

Published March 1st, 2023

High school students prep for fun spring productions

By Ashley Dong



The Miramonte High School cast of "Grease" rehearse the song "Summer Nights" featuring Danny Zuko (junior Diego Aguilar) and Sandy Dumbrowski (junior Lauren Wagner). Photo Jeff Heyman

casts are dedicated and enthusiastic. I'm proud of their commitment to the quality `bar' we have set over the years and of the tremendous participation. Many in this show will have spent practically every night in the theater from January to the middle of March," Pinkham said. "Newsies" will run from March 10-12 and March 17-19 with four shows for each cast.

"I'm so proud of our casts for putting so much energy and excitement into the shows, and I'm really looking forward to performing in this amazing production!" said sophomore Sofia Rose, who plays the newsie, Race.

The next show to open is Miramonte's production of "Grease" on March 17. Set at Rydell High, the new girl Sandy Dumbrowski - played by junior Lauren Wagner - and the leader of the greasers Danny Zuko - played by junior Diego Aguilar - struggle to sustain their summer romance as they navigate the ups and downs of high school in this iconic '50s musical. Directed by drama teacher Heather Cousins and choir teacher Meredith Hawkins, the show will run March 17-19 and March 25-26. The show is primarily student-produced: the stagecraft class built the set, designed the costumes, and will run lights and sound during the shows, while a student band plays the live soundtrack.

This year, the "Grease" cast created a TikTok account, and their first video went viral, reaching over 3 million views. "We decided to make a TikTok because we figured it would be a fun way for the cast to bond. We also thought it was a good way to publicize the show because many people have worked very hard to bring the show together, and it should get all the attention it deserves," said senior Sabrina Hernandez, who plays Betty Rizzo.

The cast is extremely excited for performances to begin. "I feel very proud of the show we've created. I would say that our cast has a special bond, and we've all gotten very close over the past few months. When the show is over, I will miss playing Danny since it's grown to be one of my favorite roles. We hope to see you at Rydell High!" Aguilar said.

Acalanes's musical, "Legally Blonde," is set at a much more prestigious school: Harvard University. From March 22-25, Acalanes' theater will be home to the bubbly and sharp-witted Elle Woods - played by junior Lux Downing Griggs - and the charming and well-read Emmett Forrest - played by sophomore Cameron Zeder. Supported by her Delta Nu sorority sisters, Elle Woods chases the man of her dreams to Harvard, embarking on a journey of self-discovery which involves eventful visits to the beauty salon, many Harvard law lectures, and innumerable moments of female empowerment.

The show is directed by Hawkins, who teaches at both Miramonte and Acalanes, and drama teacher Edward Meehan. Like "Grease," "Legally Blonde" is led by teacher directors, but is fully student produced. "All of our performers have been working very hard to fine-tune their acting, singing, and dancing. In addition, our directors, pit orchestra, stagecraft team, and costume designers have been putting in so much hard work. Everyone involved in "Legally Blonde" cares a lot about how the show will turn out," junior Monty Gumabay, who plays Professor Callahan, said.

Now, the only thing these performances need is an audience. "When we have a live audience in front of us, they bring the energy, the reactions, the applause, and the laughter, which is the last piece of the puzzle,"

Hawkins said.

Whether joining the newsies in their strike against newspaper publisher Joseph Pulitzer, driving around with the greasers in the automatic, systematic, and hydromatic Greased Lighting, or hanging out with Bruiser at the Old Valley Mall - or all three - come out and support these talented high schoolers!

Ticket information: For Miramonte's show, "Grease," visit www.showtix4u.com/event-details/70947. For Campolindo's show, "Newsies," visit <http://campochoir.com/tickets/>. Acalanes ticket sales open March 6 at www.ahsperformingarts.org.

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA