

MILLBURN HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR WINS STUDENT COMPOSITION CONTEST

May 1, 2008

Noah Berg is the Grand Prize Winner of Harmonium Choral Society's eleventh annual High School Student Choral Composition Contest with his composition *Wandering Angus*, a setting of a W. B. Yeats poem. Harmonium will give the world premiere of the work at its June 7th and 8th concerts in Grace Episcopal Church, Madison. Berg wins \$1000 as Grand Prize Winner. The Runner-Up, winning \$250, is Peter Newes, a junior at Chatham High School. He also chose to set *Wandering Angus*.

Composition for classical performance groups is relatively new for Berg. "I'm getting excited about composition," Berg declares. He's been writing pieces for his rock group, Bravest Giant, since eighth grade. But this year, in addition to his composition for Harmonium, Berg has completed his first work for symphony orchestra, which the Millburn High School orchestra will premiere in late May. Already accepted as a merit scholarship student at the University of Rochester, where he plans to study economics and music, Berg is currently considering auditioning to get into a composition class at the university's Eastman School of Music. He is quite a musician, playing clarinet, saxophone, piano and electric guitar, as well as singing lead for his rock band. He also performs in jazz band, wind ensemble, concert band, marching band and pit orchestra. Berg's sponsor is Karen Conrad, Millburn's Orchestra Director.

Composition Contest Runner-Up Peter Newes has already made his mark as a gifted singer. For three years he has been in the Chatham High School Select Choir, which has performed in major venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center and St. Patrick's Cathedral. Newes has been accepted in the New Jersey All-State Choir for next year. Not just a singer and composer, he is also a pianist, and was awarded an Excellence in Playwriting from Chatham Middle School in 2005. Newes' sponsor is Barbara Klemp, Director of Choral Music at Chatham.

Dr. Anne Matlack, celebrating her twentieth year as Artistic Director of Harmonium Choral Society, is a prime mover behind the Student Composition Contest. She serves as a judge each year, as well as rehearsing the group to perform the winning composition. She was named the 2003 Outstanding Arts Professional by the Arts Council of the Morris Area. Under her direction, Harmonium has become known for its diverse repertoire delivered in a professional and engaging manner. Access Harmonium's website www.harmonium.org or call 973-538-6969 for more information.

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