at the Glenbrook Festival (Techny).

VII. Newsletter / Communications Report

Nancy Frese let us know that the next newsletter will be coming soon and she plans to do another one before the end of the year since there is so much going on in the spring.

VIII. Publicity Report

Christine Hultman said that she will have posters soon for *James and the Giant Peach* and the Glenbrook musical. For Peach, she passed a sign up for people to hang the posters at schools, since the target audience is young children.

IX. Banquet Report

Theatre - The banquet will be 5/8/15. Elyssa Siegel said that we will be having the banquet catered by Go Roma this year instead of Marcello's. Desserts will be Dairy Queen Blizzards. She will not be asking families to bring in desserts because there were so many last year and so much food was wasted. Gluten and dairy free options will be available (fruit) for those who have allergy and / or dietary restrictions.

Invites will go out electronically and the students will R.S.V.P. through a Google form. Gifts will be ordered by next week.

Elyssa would like to request that we have only one entrance into the banquet so that she can catch kids who have not paid at that time.

Choir - The banquet will be 5/19/15. Julie Snyder said that bulk mail invitations are being sent out through GBS so may take a little longer. Alison Whitlock is handling photos for the banquet. Mr. Snyder will be collecting baby and current photos of graduating seniors for a video presentation. Gifts of blankets for the graduating seniors will be ordered.

Chad mentioned a "drop box" account where kids and chaperones who were on the choir tour can drop photos and videos. The Google folder address for Disney photos is <http://goo.gl/BG719M>.

X. Scholarship Report

Only one request for funding for a summer program has been received. We will get the word out that this scholarship exists. We hope more people will take advantage of it. We will extend the deadline for summer requests to be submitted to 4/30/15.

College scholarships were discussed. Currently (due to changes made this year by the scholarship committee), the scholarship is worded that it is for graduates who will be pursuing choir, drama, musical theatre, or tech in college. The group agreed to take out the

wording that an applicant's family must be members of the CTPO. Chad elaborated that in the past, 4 or 5 of these awards were given out each year but without the stipulation that a graduate must be going on to pursue a major in choir, theatre, tech, or musical theatre. Chad and Julie Ann expressed a desire that these awards acknowledge past performance at GBN rather than be tied to a requirement that the individuals want to pursue a major in one or the other of these areas. The CTPO members want to have transparency and a clear set of qualifying criteria associated with the scholarships and that is where the difficulty comes in. It seemed that in the past there was not a clear way for students or parents to understand why some kids received a scholarship and others did not. The goal in changing the scholarship criteria to be tied to a college major was to add a quantifiable element to the scholarships. Julie Ann commented that it is often not the desire of the teachers to encourage kids to pursue such a challenging career where it may be very difficult to be successful. For the time being, the group agreed that the scholarships should be open to any senior, regardless of what they plan to major in in college, but they must apply in writing. We discussed a comparison of this to the Spartan Spirit Award, where parents read teacher nominations (students are anonymous) to determine the winner of the award. We thought that having a group of parents (who do not have a senior student) review the applications to determine 4 or 5 scholarship recipients would be a good idea. Maria will contact the scholarship committee members in the next few days to try to get this firmed up for use this year. The Awards Assembly will be on 5/22/15 but GBN would like to know the names of the winners 2 weeks prior to the assembly.

Alison Whitlock proposed the idea of having both types of scholarships with fluid dollar amounts so that the CTPO could be flexible in years where there are more or fewer kids applying for music or theatre majors.

Ellen Westel proposed that we consider giving recognition awards with no money tied to them at the awards assembly as an addition to the scholarships.

XI. President's Report

Maria asked that each officer send her a description of their job as soon as possible. Also, people interested in an officer position for next year should let Maria know. All board positions have one year terms.

Staff Wish List - Julie Ann would like to get a gun safe for the prop guns that are stored at GBN. The safe can also hold cash when she has large amounts on hand. The safe that she had looked at was from Home Depot, cost around \$600.00, and would be able to hold the 10-20 prop guns that we currently have as well as two prop AK47s that were purchased this year. The group discussed whether a gun safe was needed or if any safe or locker would work. We also discussed whether GBN (Dr. Tarjan) should be in charge of this project, as it

may be considered a school safety issue. At the very least, we would want to have the school's approval before making such a large purchase. We also discussed that if Dr. Tarjan (GBN) purchased the gun safe, CTPO funds would be available for picture framing or some other project that is currently in the budget but that might be removed if the gun safe comes out of the budget. Bottom line, the group was in favor of supporting the purchase of a locked safe (gun or other) to hold fake guns and cash. We requested three options / estimates from Joel and that Julie Ann or Chad check in with Dr. Tarjan to see what GBN might want or be able to do for the purchase of a safe.

XI. Q and A Session

Due to the time, there was no Q and A session.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Currie
Secretary

Glenbrook North group interpretation team takes 2nd at state competition



Alex Hultman, 15, a Glenbrook North High School sophomore, practices a passage from a 30-minute performance of "Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children." (Karie Angell Luc, Pioneer Press)

By [Karie Angell Luc](#) Pioneer Press

GBN took first place in group interpretation at Fremd High School during the March sectional

The Glenbrook North High School's group interpretation cast finished in second place at the Illinois High School Association drama and group interpretation competition March 28 in downstate Springfield.

GBN took first place in group interpretation at Fremd High School during the March sectional by telling the same story, "Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children," as it did at the state competition.

"We're very excited to be doing this piece," said Julie Ann Robinson, GBN theatre director. "It's a popular young adult piece."

The group interpretation set is minimalist. Costumes are important. Audience members are encouraged to fill in the blanks with their imagination as literature is dramatized.



Glenbrook North High School finished in second place at the Illinois High School Association drama and group interpretation competition March 28 in Springfield.

The GBN actors wore school uniforms, suggesting a scholarly setting. At a March 25 rehearsal and run-through at GBN, they used risers to help achieve effect through heightened drama.

"The students use only their own bodies as props and they have to be in uniform, so it's really about how the students bring the story to life with their storytelling techniques," Robinson said.

The Miss Peregrine story, which comes from a New York Times bestseller first novel by author Ransom Riggs, is about 16-year-old Jacob, a tightly wound but typical teenager who experiences night terrors.

When Jacob's grandfather, Abe, a World War II veteran, is murdered, Jacob responds with a breakdown. Jacob believes his grandfather was killed by a monster that only they can see.

On psychiatric advice, Jacob and his father travel from their home in Florida to an island near Wales. This is where Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children is located. Abe, of the Jewish faith, had lived there before the military.

Sebastian Garzon, 18, senior, played Abe.

"He's old; his role in the story is still crucial and big. He conveys a big sense of wonder, fantastical stuff," Garzon said. "He is a big part of the imagination layer to the story."

Of group interpretation: "It takes a lot of thought and specificity to get right; we have to use our bodies and voices," Garzon said.

The cast also included Isabella Andrews, Austin Doughty, Ryan Goldsher, Alex Hultman, Camila Kaplunov, Emma Pfaff, A.J. Seymour, Travis Siegel, Katie Snyder, Cami Tokowitz and Brooks Whitlock. Crew included Rhea Rachakonda and Alexis Walker.

Andrews, 18, a senior, played Miss Avocet.

"She's not the biggest role but she is a very important part," Andrews said. "Group interpretation is all about camaraderie, which is to work together on a common goal to tell a story. You have a small amount of time to take a classic or new story that no one has heard of and give it a new interpretation."

Ryan Goldsher, 18, a senior, had never done group interpretation. He played Dr. Golan, the psychiatrist.

"(It's) harder than you think," Goldsher said.

Group interpretation might require actors to hold a statue pose for five minutes or longer, depending on the script and impact.

"It's an exhausting process. It's only 30 minutes, but it's only 30 minutes for a reason, because I don't think we could do it much longer," Goldsher said.

Chuck Dribin of Skokie, who retired in 2006 but is credited for helping build the GBN theatre community, returned March 25 for the group interpretation rehearsal and dress run-through.

Dribin retired in 2006 and has been credited by professional actors for his role in building the GBN theatre community.

"I always like to watch one of the rehearsals," said Dribin. "I'm very proud of being a part of the history that has led to this."

Dribin said group interpretation developed when "somebody got the idea to add movement to it."

Robinson took over the theatre role when Dribin retired.

"I'm proud of Julie Ann (Robinson)," Dribin said. "I'm so proud to be a mentor more than anything else. Momentum is a good word."

Erik and Christine Hultman of Northbrook, both GBN alumni, were in the audience during the March 25 dress rehearsal run-through.

Erik, a 1984 graduate, and Christine, who graduated in 1987, have a daughter Alex Hultman, 15, a sophomore and cast member.

"Julie Ann Robinson emphasizes repeatedly to each of the students involved that they must 'trust the process,'" said Christine Hultman. "Throughout the group

interpretation experience, students learn vital life-long skills in teamwork, goals and trust."

Miguel Sanchez, an assistant director, knew Robinson when they taught together at Elk Grove High School.

Sanchez, who works in drama at EGHS, is happy to lend professional support to GBN.

"The kids put in so much work," Sanchez said. "(Going down to) state is like icing on the cake."

Dre Prizant, a 2009 Glenbrook North High School graduate who participated in the GBN theatre program, was assistant director.

"I'm proud," Prizant said. "Being an alumni of GBN, I'm very happy to come back."

The group performed at Sangamon Auditorium in Springfield.

Fremd High School in Palatine took first place at the IHSA final competition.

Visit <http://gbntheatre.com><http://gbntheatre.com>.

Karie Angell Luc is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.

