

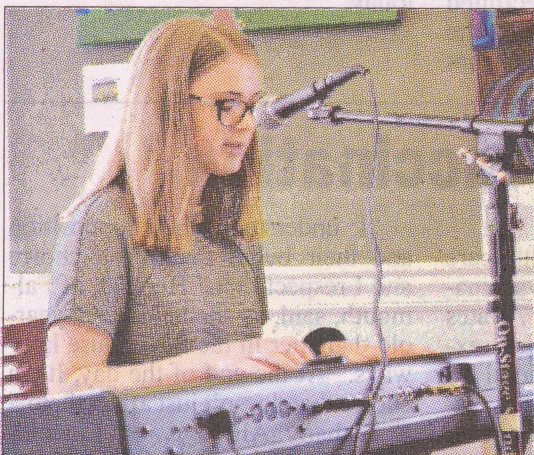
# BEAT AND EGGS



Photos by Kendra Gravelle

Above: Coventry High School ninth-graders Chloe Barney and Jazmine Laframboise and junior Nick Velleca serve up some food at the school's annual Breakfast with an Upbeat event. Below: Rachel Miller performs.

## Coventry High School pairs culinary arts with the performing arts to show off range of student talents



By **KENDRA GRAVELLE**

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COVENTRY — Live music rang through the Knotty Oak Room at Coventry High School Thursday morning, as the scent of pancakes, bacon and other staple breakfast foods wafted through the air.

“This really showcases everything that our school has,” junior Meg Brietzke said, just after performing “These are Days” alongside some of her peers during the much-anticipated “Breakfast with

an Upbeat” event.

As Brietzke spoke, culinary arts students donning red chef coats were replenishing their chafing dishes, having spent the last couple hours serving up heaping plates of food.

“We have an amazing music department,” Brietzke continued, “we have an amazing career and tech program, with the food they make and the service they provide. This is just a fun way to be able to combine those two things.”

**See Breakfast, page A2**



# Breakfast

Continued from page A1

Highlighting the culinary and musical skills of dozens of high schoolers, the annual event, previously dubbed "Breakfast with the Beatles," was hosted by the culinary arts program at Coventry Regional Career and Technical Center, and invited members of the community into the school to experience a sliver of the talent the students have to offer.

Students from three culinary classes—some 40 students in total—came together to put on the all-you-can-eat feast that included eggs, home fries, pancakes, pastries and sausage.

"These kids work hard," Tina Andrews, a teacher assistant in Coventry's culinary arts program, said following the second of three seating times.

Andrews touted the event as an opportunity for the students to interact with the

community while they show off what they've learned.

"They put their best foot forward when they're in here," she added, as culinary arts students dressed in white button-down shirts and black aprons buzzed around her, wiping down tables in preparation for the next group of patrons. "They love to be with the customers, and the customers love them."

As for the event's entertainment, for each seating, students performed a set of 11 songs that ran the gamut from classics, like "Dream a Little Dream of Me" and "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," to modern hits, like Adele's "Turning Tables" and "The Climb" by Miley Cyrus.

"They get up here, they focus, they sing, they learned it on their own," said Kristen St. Sauveur, a music teacher at the high school. "I'm really proud of them."

Auditions for the event were held in February, offering students school-wide the chance to try out for a perfor-

mance slot.

For Brietzke, preparation for the event meant a mix of practicing solo and finding time to rehearse with the Instrumental Workshop students who would be accompanying her.

"We did a lot of practicing on our own and then coming together," she said. "It just shows how amazing everyone is."

Indeed, St. Sauveur added, the students "worked very hard."

And all that hard work was evident Thursday.

Daylight poured through the tall windows of the Knotty Oak Room as students, teachers, parents and school and local officials mingled at their tables in between performers, sipping coffee and chowing down. But as each new performer took the mic, all attention was turned to the front of the room.

Rick Schwartz, a volunteer consultant to the district, was certainly impressed by it all.

"What's amazing is that

this is just one of 16 programs in the career and technical center," Schwartz said, a half-empty plate on the table before him. "It's amazing that the community doesn't know about all these programs because they could take advantage of them."

Town Councilor Ann Dickson, who sat at a table with Schwartz and Superintendent Craig Levis, shared similar sentiments.

"This is a wonderful community event," she said. "It really spotlights what the kids in the culinary department are doing."

Schwartz added that it was heartening to see the community come out to support the students.

"Look around you, see all the folks from the community who are here," Schwartz said, as a rendition of "I'm Yours" by Jason Mraz echoed in the background. "It's just a great, great service."