

# MEET THE JUDGES



Adam  
Orban

VOCAL JAZZ  
CRITIQUE



Adam Orban is the Wilcox Performing Arts Center Manager and Communications Coordinator for the Algona Community School District. Adam is a graduate of Morningside College (now University) and received his Master's in Music Education from the University of South Dakota. Adam taught secondary vocal music for 18 years prior to his current position. During that time he started two jazz choir programs and directed show choir programs. Over the years, students under Adam's direction have received numerous awards and accolades, including 1st Place finishes in jazz choir (including 1st Place at the Iowa Vocal Jazz Championships in 2015), 1st place and finals appearances for show choir, over 50 all-staters, and several Outstanding Performances at the IHSMA solo/ensemble festival. Adam has been a guest clinician for several events and his conducting honors include directing the 9th Grade Mixed Opus Honor Choir in 2013. Adam is an active composer of original music and arranges for area show & jazz choirs. Adam is happily married to his wife and fellow music colleague, Jill, and they have four children together.

# MEET THE JUDGES



Linda  
Vanderpool

VOCAL JAZZ  
SCORING



Linda devoted her career to developing and nurturing students as they learned and performed a variety of music.

A versatile conductor, Linda led choral and vocal jazz ensembles in memorable performances at such sites as the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., Carnegie Hall in New York City, Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis, the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival at the University of Idaho in Moscow, and the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris.

Her interest and vision for vocal jazz led to the creation of the Iowa All State Jazz Choir. Linda's research and design led to a comprehensive audition procedure that is still used today, incorporating prepared ensemble and solo literature as well as literacy skills into the audition structure. The specially designed rubric helps to judge students on jazz concepts needed for high level ensembles. Her expertise in vocal jazz is in demand at both secondary and collegiate levels, and she mentors area professionals in the development of high caliber vocal jazz choral curricula.

Linda holds a Master of Music Education with choral emphasis from Drake University and a Bachelor of Music Education Cum Laude from Simpson College where she studied voice and piano. She began her musical studies by playing the guitar and listening to Louis Armstrong records her father collected.

# MEET THE JUDGES



Clay  
Blackman

SHOW CHOIR  
SCORING



Clay H. Blackman was fortunate to teach Choral Music to the young people of Nebraska for 38 years. During that time, he taught students of all ages from kindergarten through college. He has presented interest sessions at local, state and national music conventions and Magnet Schools of America Conferences on topics including vocal pedagogy, new choral music reading and building healthy relationships within the choral music classroom. In January of 2024 and 2025, he presented two Professional Learning sessions at the Nevada Music Educators Conference in Las Vegas. Earlier this month ,he presented an "Advocacy 101" session at the Nebraskans for the Arts Hill Day held at the Nebraska State Capitol. Retired from Omaha South High Magnet School for the Visual and Performing Arts since 2014, he and his husband opened The Covered Porch Cafe in Stromsburg, which they sold 18 months later. Having failed retirement when he accepted a position teaching PK-12 Vocal Music and Assistant One Act Play director at Cross County Schools in Stromsburg. After four years at Cross County, he retired once again in the Spring of 2020. In the fall of 2022, due to a lack of teacher applications for the Vocal Music position, he agreed to "un retire" once again and return to Cross County on a part time basis. He served the Nebraska Music Education Association as Chair of Exhibits for three years and is honored and privileged to be the current Immediate Past President of the Nebraska Music Education Association. In June of 2024, Mr. Blackman assumed the office of North Central Division President Elect for NAFME and with that, a seat on the National Executive Board. He continues to maintain an active schedule as a clinician and adjudicator throughout the Midwest. Mr. Blackman holds a Bachelor of Science in Education degree from Kearney State College and a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Doane University. He retains membership in the Nebraska Music Education Association (NMEA), the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) and the Nebraskans for the Arts. Mr. Blackman is excited to return to Shake the Lakes today to see some amazing performances!

# MEET THE JUDGES



Lindsey  
Norine

SHOW CHOIR –  
SCORING



**Lindsey Norine** is a private vocal coach, choral clinician, and adjudicator based in Waukee, Iowa. She received her BA in Vocal Music from Drake University and has been teaching her private studio of singers for eleven years. Her students frequently receive best soloist awards, Opus Honor and Iowa All-State choir selections, acceptance and vocal scholarships at prestigious universities, as well as other accolades.

Lindsey's background onstage touts many performances in musicals and operas. She has been lucky enough to travel the world singing—performing in China, England, Ireland, and Wales; as well as in Avery Fisher Hall in New York City, The Grand Ole' Opry in Nashville, and the MainStage in Disney World (Orlando).

An active member in the National Association of Teachers of Singing, Lindsey is passionate about promoting vocal health, proper technique, confidence, and using music as a tool to encourage personal growth and interpersonal connection. She enjoys serving as a judge for show choir and solo and ensemble contests, as well as a freelance clinician for show choirs across the state. Lindsey directed multiple show choirs at Des Moines Christian School prior to her proudest accomplishment — becoming “Mama” to Vera (7), Barrett (5), and Charlie (2).





# MEET THE JUDGES



Michelle  
Chapman

SHOW CHOIR  
SCORING



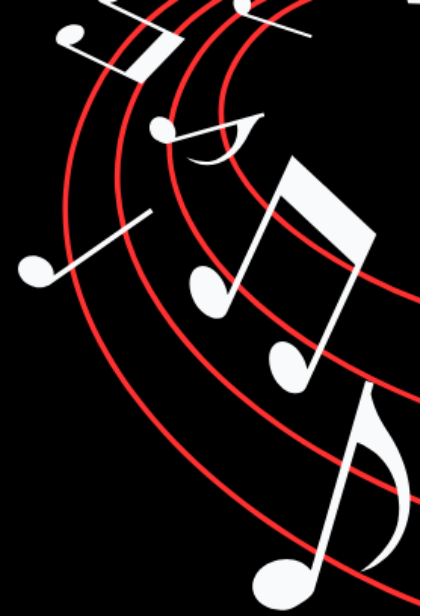
Michelle directed high school vocal music ensemble in Iowa for twenty-three years, at Pella Community High School and Center Point-Urbana High School. She began her teaching career at CPU, where she directed the High School choir, musical and show choirs (The Summit Street Singers and Pointer Sisters). She then moved to Pella, where for sixteen years she directed advanced choir, chamber choir, madrigal singers, musicals and three show choirs (AcaPella, Bravo and Durch Divas). Under her direction over sixty Pella students were selected for the Iowa All-State Chorus, and her show choirs won more than a dozen grand championships fifty-plus class championships and more than one hundred caption awards.

# MEET THE JUDGES



Dr. Kurt  
Runestad

JAZZ - CRITIQUE



It has been Dr. Kurt Runestad's privilege to teach at Doane University since the fall of 2004. He teaches three of Doane's four choral ensembles, including the acclaimed Doane Choir, which under his leadership has performed throughout the United States as well as in 15 countries on 4 continents—most recently in Costa Rica, in May of 2022. The Doane choirs will tour to South Africa in May of 2025, where they will sing for and with the world-renowned Soweto Gospel Choir. Runestad also serves Doane as the music department chair. A native of Wayne, Nebraska, he graduated from St. Olaf College (Northfield, Minnesota) with a B.A. in music education, taught 10 years in the public schools of Iowa and Minnesota, and earned two graduate degrees in choral conducting from the University of Iowa. He is a frequent clinician, arranger, and adjudicator for choirs throughout the Midwest, and has published several arranged transcriptions of pieces by the Soweto Gospel Choir. Runestad has twice received the "Outstanding Teacher of the Year" award from Doane's Student Congress and has also been awarded Doane's Ardis Butler James faculty fellowship. He lives in Lincoln, Nebraska with his wife Carly Woythaler-Runestad, and their two children, daughter Avery (17) and son Owen (14). Outside of music and parenting, Runestad also enjoys reading, (mostly) organic gardening, camping, and travelling.



# MEET THE JUDGES



Jason  
Heitland

VOCAL JAZZ  
SCORING



Jason E. Heitland is a graduate of North Iowa Area Community College (AA), and the University of Northern Iowa (BME, and MM). For over 30 years, Jason has taught vocal music to all levels of students from Pre-K through College. Jason has held teaching assignments at Greene Comm. Schools, Garner-Hayfield-Ventura Comm. Schools, was an adjunct professor at NIACC, and is currently teaching at Clear Lake High School.

Jason has conducted at multiple festivals and honor choirs including the 2002 7-8 Grade Boy's Opus Honor Choir and the North Central District of ICDA Honor Choir. In the summer of 2006 and 2023 Jason was an adviser/conductor for the Iowa Ambassadors of Music European Tour, and had the opportunity to conduct the men's choir in seven counties with the highlight of performing in St. Mark's in Venice, Italy. In 2013 Jason directed the North Iowa Voices in a European tour performing/conducting in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

Jason has also taught many music technology workshops including being a featured presenter for the North Iowa Technology Fair, AEA 15, and ICDA. Jason was also an ESS Clinician for SmartMusic and Finale. Jason is an approved Adjudicator for the Iowa High School Music Association and served as Chairperson for the North Central District of ICDA, and currently serves as the Iowa All-State Chorus Chair. Jason is also a Tour Representative for Good News Tour and Travel and enjoys supervising various school music tours.

