

The Clark Fork Valley Press
And The Paradise Center Present

Solveig Nygaard

Thompson Falls Junior High School
Spotlight on the Arts – August 2022



“Spotlight on the Arts” by The Paradise Center honors and encourages students in the arts by highlighting their talent and acknowledging the support they receive through their schools and teachers.

Solveig Nygaard is a multitalented eighth grader in Thompson Falls. At fourteen she is proficient with three musical instruments, sings in the school choir, and composes her own music. Her music teacher, Lisa Mickelson, is clearly proud of Solveig’s accomplishments and has watched and encouraged the young musician over time.

Learning to play piano at six years of age, Solveig still uses that instrument as the foundation of her understanding of music. In the fifth grade she joined the band,

choosing the trumpet as her instrument. Her mother and brother play the trumpet, so she was assured of assistance if she needed it.

Eighteen months ago, her grandfather gave her his 60-year-old ukulele. Some years ago, he was in the military and purchased the hand-made instrument in Hawaii. It is a famous brand, a

Kamaka, founded by a Hawaiian family in 1916 that is credited for creating some of the finest ukuleles ever made.

In addition to the very different musical instruments that Solveig plays – piano, trumpet, and ukulele – her composing skills began before she had a musical instrument to play. When asked what comes first, lyrics or melody, she replies that it depends on a lot of variables. Her compositions sometimes begin with lyrics and other times with a melody. Her most creative moments seem to be before falling asleep at night. She also credits a portion of learning about composing to a song-writing section that is part of her musical education at Thompson Falls Elementary School. She believes that once you settle on a chord progression, the rest of a composition will come more easily.

Solveig has participated in several musical events, including a talent show and at the Trout Creek Huckleberry Festival, where she shared some of her original musical pieces.

Mrs. Mickelson noted that students participating in choir look to Solveig for confidence when they perform. She sets the pitch for the group, which gets them going in style.

Taylor Swift and Grace VanderWaal are among Solveig's favorite singers/songwriters. Her encouragement for fellow musicians/composers is to keep growing, not be afraid to try, avoid being too structured in their work, and grow in ways that reflect their unique approaches.

The future for Solveig includes the possibility of participating in a song-writing contest and recording her music to share on YouTube or through CDs. She is planning and building her own recording system.