

Music and the Arts in the Fox Cities

by

Joanne Bozeman, All Saints Parishioner

Our beautiful church is situated in [Appleton, Wisconsin](#), at the edge of a vibrant [downtown](#) business and entertainment district. It is also next door to [Lawrence University](#), a small, select liberal arts college that includes an excellent and relatively large [Conservatory of Music](#). My husband and I both teach voice at the Conservatory, have lived nearby for many years and have grown to love and appreciate this remarkable, progressive community. Appleton proper has a population of about 75,000 and is the crown jewel of a necklace of small cities and villages that border the Fox River. Though the total population of the [Fox Cities](#) is about 350,000, it features the friendliness and lack of congestion of a smaller community. But the year-round music and arts scene here belies our small-town atmosphere! The arts in general have a huge effect on the quality of life in our area and we are convinced that for someone relocating from even a large metropolitan area, the amount and variety of cultural activities will surprise and impress.

Perhaps it might be easier to convey the quality our arts environment if I simply write in real time. In about an hour, my husband, who also teaches voice at LU, and I will go to the [Lawrence Memorial Chapel](#) to attend an event on [Lawrence's Artist Series](#) by concert pianist Jonathan Biss. Tomorrow night, we will attend the inaugural [Lawrence Choral Department](#) concert, featuring three fine choral groups. Next week the [Lawrence Voice Department](#), from which All Saints recruits its Choral Scholars, and the [Lawrence Piano Department](#) will host vocal coach and collaborative pianist Margo Garrett for a residency of three days. Oh, I mustn't forget that our long-standing community-based [Attic Chamber Theatre](#) presented a series of Gershwin concerts this week, directed by a member of All Saints. Anyway, the same night as the choir concert, the [Fox Valley Symphony](#) presents its season opener at the [Fox Cities Performing Arts Center](#) (PAC), which is the heart of downtown Appleton's entertainment district. The soloist is the esteemed concert artist and violin professor at Lawrence, [Wen-Lei Gu](#), playing the Shostakovich Violin Concerto. Sadly, we aren't going to be able to make that one or the [Metropolitan Opera live broadcast](#) of *Norma* tomorrow afternoon. Well, there will be more MET broadcasts later this year. And when we can't get to all the LU ensemble concerts, we can watch them later on the archives of the [live stream webcasts](#). Onwards: Sunday afternoon, we will be back in the Chapel as [Lawrence University Orchestra](#) plays its opening concert of the year. Next weekend, we will attend the biennial [Lawrence Kaleidoscope](#) concert at the PAC - 75 uninterrupted minutes of all the major ensembles of the Conservatory. It sells out the 2,000-seat main auditorium of the PAC every time it's presented. A few weeks later, scads of jazz lovers in the Fox Cities will enjoy the annual [Fred Sturm Jazz Celebration Weekend](#) at Lawrence. It features two concerts with internationally renowned jazz musicians and the

[Lawrence University Jazz Ensemble](#). We find it difficult to squeeze even just a few of the many Broadway [touring performances](#) that come to the PAC. But we will try to get to *Waitress* in late November or maybe *The King and I* in early '18. On the way to the PAC we may hear live music coming from a bar or a venue like the new [Gibson Music Hall](#), which regularly features live original music by local and touring bands. We're hoping to see *The Nutcracker* with the Fox Valley Symphony in December, featuring Appleton's [Makaroff Youth Ballet](#). December will also bring performances by [Lawrence Academy of Music Choirs](#) and the [Appleton Boychoir](#). It's not really Christmas until we attend the Boychoir's annual [Lessons and Carols](#) in the Chapel. And so it goes. Honestly, we find it impossible to attend all the worthy musical and theatrical offerings that grace local stages and theaters. In my opinion, that is a good problem! Please see below for many more links to local arts organizations and other community information.

Music

[Lawrence University Conservatory of Music](#)

[Brombaugh Pipe Organ - Lawrence University Memorial Chapel](#)

[Artist and Jazz Artist Series](#)

Faculty and Student Recitals

[Opera at Lawrence](#)

[Lawrence Symphony Orchestra](#)

[Lawrence University Wind Ensemble](#)

[Lawrence University Jazz Ensemble](#) and other student jazz and ethno-music ensembles

[Lawrence Academy of Music](#)

[Girl Choir](#)

[Young Men's Chorus](#)

[Appleton Boychoir](#)

[Fox Valley Symphony](#)

[Youth Orchestra](#)

[Fox Cities Performing Arts Center](#)

[newVoices](#) (semi-professional choral ensemble)

[Mile of Music](#) (a summer festival featuring all original music)

[Summer Organ Series](#)

[Fox Jazz Fest](#)

And beyond: [Door County](#) Music Festivals

[Birch Creek](#)

[Peninsula Music Festival](#)

Theater

[Fox Cities Performing Arts Center](#)

[Lawrence University Theatre Arts Department](#)

[Attic Chamber Theatre](#)

Art Museums

[Trout Museum of Art](#) (also features a jazz series)
[Lawrence University Wriston Art Center Galleries](#)
[Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass](#)
[Paine Art Center](#)

Dance

[Makaroff Youth Ballet](#)
[International Folk Dancers of the Fox Valley](#)
A number of dance studios of other genres, including ballroom

Other Area Attractions:

[Downtown Appleton](#) ([Farm Market](#), [Oktoberfest](#), Beer Walks and more)
[The Building for Kids Childrens Museum](#)
[The History Museum at the Castle](#)
[Hearthstone Historic House Museum](#)
[Art at the Park](#)
[Fox River Shopping Mall](#) (biggest outside Milwaukee)
Many restaurants, including ethnic establishments
Craft breweries
[Green Bay Botanical Gardens](#)
[University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh](#), [Green Bay](#) and [Fox Valley](#)
[Fox Valley Technical College](#)
Active local sports scene from [Green Bay Packers](#), to the [Timber Rattlers](#),
to high school and youth leagues

Ease of Transportation:

[Appleton International Airport](#) (15 minutes from downtown; served by Delta, American, United) Delta Airlines can get you from Appleton to La Guardia in 6 hours. [Austin Straubel International Airport](#) in Green Bay, offering more flight options, is only 30 minutes to the north.

By car:

3.5 hours to Chicago
1.30 hours to Milwaukee
1.75 hours to Madison
4.5 hours to Minneapolis
2.25 hours to Door County
3 hours to the North Woods

We have a robust local economy based on manufacturing, paper, construction and insurance industries. These companies have a history of investing in our community, especially in the arts.

Appleton was recently [ranked 48th out of the 50](#) most desirable cities to live in the US. We have a reasonable cost of living, including housing.

For more visuals of our community, see:

This is Appleton (LU video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5T-0FbCq3P4>

This is Appleton – LU Winter Edition

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08UMAQx27MY>