



## Inside This Week's MILTON COURIER

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## Blumer to be inducted into Arts Hall of Fame Sunday

By RICK MILLER  
Associate Editor

*"If you love your art, you will work despite obstacles and love it. If you have to be prodded to it, better choose an easier gesture to express yourself. Art offers no crown for mediocrity."*

--legendary soprano Geraldine Farrar

Dr. Robert Harrison, professor of voice at Indiana University's Jacobson School of Music in Bloomington recalled the above quote when he contemplated Susan Blumer's nomination to be inducted into the United Arts Alliance of Rock County Hall of Fame. The eighth annual Arts Hall of Fame brunch and ceremony is Sunday, March 8 at the Janesville Performing Arts Center.



RICK MILLER PHOTO | COURIERNEWS1@CHARTER.NET

**MUSIC LEADER** – Milton's Susan Blumer will be inducted into the United Arts Alliance of Rock County Hall of Fame on Sunday. Blumer was a vocal music professor at Milton College from 1963 to 1981. This photo was taken Monday in the chapel of Main Hall, the location of many music performances when the college was in operation.

gram, but the school reached impressive new heights after professor Bernhard H. Westlund founded the college choir in 1946.

Blumer came to Milton College with undergraduate and graduate degrees from Westminister Choir College in Princeton, Massachusetts in performance and choral conducting, respectively. She has worked with world-renowned conductors such as

Leonard Bernstein and John Finley Williamson as a soprano soloist.

Despite being in a small Wisconsin community that, at the time, was surrounded by cows and corn, former students attest to how Blumer focused on providing them with the highest caliber music education possible. Many of those students would go

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**"Sue is a living example of how music can enrich all aspects of your life."**

**MARY SANDERS**  
Former student of Susan Blumer

Blumer's tenure as a voice professor at Milton College ran from 1963 until her position was eliminated amid the school's financial collapse in 1981 (It closed its doors permanently in the spring of 1982). Milton College had a strong music pro-

## Milton skier qualifies for Junior Olympics

By DOUG WELCH  
Managing Editor

Milton's connection to the Olympics may just be beginning.

With sets of grandparents of two Olympians already living in Milton, the community may be getting a new connection.

Sophie Hanson-Rinehart, an 11-year-old fifth-grader at Northside Intermediate School, has qualified for the Junior Olympics in downhill skiing. Hanson-Rinehart will compete in the Junior Olympics in three skiing events at Winter Park, Colorado March 17-20.

Hanson-Rinehart is hoping to follow a recent tradition of Milton's connection to the Winter Olympics. Speedskater Casey FitzRandolph's grandparents, Ivan and Spin FitzRandolph, live in Milton. So too do Don and Shirley Kildow, the grandparents of Lindsey Vonn. Vonn's father, Al Kildow, was a 1970 graduate of Milton High School and a junior downhill skier.

Hanson-Rinehart's father, Dan Rinehart, is a 1986 graduate of Milton High School and was a downhill racer on the junior circuit during his high school days. Rinehart points to the Milton connection to the Olympics as being a source of inspiration for his daughter.

"When I'd take Sophie out to her granddad's place on Highway N we'd get by the Kildows and I'd point it out and tell her

that the grandparents of one of the best skiers in the world lives there," Rinehart said. "She wrote Lindsey and she sent back an autographed poster that she still has hanging in her room."

Rinehart said Sophie has been skiing

since she was two and competitively for the past four years. Her entire winter revolves around training and competing.

Hanson-Rinehart trains at Cascade Mountain three times a week and competes in at least eight events by two sanctioning bodies each winter. The Junior Olympics is the pinnacle of the competition circuit, her father said.

This year was her first opportunity to qualify for the Junior Olympics in the 11-12-year-old age bracket. On Feb. 21 in Marquette, Michigan, had two top-12 finishes among three events – the Super Giant Slalom, the Giant Slalom and Slalom. Skiing three times in each event, Hanson-Rinehart qualified in all three events.

"This is what she's been working for all year," Rinehart said. "I keep telling her that no matter what happens there, she's already succeeded this year and she just needs to relax and go out and lay down the best runs she can."

Hanson-Rinehart is in her first year at Northside after attending elementary school at St. John Vianney's in Janesville.

"She has adapted very well to Northside," Rinehart said. "It's a great school."

Hanson-Rinehart's mother, Heather Stevenson, said her daughter does great juggling the demands of skiing in the mid-



Sophie Hanson - Rinehart

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# Blumer/Former professor touched lives through music

Continued from page 1

on to sing at the highest levels and perform with the New York Philharmonic orchestra, the New York Metropolitan Opera, the Boston Symphony and others.

Harrison came to Milton College in 1967 from Dodgeville. In his nomination letter, Harrison admitted that upon entering "that special academy," he hadn't yet made a lifelong commitment to music. But he said his life would change after meeting Blumer.

"After a few lessons with this master teacher of voice," Harrison wrote, "I found myself lured into the art of music."

Blumer said there was "a great atmosphere" in Milton College's music department because of camaraderie not found at larger institutions, and a vibe among students and faculty alike who knew they were exceeding expectations.

"I really felt we were doing something very special at Milton College," Blumer said Tuesday, "There were universities with better equipment and facilities that were not doing the work that Dr. Westlund was doing. I was always proud of what we accomplished there."

Robert Johnson wrote in his nomination letter that Blumer was able to improve the voices of any student that worked with her.

