

Academy's young actors 'Grease up' for latest production

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

A flurry of poodle skirts and leather jackets will help bring the musical Grease to the stage in Stouffville this week.

It's the York Durham Academy of the Performing Arts' first production of 2007.

The lead role of Danny is handled by Markham resident Robby Wierzbicki, while Stouffville's Breanne Maloney plays the girl from the right side of the tracks, Sandy. Both are Grade 8 students.

Show days are Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

The cast is "knee-deep in rehearsals now", YDAPA spokesperson Susan Dekker said. The cast has been practising since September, including the Christmas holidays.

The story is set in the 1950s, when Danny and Sandy meet and fall in love during the summer.

But the romance will be short-lived, they think, once school starts.

As it turns out, they end up at the same school, where their social differences challenge their romance.

The cast of about 30 youngsters

perform such hits as Summer Lovin' and Greased Lightning. The performers, who are in grades 4 to 8, are directed by the duo of Cam Pegler and David O'Reilly.

Both directors have performed with the musical theatre company since its inception more than five years ago.

They custom-designed the massive frame to hold the black theatrical curtains framing the stage in EastRidge Evangelical Missionary Church.

New members join the non-profit theatre company each year, the majority in the senior elemen-

tary school grades.

But there is also a strong contingent of adult actors who are part of the company.

While the original focus of the theatre was as a forum for young people, many adults also wanted to take part, Mrs. Dekker said.

There are several adult roles in the Wizard of Oz production, slated for April 12 to 14 at EastRidge.

In addition to Grease and the Wizard of Oz, YDAPA's season includes The Academy Children's Choir presenting The Jungle Book from Feb. 22 to 24 at Glad Park Public School in Stouffville, Oliver

from May 17 to 19 at the YCDSB Performing Arts Centre, as well as a dinner theatre, Clue, in June. YDAPA's first dinner theatre, Little Shop of Horrors, received a positive response last year.

Tickets for Grease are \$19 for adults, \$15 for students and seniors and \$9 for children under six.

EastRidge is on Tenth Line north of Main Street.

To order tickets, log on to www.y-shows.ca to download an order form or call 905-640-0823, ext. 3 to arrange to pick up tickets at the academy's office in the Silver Jubilee Club building at Main and Market streets.

Stouffville Christian School welcomes prospective parents

An open house is being held at Stouffville Christian School Wednesday.

Staff and students will be on hand from 9 a.m. to noon and 7 to 8 p.m.

The open house is for parents who are considering enrolling their children for the next academic year.

The school is at 565 Uxbridge-Pickering Townline. Go east on Main Street to the York-Durham Line and turn south. The Uxbridge-Pickering Townline is the first street on the left.

School officials announced late last year they're looking for a new home in Stouffville.

For more information, call 905-640-3297.

All-ages bereavement support

Evergreen Hospice is offering bereavement support groups this winter to meet the special needs of children, teens and adults in Markham and Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The death of a loved one impacts people differently at different ages, Jan Pearce, executive director of Evergreen Hospice, said.

Stormy Nights-Sunny Days is held once a week for children after school over eight weeks. Children can meet in a structured, positive setting to explore their feelings of loss and develop ways to cope with the changes in their lives.

Digital Memories is designed to help teenagers work through their grief by using the latest in videos, cameras and computer technology to create a video about the family member who has died. The videos are recorded on DVDs and combine photographs, text, music, home video footage and interviews with family members to create an audiovisual collage of memories.

Circle of Hope for adults is an eight-week bereavement self-help group based on the belief that sharing common experiences and concerns can aid in the healing process.

Registration is required, but there is no cost. Call Evergreen at 905-472-5014 or 1-800-632-0465.

CLARIFICATION

Half of co-op students in trades

A statistic in the story *Get a Job, Whitchurch-Stouffville* in the Jan. 13 Sun-Tribune requires clarification.

About half of the school's co-operative education students are entering trades.

Around 25 per cent of SDSS students are in the co-op program.





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