



News Release

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Sheboygan Theatre Company is putting on a fundraising event, Saturday, June 11, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. Sheboygan's Next Star is not only a new fundraising idea for the Sheboygan Theatre Company but a talent showcase for area talent of all ages.

The showcase will profile 18 performers in dance, acting and singing. There will also be giveaways and surprises for audience members.

Each category will compete for the cash prize and the title of "Sheboygan's Next Star". They'll have to impress the three judges; **Laura Kohler, Ralph Maffongelli and Randy Schwoerer**. The audience will also get to contribute to the final winner.

While there are only two actors competing in their category, they will offer very different contrasts to each other. **Jim Johnson** is a Sheboygan elementary teacher who started acting back in 2006 when his wife and child got into theatre. He will be performing a comedic monologue. His opponent is **Amanda Ellis**, who grew up in Sheboygan and then earned her bachelor's degree from UW-Stevens Point in musical theatre. She will be performing a piece from "Hamlet."

The four dancers competing will be **Marissa Kream, Quinn Vande Hey, Ariannah Albrecht** and **Betsy Klauck**. Kream, age 19, has been a pupil at Jessica's School of Dance and is performing a ballet piece on pointe. In sharp contrast, Vande Hey who is eleven will be performing her specialty of hard shoe Irish dance. Vande Hey is a fifth grader at Lincoln-Erdman Elementary who recently competed and placed at the World Championships in Dublin, Ireland. Albrecht just finished her freshman year at Howards Grove High School. She has choreographed for Theatre for Young Audiences and has been involved with her high school dance team. Klauck will be newly graduated from Etude High School here in Sheboygan and was honored by the Kohler Foundation in May by receiving the Ruth DeYoung Kohler Scholarship for Artistic Merit.

The twelve singers are also vast in their accomplishments, ages and genres. For example, Sheboygan resident, **Charlotte Tank**, will sing Annie Lennox's 'Fingernail Moon,' while **Mary Van Wyk**, a Sheboygan Falls High School freshman who will power through 'Think of Me' from "Phantom of the Opera."

There are also, singer/songwriters. **Devlin James** is a Sheboygan Falls High School senior, who has rock n' roll aspirations with his band, the Devlin James Band. Since Sheboygan's Next Star is a solo competition James will instead be accompanying himself and playing an original song. Also performing an original song is Plymouth's, **Brook Julianna Bignell**. The 15 year old high school student will have her co-writer and friend, **Rachel Altman**, accompany her on the piano.

Delaney Scudella will be performing a Beatle's song with 'a little help' from her father, who will be playing the guitar. The sixth grader from Riverview Middle School is the youngest competitor of the singers. In contrast are the adults, first being **Kristi Hasenstein**, a 25 year old, married mother of two. She is a professional photographer who has grown up in Sheboygan throughout her life. She is performing one of her favorite Broadway tunes. **Patricia Lutze**, 20 year old Lakeland College student, is from Sheboygan and is looking forward to coming back home to the theater she grew up in. Then there is **Marielle Schuchardt**, a 19 year old Sheboygan resident who aspires to perform musical theatre professionally. She has been seen recently as Mimi in UW-Manitowoc's "RENT."

Marilyn Reles comes the furthest of all the contestants, hailing from Milwaukee, Wis. The 22 year old Reles is a recent graduate from UW- Milwaukee with a Bachelor of Arts in Acting. **Paul Kettler** will be accompanying her on the guitar for her Janis Joplin song.

There are several high achieving high school students competing alongside the adults. Competitor, **Kayla Rose**, a 16 year old South High School student, has aspirations to be a singer or actress. She has been taking voice lessons and hopes to gain more confidence through this competition. **Celeste Benzschawel** is 15 years old and from Sheboygan Falls. She both sings and plays guitar and recently performed at the Unity Music Gala last April. Finally, 17 year old Roncalli High School student, **Lauren Haasch** is from Sheboygan and gets immense joy from singing.

Tickets for this general admission event can be purchased at any "Guys and Dolls" performances. Tickets are also available at the Theatre Company office in the Community Recreation Department, 607 S. Water Street, and also at the theatre box office 45 minutes before curtain of each performance. To learn more visit www.sheboygantheatercompany.org and then call 920/459-3779 to reserve tickets or for further information. Tickets for all ages will be \$10 before tax. The proceeds for this show go towards the Sheboygan Theatre Company.

Sheboygan's Next Star will be Saturday, June 11, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. The production will be presented at the Leslie W. Johnson Theatre, 2820 Union Avenue, Sheboygan.