

Young thespians take charge

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT
The Herald

They may not be professional thespians but members of the Halton Hills Recreation and Park's Department musical theatre camp know how to steal the limelight.

That's exactly what they did Thursday night at the John Elliott Theatre in the Halton Hills Cultural Centre when they presented their own musical play, "Wenzell, Wesley and the Wizard."

The evening performance of the comedic play culminated a three-week training camp which started July 22 when local actors and theatre hands became guest speakers and taught the campers how to create sets, write songs, direct, block, project their voice and sing in front of an audience.

With this new knowledge, the children proceeded to create their own play, complete with songs and verse, said Elizabeth Weststeyn who leads the campers along with Sarah Hobbs and junior leaders, Naomi Assenheim and Tim Hunter. The camp was supervised by Mark Duke.

"Considering they only had three weeks, they came up with a really good play," she said.

"Wenzell, Wesley and the Wizard" is set in medieval times at a king's castle where the popular King (Tristan Yates) is happy to announce the marriage of his daughter, played by Caitlin Radley-Walters Wall, to a prince. But the prince, portrayed by Mike Armstrong, has no interest in the beautiful princess save for the kingdom her father rules.

The story continues as narrators Eric Gee and Brianne Beaumont tell how the evil prince consults with a wizard (Sophie Johnson) and her helpers (Cairis Radley-Walters Wall, Julie Brown and Annelise Brand) to find a way to kill the King.

The wizard gives the prince's guards (Willie Johnson, Loui Archambault and Tristan McCallum) poisonous powder which the prince spreads on the king's food during a feast he's hosting to celebrate the upcoming nuptials.

But before the prince can complete the task, a good guard of the king (Craig Anderson) sees the Prince and after the king dies, realizes the prince killed the king.

Into the picture steps a Black Knight, played by Ryan Giessen, who sweeps the princess off her feet and punishes those involved with the king's murder.

The campers, who wrote the entire script, and created most of the set, didn't leave out any chance for a good laugh.

When the wicked prince tells



The good King, played by Tristan Yates, clutches his throat in agony as the deadly poison his future son-in-law mixed with his food begins to take effect in front of his townspeople, Julie Brown, Annelise Brand and Colin Edington (left) and the Black Knight, (immediate left of King), played by Ryan Giessen. Also watching as the King suffers in the throes of death is the Princess, Caitlin Radley-Walters Wall (immediate right of King). The King's death is one dramatic scene from the play Wenzell, Wesley and Wizard which children in the Halton Hills Recreation and Parks Department Musical Theatre Camp wrote and performed in John Elliott Theatre Aug. 8. (Herald photo by Lisa Boonstoppel-Pot)

his depraved guards he's going to kill the king, he casually asks, "So, any ideas how we can knock him off?"

The wizard's helpers have a humorous scene discussing one of the deplorable guards.

"Do you remember the guard that came over. Did you think he was cute," one helper asks the other.

"Yeah, I love a man in uniform," the second helper responds.

The third agrees but adds, forlornly, "it's too bad I'm going to wizardry school in September. There's no time for a summer relationship."

Even the innocent princess goes for a laugh at the risk of appearing unladylike. After meeting the Black Knight she says to her mother, "Oh mother, the Black Knight is so hot. I would love to be courted by him."

Other cast members include, Kim Jasper as the Queen, Scott Herbert as the court Jester and Colin Edington as the nobleman/townsperson and trumpeter.

The musical theatre camp is one of several summer camps Halton Hills Recreation and Parks Department puts on. Other camps include Studio Art, Day Camp, and Outdoor Adventures.

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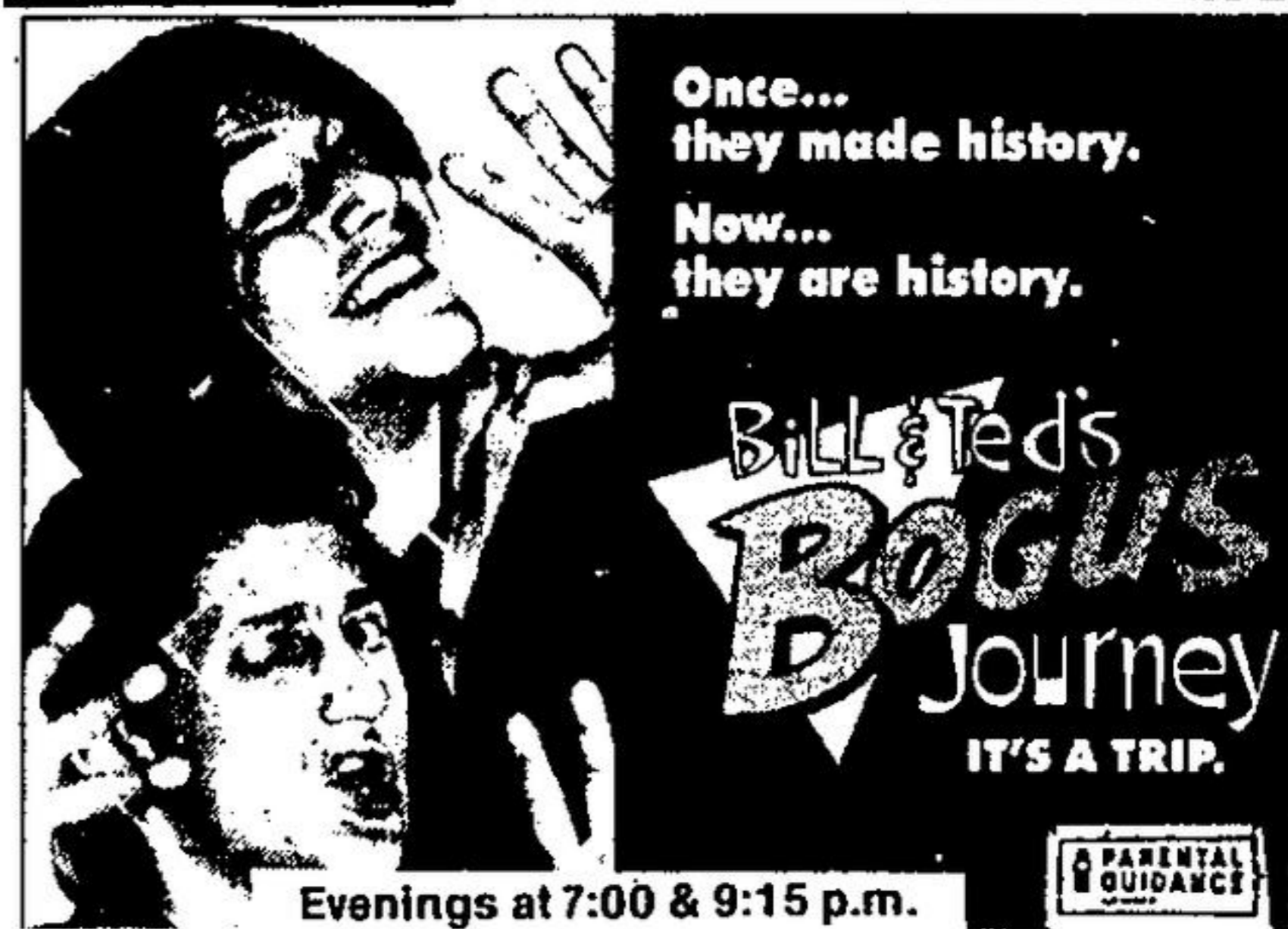


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