

Students play on 60-year-old piano

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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Instrument bought in 1950.

“A Celebration of the Grand Piano” was the theme for a piano recital at the Gothenburg High School performing arts center Oct. 18.

Students of piano teachers Linda Grabenstein of Gothenburg and Ilene Blattner from Cozad had the unique experience to perform on a 60-year-old concert grand piano.

The teachers said the nine-foot piano is a 1948 Baldwin Model D Concert Grand.

The piano was bought in 1950 for \$2,900 through the efforts of the Gothenburg Community Choir, The Gothenburg Community Concert Association and the graduating classes of 1950-52, according to pianist, Ernie Blecha.

Today it would cost approximately \$151,000 to replace a piano of this magnitude, Blecha said.

Restoration of the piano cost about \$16,500 and took several months after being taken to restoration specialists in Lincoln.

The program started with a duet by the teachers. Blattner and Grabenstein played “Edelweiss” and “God Bless America.”

“Playing the grand piano on stage at the PAC was a wonderful experience for us and our

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students, “ Blattner said. “Something we will always remember.”

A special guest performer was Deanna Floe who is originally from Cozad and now a student at Nebraska Wesleyan. Floe is a former piano student of Blattner.

Blattner said Floe recorded an original album in Nashville, TN, this past summer.

“She considers herself a country-mix performer, singing and accompanying herself on the piano and with acoustic guitar,” Blattner said.

Each student received a certificate and a pass to the Cozad Entertainment Series performance of Paul Asaro, a master of the two-handed jazz and ragtime piano.

A reception honoring the students followed the recital.