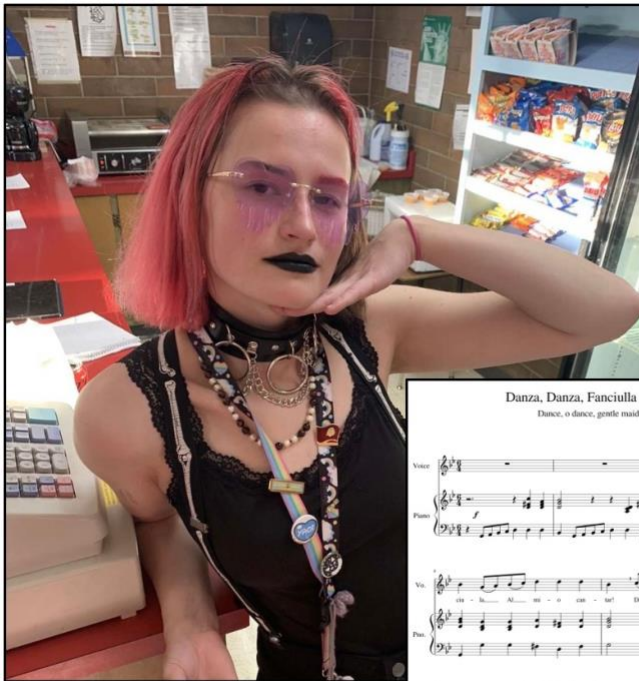


The Paradise Center Presents

## Serenity Barrus

Thompson Falls High School  
Spotlight on the Arts – April 2024



Interviewed by Karen Thorson

*“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.*



Students involved in music have many avenues to achieve their goals. “A road less traveled,” but taken by some students, is the pursuit of perfecting their voice. Serenity Barrus is one of those. A 19-year-old senior at Thomson Falls High School, she is not just a singer, she is an opera singer with a long-

term desire to perform professionally. It is no surprise to learn that her favorite musical era is Baroque, a musical genre with roots in the late 1600s and still treasured today as dramatic, energetic, complex, and diverse.

Barrus has loved music her entire life. She recalls that as early as she can remember, she was dancing and singing to music whenever and wherever she heard it. She recalls her grandparent’s patience with her noise and movements. She says they tolerated “a lot of it”!

In elementary grades at Trout Creek School, her interest in music began to take form in a more conventional way. She not only sang, but she also played the violin and the guitar, both with a classical approach.

A favorite piece of music for Barrus is by composer Francesco Durante, titled *Danza, Danza, Fanciulla Gentila*. It is a delightful invitation to dance, in Italian, which translates to “dance, o dance, gentle maiden.” Various opera singers have recordings available on YouTube and are well worth a listen.

Completing a musical goal from several years ago still resonates for Barrus. She began transcribing a 15-minute classical violin piece into an 8-minute vocal performance. Time to complete the work is currently elusive, but she is committed to it. Her passion for it is evident in her description of the process.

Barrus recently participated in the Montana High School Association's District Music Festival on Friday and Saturday, April 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. She performed both in a duet, with a friend, and gave a solo performance. For the future, she has auditioned to attend the University of Montana to earn a degree in music and she hopes to develop a professional career.

For individuals interested in singing, especially for opera, Barrus says "Go for it!" She then quickly adds, "Practice 40 hours a week, work hard, and find a teacher if you are able."

As a person who values privacy, Barrus hopes to eventually have a home that provides quiet space but is also located in a place that makes travel easy. She recognizes that a career in music will require travel.

Whether she pursues a professional career, or sings only occasionally, Barrus will keep music as a prime focus of her life. Given her dedication and passion, she will be successful no matter what life brings.