In his spare time Jason likes to spend time outdoors golfing, fishing, water skiing, and going for a "Lake Lap" with his wife and/or children in his classic 1968 Chevelle Convertible that he restored.

# MEET THE EMCEE



Wes  
Chaplin  
EMCEE  
EXTRAORDINAIRE



Wes Chaplin is excited to serve as our master of ceremonies today. Wes is no stranger to the show choir world, both from his days as a sequin-clad performer with Nevada, Iowa High School's Starburst, Inc. to his years of adventures assisting his wife with her many competing groups and clinics. During the week, you can find Wes working in his "real" job as an attorney at Kreykes & Chaplin, PLC in Pella, Iowa, but on weekends, he enjoys sharing the stage with hundreds of the best young people in the world as he emcees numerous show choir competitions. In his free time, Wes is passionate about endurance sports, and has completed over 100 triathlons, including Ironman triathlons in France, Austria, Switzerland and Arizona. Wes is thankful that his lovely wife of 30 years, Michelle, is tolerant of his need to dance awkwardly onstage on a regular basis, much to her chagrin. He's excited to introduce you to all of the wonderful students who will be performing today!



# MEET THE JUDGES



Abby  
Leusink  
Sheppard

SHOW CHOIR  
CRITIQUE



Abby Leusink Sheppard is the Assistant Vocal Director at Sioux City East High School. She is a graduate of Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa with a bachelors in vocal performance and was a recipient of the Eleanor Basler Music Scholarship. Abby received her teaching endorsement from Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa. Prior to her time in Sioux City, she taught middle school and high school vocal music at her alma mater Sioux Center where her choirs received many high rankings. Her time in Sioux City began at East Middle School where she directed over 500 students creating opportunities in curricular choirs, regional and state honor choirs and starting two show choirs, one of which was competitive. Currently, she directs three curricular choirs at East High School including Treble Chorale, Bass Chorale and Varsity Choir along with the competitive Varsity show choir Prestige and JV Prep group New Sound. Abby is an active member of ICDA where she has served as the Northwest District Representative and 5th/6th Opus Chair. Abby was the recipient of the 2023 winner of the Iowa Choral Director's Outstanding Choral Educator Elementary/MS Level. Last year she was the 2023 Treble Clef Opus Director and just loves being the guest director at area honor choirs along judging at IHSMA events and regional show choir competitions. Abby devotes her summers to her voice studio ensuring students have the opportunity to continue singing throughout the year. She has three active and lovable children Austin 17, Ashlyn 9 and Colton 5.



# MEET THE JUDGES



Brett  
Fuelberth

VOCAL JAZZ  
SCORING



It has been Brett Fuelberth's privilege to serve as the Director of Choral Activities at Iowa Lakes Community College for the past 27 years. At Iowa Lakes, he directs four choirs, and teaches Music Theory, Music Fundamentals, Successful Learning, and Music Appreciation. He received a master's degree in choral conducting from the University of Missouri at Kansas City, and a bachelor's degree from Wayne State College. Since coming to Iowa Lakes, he has initiated the annual Elizabethan Madrigal Feasts, Heartland Honor Choir, Night at the PACs, and along with Luke Miller, Iowa's only free All-State Camp. Brett serves as the advisor for the Laker Life Christian Campus ministry, overseeing a student-led praise team, food pantry ministries, and annual Spring Break Mission Trips. Brett has been married for 31 years to his wife, Barb, and they have two sons, William and Matthew and one daughter, Anna.

# MEET THE JUDGES



Jenny  
McClenahan

SHOW CHOIR -  
SCORING



Jenny McClenahan is a retired choral director after thirty one years, most recently teaching seventeen at Highland Community Schools. Over the past several years, Jennifer has had the opportunity to conduct 50 district honor choirs and vocal festivals, and in 2008, conducted the 5th and 6th grade Opus Honor Choir. She has been a member of the Iowa Choral Directors Association since 1992, and has served on the board for over 20 years, serving several appointments and elected positions, but most recently was elected President, and is finishing that 6-year term in July.

For the past 25 years, she has been actively judging State Music Festivals, including All-State, and numerous jazz and show choir competitions across Iowa. She was elected to the District Advisory Group in 2018 for the Iowa High School Music Association. Jennifer has also given sessions at the ICDA Summer and Fall Symposiums. Colleges and Universities in Iowa frequently ask Mrs. McClenahan to speak to methods classes, giving her insight on life in rural 1a and 2a schools, approaches to general music, and philosophies on standards. Outside of school, she, her husband and children are involved in community theater. She resides in Washington, Iowa, with her husband Craig. They have 4 adult children Tiffany, Tanner, Zoe, and Rory and 5 grandchildren.

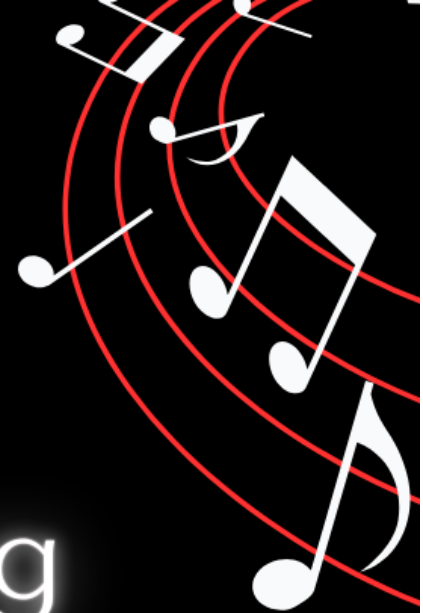


# MEET THE JUDGES



Meg  
Byrne

VOCAL JAZZ  
CRITIQUE



Meg Byrne is the Director of Vocal Music at Pleasant Valley High School, a position she has held for 30 years. She directs the Chamber Choir, Treble Chamber Choir, and the Leading Tones, an a cappella jazz choir. During her time at Pleasant Valley, the Chamber Choir has been invited to sing in concert with multiple collegiate ensembles, the Nova Singers, the Quad City Symphony Orchestra, and was selected as one of the outstanding high school ensembles to perform at the Iowa Choral Showcase. The Leading Tones have been invited to the Iowa Vocal Jazz Championships for the past 16 consecutive years, and performed at the 2024 Midwest American Choral Directors Association conference. Her students regularly represent Pleasant Valley in the All-State Chorus, All-State Jazz Choir, as well as regional and national ACDA Honor Choirs. A 2024 Finalist for the GRAMMY Music Educator Award, Meg also teaches AP Music Theory and has worked as Music Department Chair and Instructional Lead for Vocal Music. She enjoys work as a judge and clinician with choirs and jazz choirs, and in 2024 was selected to direct the Ninth Grade Opus Honor Choir. Meg sings regularly with the Augustana Choral Artists, under the direction of Jon Hurty. She holds degrees from Bryn Mawr College, the University of Northern Iowa, and Western Illinois University. She has been a member of ACDA for over 30 years, has served the Iowa Choral Directors Association as chair of the All-State Jazz Choir, chair of the 2022 ICDA Summer Symposium, and is currently the High School Repertoire & Resources chair for Iowa.

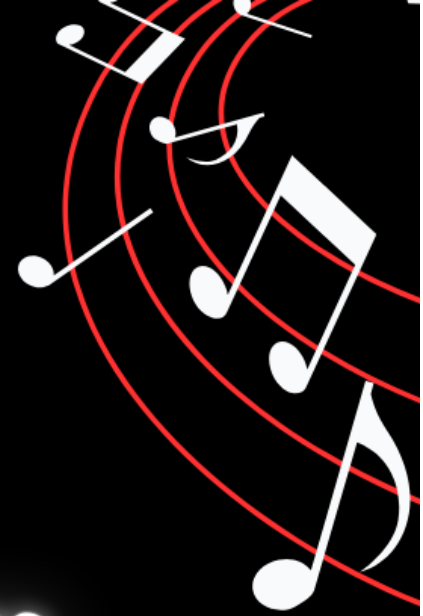


# MEET THE JUDGES



Jim  
Cox

SHOW CHOIR –  
CRITIQUE



Jim Cox received his Bachelors in K-12 Music Education from Luther College in Decorah, IA and a Master's Degree in Arts in Education from Saint Mary's University of Minnesota. Now in his twenty-fourth year of teaching, prior to Eagan High School, Jim's experience has included teaching positions at Bloomington Kennedy High School and Lakeville South High School, and Jim started his teaching career in Zumbrota-Mazeppa in southern Minnesota. Jim is in his fourteenth year at Eagan where he directs two curricular choirs, two co-curricular choirs, and teaches voice lessons. Throughout his teaching career, Jim has taught show choirs, jazz choirs, TB choirs, SA choirs, mixed choirs, a cappella ensembles, Advanced Placement Music Theory, and students in grades 5-12. In addition, Jim is currently the vocal director for the summer community theatre musical, co-director and vocal director for the school musical extravaganza, ENCORE!, and co-chair of the music department.

Jim is a frequent judge and adjudicator at choir, show choir, jazz choir, and solo competitions throughout the Midwest. Jim has been a section coach for All-State and Honor Choirs and presenter at conferences for ACDA-MN and ICDA. Conference sessions have included content on DEI, working with treble voices, and retreat and team-building activities. Jim has held several leadership roles with ACDA-MN, currently serving as co-chair of the ACDA-MN 9-10 TBB State Honor Choir. In his free-time, Jim loves spending time with his wife Megan, who is a middle school choir director, their four kiddos and two dogs!