

'25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee' musical comes to GHS stage Feb. 23-24

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Thursday, 14 February 2013 14:23 -



Six young people in the throes of puberty, overseen by grown-ups who barely managed to escape childhood themselves, learn that winning isn't everything and that losing doesn't necessarily make you a loser.

That sums up the "25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," according to director Ernie Blecha. The musical will grace the stage of the performing arts center on Feb. 22-23.

Rehearsals have been underway by Gothenburg High School choir students since the beginning of January.

Auditions were in December.

Blecha said the setting is a junior high school gym in which the spelling bee is hosted.

Winners from local elementary and middle schools arrive and check in with the bee's long time hostess and former champion, Rona Lisa Pereti (Carlin Daharsh).

Audience volunteers are also welcomed to the stage.

However speller Olive Ostrovsky (Rachel Rice) does not have her entrance fee and vice principal Douglas Panch (Jon Rehmert) is announced as the day's word pronouncer. Panch is a last-minute substitute for an ailing superintendent.

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When a speller misses a word, a bell will ring and the speller must immediately leave the stage, escorted by the bee's comfort-counselor, Mitch Mahoney (Joe Darling).

Blecha noted that the Lied Center in Lincoln will host the "25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" June 7-8.

"It began on Broadway and really is making a name for itself," he said.

Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$5 for students and children.

They can be bought at Gothenburg State Bank, First State Bank and in the high school office and are also available at the door.

The music and lyrics of the musical, based on a book by Rachel Sheinkin, are by William Finn. The idea was conceived by Rebecca Feldman with additional material offered by Jay Reiss.

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| SPELLING BEE CAST MEMBERS | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--|
| Chip Tokratino | Rhet Lindholm | Carl Grubenierr | Paul.....Eric Cole |
| Lead Counselor | Drew Mann | Archer Jensen | Chas |
| William Barfee | Cody Cooper | Leaf's Mom | Kyla Trevino |
| Loganwe Schwarz | Staley Gibbons | Leaf's Dad | Alex Jorgenson |
| Marcy Park | Abbie Mazour | Jesse | Jeff Soimer |
| Olive Ostrovsky | Rachel Rice | Voice | Jacob Franzen |
| Rosa Lisa Perretti | Carlin Daharsh | Leaf's siblings | MariqM & choreographer |
| Vice Principal Douglas Peach | Jon Sabmert | Shaylee Scott | Lauren Andre |
| Mitch Mahoney | Joe Darling | Brook | Shelby Loostron |
| Community volunteer #1 | Betsy Potter | Pinecone | Alaya Collins |
| | | Landscape | Roman Schmidt |
| | | | Ernie Blecha, Trudy Elso, Erin Feather and Stephanie Block |