

Play within a play earns top spot

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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Swede senior Rhett Lindholm wore an orange T-shirt to district one-act play competition last year.

Lindholm thinks it helped when the Swedes qualified for state.

He repeated the good-luck ritual again this year and the Swedes swept the B-5 competition for a return trip to state.

The team will perform “The Play Called Noah’s Flood” in the Johnny Carson Theatre Friday morning in Norfolk.

Class B competition includes Ogallala, Bennington, York, Pierce and Concordia.

Senior Trenton Long said he thinks the ensemble, Frogsham villagers without speaking parts, helped seal the win.

“And all of the leads work well together,” Long said. “We have good chemistry.”

Fellow senior Shaylee Scott feels this district win is a bit sweeter because the cast is closer.

Brett Mann, another senior, said more people have larger roles this year than in last year’s play “Hiding in the Open” which makes the win feel great.

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“We received nine outstanding actor awards,” he said.

Because the colorful village set wasn't complete until districts, senior Betsy Potter said two of the three judges—who had judged the play earlier in the season—may have been surprised.

“When they saw the other plays at district, not much had changed,” Potter said.

Mann shared a secret to the medieval play.



“If we mess up, it looks like it's part of acting because we're doing a play about a bad play,” he said.

For example, a rainbow after the flood, illustrated when Lindholm waves a rainbow flag, didn't come off as expected at districts.

After the second wave, the flag tangled in the peak of a house.

Lori Long, who directs the play with help from Erin Feather, said the win wasn't a unanimous judges' decision.

“We're in a tough district but are confident that we can take a great show to state and compete with the best of the best and represent the district well,” Long said.

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At districts, she said the judges commented that the ensemble was “spot on” and that the actors and actresses who did not have lines were still believable and in character throughout the play.

“That makes the entire performance more believable and solid,” Long said.

Long said the Swedes’ biggest challenge this week will be themselves and showing up at rehearsal.

“And not being over-confident or shell-shocked in the auditorium,” she said, noting that the Johnny Carson Theatre seats more than 1,200 people.

She said the great thing about the team is that “they are in for each other, not themselves.”

“This is definitely the most selfless group I’ve worked with,” Long said. “They want to help each other improve and are willing to take risks so that it benefits the whole.”

Because the cast is made up of nearly half seniors plus other veterans, Long said there’s a base of understanding of expectations and leadership.

“Humble, talented, and determined...those are our kids,” she said.

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