



# The High School View

The High School View is staffed and prepared entirely by students from the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, and published on their behalf by The Martha's Vineyard Times, with the generous assistance of the sponsors whose names appear below.

## Minnesingers usher in the holidays

BY NATHANIEL HORWITZ

In the Old Whaling Church, expectations were high for the Minnesingers. After a successful show the previous night, the vocal group staged a surprise entrance from the back of the sanctuary this past Saturday.

The Minnesingers did not disappoint. The first song was "Hodie Christus Natus Est," by Bruno Vlahek, a composer from Croatia, where the group will be traveling to this spring. In another unexpected move, the Minnesingers arrayed themselves throughout the audience aisles for a haunting rendition of the Israeli folk tune "Hashivenu." Said Minnesingers director Jan Wightman, "I tried to choose a variety of pieces, serious and playful, of various styles and periods, to present different viewpoints of the holiday season."

With this eclectic theme in mind, the Minnesingers mounted the stage for their third piece after a quick statement from Ms. Wightman. She commended

them for their devotion of time and effort, despite the rigorous demands of school, sports, theater, and other commitments. Accompanying the singers was pianist John Gorman,

a descant by junior Sarah Ortlip-Sommers, the audience was enthralled, silent, and motionless until Ms. Wightman asked them to join the Minnesingers for "Away in a Manger." This was followed

the Minnesingers concluded the first half with an upbeat, joyous, and energetic "Go Tell it on the Mountain."

Minnesinger-alumni parent and engineer Garth Meyerhoff said, "The show

The audience joined the singers for "Silent Night," creating an impressive chorus.

Stephen Schwartz's Chanukah song, "We Are Lights," provided a startling, expressive contrast, with beautiful accompaniment. The Minnesingers then shifted positions for a jazz arrangement of "I'll

sang "a challenging rhythmic refrain" in a melodic variation of "Jingle Bells," minus the children.

As always, the show concluded with "Hallelujah," from Handel's "The Messiah," and "Santa Claus is Coming to Town." As a tradition for these last two pieces, alumni Minnesingers from several decades joined in on stage. Ms. Wightman took the piano for the final song, her personal favorite.

Senior and three-year Minnesinger Gage Rancich, who hopes to pursue a career in musical theater, said, "It felt like just yesterday I was getting ready for the show my sophomore year. All things considered, this was the best note to end things on. The group is filled with awesome people this year, and once a Minnesinger, always a Minnesinger. I'll still be able to join the group for the 'Hallelujah' chorus and 'Santa Claus is Coming to Town' when I come back to visit."

The Minnesingers have nothing to hide from Santa Claus after this tremendous performance, which concluded with a resounding standing ovation, taking several minutes to quiet down. **HSV**



Minnesinger sopranos sang "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town" at the Winter Show last Saturday, left. Children from the audience help the Minnesingers summon Santa Claus to the Old Whaling Church, as director Jan Wightman conducts. (right)



PHOTOS BY DYLAN BROCKMEYER

who has played with the group for two and a half years. He said, "This year's show was the best ever." Mr. Gorman has been preparing with the group at Wednesday-night rehearsals that began in September.

The work paid off. By the end of "Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming," featuring

by "We Three Kings," sang solely by the male Minnesingers, in sleek black tuxedos with silver vests and red bow ties. Next was "Mary Sings a Lullaby," performed by the young women, wearing long black dresses, hair adorned by crimson ribbons. The audience joined in for "Angels We Have Heard on High" before

was impressive, as usual." The show continued after the intermission with an appearance by Santa Claus, summoned by a spirited "Jingle Bells" during which children from the audience rang bells. The excitement settled as the singers launched into a medley of traditional carols, the "Medieval Noel."

Be Home for Christmas," sung by this year's seniors. After returning to their previous positions, the group sang a fast-paced "Winter Wonderland," followed by "I Saw Three Ships" with the audience joining in once more. The four section leaders, joined by one more singer from each voice part, then

## Commentary Misuse is Abuse

BY BELLA BENNETT

Teenagers have a way of transforming the meanings of ordinary words. To name a few--cool, chill, dank, sweet, sick, ill, and nasty have been altered to fit the needs of the teenage vocabulary. If you were to look up any one of these words in a dictionary, the definition would not be "awesome." However, all seven words roughly translate into a synonym for great, as far as the majority of teenagers are concerned. While the adaptations to these words are harmless, misusing other words can have insulting

and hurtful effects.

The word, "gay," is the latest of the offensive words to circulate through the young adult population. The correct definition of gay is 1) Having or showing a lively or merry mood. Example: gay music. 2) Bright or showy. Example: gay colors. 3) Of, indicting, or supporting homosexual interests or issues. Example: gay rights.

Some teenagers have recently started using the word to describe something that they don't like, disapprove of, or think is distastefully flamboyant. Undoubtedly, this damaging new definition originated out of homophobic

intent. However, it's incorrigible spread is most likely the result of the desire to fit in. Teenagers are full of self doubt and therefore strive to fit in with their peers, which evidently aided the quickness with which young adults began to use the phrase.

While strolling through the halls of my school yesterday, I heard a common example of how teenagers use the term incorrectly. A boy walking in front of me was telling his friend about a math test that he had previously taken, and described it by saying, "Dude, the test was so gay; I didn't know anything on it." In this case, the boy used the



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word, "gay," to describe something that he felt was difficult, stupid, and possibly annoying. Using this term, which most often refers to a person's sexual orientation, in a negative context, exhibits disdain or aversion for that person's preference. Unconsciously, the comment that boy in the hallway made, connoted something to the effect of, "Homosexuals are dumb and obnoxious," due to the context in which he used the word, "gay." The boy did not intend to express anything to that effect, however, that is what he conveyed. There is no purpose for the upset that can be caused when

the term is used inappropriately, and is therefore no reason why the term should be used at all.

Not only is misusing the word, "gay" unnecessary, it completely mutates the meaning of the statement in which it is placed, and replaces a harmless remark, with one that is derogatory, cruel, and furthermore, grossly inaccurate. Nonetheless, teens carelessly describe things that have a negative effect on them, or that they look down upon, as, "gay," and are consequently spewing insulting and derogatory comments without considering the actual meaning of the words that they are using. For this reason, it is imperative that everyone--teens and adults--realize the implications of their words. **HSV**

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