"Under her guidance, Susan's students found the vocal exercises which corrected imperfections and replaced them with correctly placed, rich, beautiful sounds." Johnson said, "My upper range increased by almost a fifth and my lower range dropped by over an octave."

Former student Mary Sanders, also of Janesville, stated succinctly that Blumer "eats, lives and breathes music. Sue is a living example of how music can enrich all aspects of your life."

Many in the area point out that Rock County continues to benefit from Blumer's contributions as a voice teacher, organist and direction at Cargill United Methodist Church, founder and director of the Women of Note choir, director of St. Mary's Catholic Church choir, organist at Trinity Episcopal Church, or in her participation in Cho-



**MILTON COLLEGE PRESERVATION SOCIETY ARCHIVES**  
**PROFESSOR AT WORK** – Susan Blumer coaches a Milton College voice student in this 1977 photo. The college had a strong music program, and former students credit Blumer for much of the success, and for her continuing musical contributions throughout Rock county.

**"I really felt we were doing something very special at Milton College."**

**SUSAN BLUMER**  
 On her time at Milton College

ral Union, the choir that strives to continue Milton College's vocal music traditions. Others offer that Blumer's nomination is long overdue.

Harrison, who after a 40-year international career in music as a performer and professor of voice has a resume of his own that could fill many column inches, ties much of his success directly to Blumer.

"Whether in her voice studio, her performances, at the organ console, or in the choir loft," Harrison concluded, "Professor Blumer taught each and every one of us that 'Art offers no crown for mediocrity'. No finer lesson could I have received from her."

In addition to Blumer, the alliance is also inducting Janesville's Laurel A. Canan, an arts executive, community arts leader and community activist; and Loren M. Sass, a Beloit director, actor, educator and community theatre leader. For more information on the Arts Hall of Fame Brunch, phone (608) 758-0297.

## News in Brief

### Pre-School Screening

The School District of Milton offers regularly scheduled screenings of children ages three and four years. The last screening of the 2008-09 school year will take place on Wednesday, March 18, 2009. If you have concerns about your child's development and would like your child to participate in the screening, please contact Ellen Cummings at the Special Education Office at 868-9221 to schedule an appointment.

### Johnstown Center Cemetery Association

The annual meeting of the Johnstown Center Cemetery Association will be held Tuesday, March 10, 2009, at 7:30 p.m. at the Johnstown Community Center.

### Burdick Breakfast

The Burdick Breakfast will be held at 8:30 a.m., Monday, March 9, 2009 at Milton Family Restaurant.

### Milton UMC to hold Community Talent Night

The Milton United Methodist Church is holding a Community Talent Night on Saturday, March 7, 2009, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Anyone who can play an instrument, sing, dance, tell stories, singly or in a group is welcome to perform. Performances do not need to be Christian in nature but must be appropriate for all ages. To register call 868-2860 and leave a message. Walk-ins the night of the show are also welcome. A pie sale will also be held during the evening with proceeds going to the Alaska mission trip.

### Business Professional Women to meet

The Milton Business Professional Women will meet Tuesday, March 10 at the Junction Pub at 11:30 a.m. For more information, call 868-7745.

## Corrections

At the **Milton Courier**, our staff is dedicated to accurately providing the community with the week's news in a fair manner. Unfortunately, mistakes can happen from time to time.

If you feel we have made a factual error, please notify the staff by calling (608) 868-2442 or e-mailing [mcourier@charter.net](mailto:mcourier@charter.net). Corrections are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

### WISCONSIN TRIVIA

**Q:** What city is home to the world's largest loon - a 16.5 foot sculpture named Claire?

**A:** Mercer.

## SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MILTON BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING AGENDA

**Monday, March 9, 2009**  
**Milton High School - Library**  
**6:30 p.m.**

- I. Approval of Agenda
- II. Approval of Minutes
- III. Approval of Vouchers
- IV. Public Comment
- V. Budget & Planning Committee Report - Al Roehl
  - A. Discussion of American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (Stimulus Package)
  - B. Discussion and Possible Action on Mower for Schilberg Park
- VI. Youth Options Report
- VII. Miscellaneous
  - A. Staffing
  - B. Gifts and Donations
  - C. Student Council Report
  - D. Meeting Dates
  - E. Announcements and Recognition
  - F. Motion to go into Executive Session 19.85 (1)(c)

### Executive Session

Considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility. (Support staff and Administrative Compensation)

### Motion to Reconvene in Open Session

- VIII. Possible Action on Support Staff and Administrative Compensation

*(This meeting notice may be supplemented in order to comply with Wisconsin's open meetings law. If this notice is supplemented, the final notice will be posted and provided to the media no later than 24 hours prior to this meeting or no later than 2 hours prior to the meeting, in the event of an emergency.)*

## SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MILTON BUDGET & PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

**Monday, March 9, 2009**  
**Milton High School - Library**  
**6:00 P.M.**

- I. Approval of Agenda
- II. Discussion of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Stimulus Package)
- III. Discussion and Recommendation of Purchase of New Mower for Schilberg Park

*The potential exists for a quorum of Board members to be in attendance at this meeting. There will be no action taken by the Board at this meeting.*

*(This meeting notice may be supplemented in order to comply with Wisconsin's open meetings law. If this notice is supplemented, the final notice will be posted and provided to the media no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting or no later than 2 hours prior*