



## *De's Dazzles – Perseverance! Perform! Gratitude!*



I recently read a Facebook quote “So few musicians ever miss a show due to illness or injury. They’d rather pass out on stage doing what they love than sit at home, miss the gig, and be miserable.” I found this to be so true in my own life and at the Corning Opera House!

Many years ago, I taught vocal music. I was moving the piano and bench to accompany the choir for that evening’s concert. As I went to sit on the bench, my pinky finger ended up between the lid of the bench and the base – breaking my finger at the last joint. I wrapped it and the concert went on, I did miss a few bass notes on the piano, though. The next day I went to the doctor.

At the opera house, the first one I remember was an Elvis impersonator who broke his foot the night before his scheduled Corning show. He got excited at a football game, jumped up and landed wrong. So, 24 hours later he is on our stage, wearing a boot, but thoroughly entertaining the audience with his Elvis’ moves, even attempting the splits!

Another time I remember the group receiving a phone call from their lawyer about 30 minutes before the show was to start, about their treasurer embezzling thousands of dollars from them. There were many phone calls in those 30 minutes but at 7 pm they put on their smiles and persevered with no hint of the troubles they were encountering!

Five minutes until show time and the lead singer’s cell phone rings in his pocket saying his mother-in-law was in a severe accident, unconscious and being life-flighted. He went from energized to shock instantly. His band mates gave him a pep talk and the show started on time unbeknownst to the audience how his heart was breaking. The entire intermission he was on the phone planning how he was going to get from Corning to the hospital hours away. The second half went off without a hitch and they performed so well they received a standing ovation.

A female performer had a comical phone call a few minutes before she took the stage. Her children called to tell her the chickens got loose and could she please come home (Tennessee) and help them gather the chickens! She replies no, ask your dad for help.

In my opinion, these performers stood out from the crowd! They projected confidence in their own abilities and were able to roll with the punches. As soon as their feet touched the stage, they became enthusiastic, pulling the audience into their songs and stories. Plus, they were committed – their words meant something. Success is no accident! But a lot of hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrificing, and loving what you do! Here at the opera house, we will learn from these people to keep persevering and to be grateful in the moment!

Sincerely,  
De Heaton,  
Executive Director  
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