



By LaDonna Swedberg

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Eleven Wallace students and seven adults recently returned from an action-packed New York City adventure. The students were involved in a Manhattan Production Festival Choir which had the privilege to perform in the Lincoln Center.

The excitement began with an early flight out of Denver with some wide eyed tension during the take off and the turbulent landing. The limo ride from the airport to the Time Square motel proved to be as adventurous as the flight with all the traffic, speeding forward and abruptly hitting the brakes, over and over.

The excitement continued once the bags were unloaded. The small town gang ventured out to the streets of Times Square on a Saturday night to find a place to eat. After encountering more people within a two block span than they would in all of Wallace, the students settled for the first pizza place with an available table to escape the crowd.

The first choir rehearsal began following supper and the students continued to be awestruck. The Wallace choir members were singing among students from three different honor choirs from Connecticut, Wisconsin and Minnesota and they were all being directed by Dr. Jerry Blackstone, one of the best directors in the country.

Things did not slow down on day two. After a four hour rehearsal and a quick lunch, the group got to attend the high energy Broadway musical, "Newsies."

Following dinner at the Hard Rock Cafe it was time to experience the many adventures of Times Square; bus tours, street artist drawing portraits and spray painting pictures, shopping and watching the NBA finals on the Good Morning America Big Screen.

Concert day came on the third day of the trip and to get it started, a group of the students went to watch a little bit of "Good Morning America" and the "Today Show" being filmed. By 10 a.m., they were back to the hotel and ready for one last rehearsal.

The choir sounded amazing at their first rehearsal but they found ways to continually improve so the final rehearsal on Monday morning caused great anticipation for the evening performance.

There was free time before the concert so the next adventure was to go to 'Top Of The Rock' observation deck at Rockefeller Center. Experiencing New York City from above was much more relaxing than it was down on the streets. Before heading back to the hotel, a trip across

the street to see the beautiful St. Patrick's Cathedral, was a must. Though the Cathedral is being renovated, it was still an amazing experience.

Concert time had finally arrived and along with that came the back stage scene and the sound checks, just like many famous performers that had previously graced the prestigious stage. The students performed like professionals causing the audience to experience the music in such a way that they received a standing ovation at the end of their performance.

A successful performance deserves a celebration so Manhattan Concert Production provided a dinner cruise for the choir members and their sponsors. The group experienced the beautiful New York City skyline, the Statue of Liberty and the famous bridges all lit up for the night time view.

The Wallace group had time for a little more sight seeing before their early evening flight so it was time to experience the subway and tour the 911 Memorial.

There were opportunities for more memories and photos before traveling back to the quiet, relaxed Nebraska lifestyle.