

Amber Blythe and Cole Crandall  
2018 BHS Musical Annie

The 2018 annual musical for Beatrice High School was *Annie*, and it took more work to put on than one would think. When senior Chloe Craig, who plays Grace Farrell in the musical *Annie*, was asked about opening night she said, “I was shaking in my boots a little, but once I got on stage I was okay.”

The musical was cast in early April of 2018, with a lot of thought put into the production by Kelly Meyer, the choir director at BHS. Meyer says that the hardest part of the musical was choosing which musical best fits the choir. Meyer says it is the hardest part every year. Meyer also says that assigning roles is a very difficult part of picking the musical. He says that he has to see who tries out, and then hope that they audition for the role that would best fit the student, because he said, “You don’t know who’s going to audition.”

Mr. Meyer said that this year he estimates the budget for the musical was around 6,500 dollars. He had to pay for the rights for the scripts, and orchestra pieces for the three nights he had them in use. He also had to pay for the rental of the costumes, as well as for some of the set pieces that are not reused from previous years’ musical productions. Meyer rents some of the characters’ costumes from a woman in Nebraska City who hand-makes the costumes, as well as many of the props and set pieces that are not already on hand. The musical asks for parents from the community to help build sets, organize costumes, play in the orchestra, and work with characters. The musical has set construction every Monday night, and has orchestra practice on Tuesday nights, with character development on Tuesdays and Thursdays as well. These practices usually start within eight or nine weeks of the musical.

When Chloe Craig was asked how many hours a week she spent on the musical, she estimated around 20 hours, while Mr. Meyer estimated around 60. Craig said the hardest part of learning all her lines for the musical was learning her cue lines. Cue lines are the lines that let one know when their line is coming up to speak. Craig also said that although it was stressful it was fun, and she enjoyed spending time with the cast. Both Meyer and Craig said that they have had to sacrifice family time and other commitments for the musical, but in the end they both said the time spent was well worth it.

Mr. Meyer says that the worst part of the musical every year is designing the set and getting it all put together. Meyer says that once the set is up, it is easier to get everything rolling. When Craig was asked what she had to sacrifice for the musical, she said, "Calc and Chem grades." Craig said it was difficult to keep up with all the homework on top of musical practices. She also said she had to give up some time that she usually spent with family and friends. Although Craig said there were a couple things that she had to give up during the coming month of the musical, she said it was worth it in the end.

When Meyer was asked what the best part of the musical was, he said, "The best part was the sense of accomplishment for the kids." Meyer says he really enjoys seeing the kids perform and see how the community responds to the kids' hard work. Craig also says that she enjoys the satisfaction that comes when it is all said and done. Overall, Mr. Meyer and Chloe Craig both agree the production is a lot of work, but in the end the satisfaction is worth all of it.