



Drama students prep for sectionals

Gloria Hong
Staff Writer

Twenty-three actors will perform this month, some lacking costumes, props and scenery. This isn't a mistake. Students are performing in Group Interpretation and Contest Play, which are competitive acting groups.

This year's Contest Play, a group of eight directed by media center coordinator Lauren Dennhardt, will be performing *And They Dance Real Slow in Jackson*, a story about a polio-stricken, wheelchair-bound girl living in a small Indiana town in the 1950s.

The lead, junior Meghan Shanahan, had never used a wheelchair prior to the play.

"It was so awkward at the beginning and everyone laughed at me," Shanahan said. "Now I'm a pro at it."

Contest Play also challenges actors to

portray more than one character without costume changes.

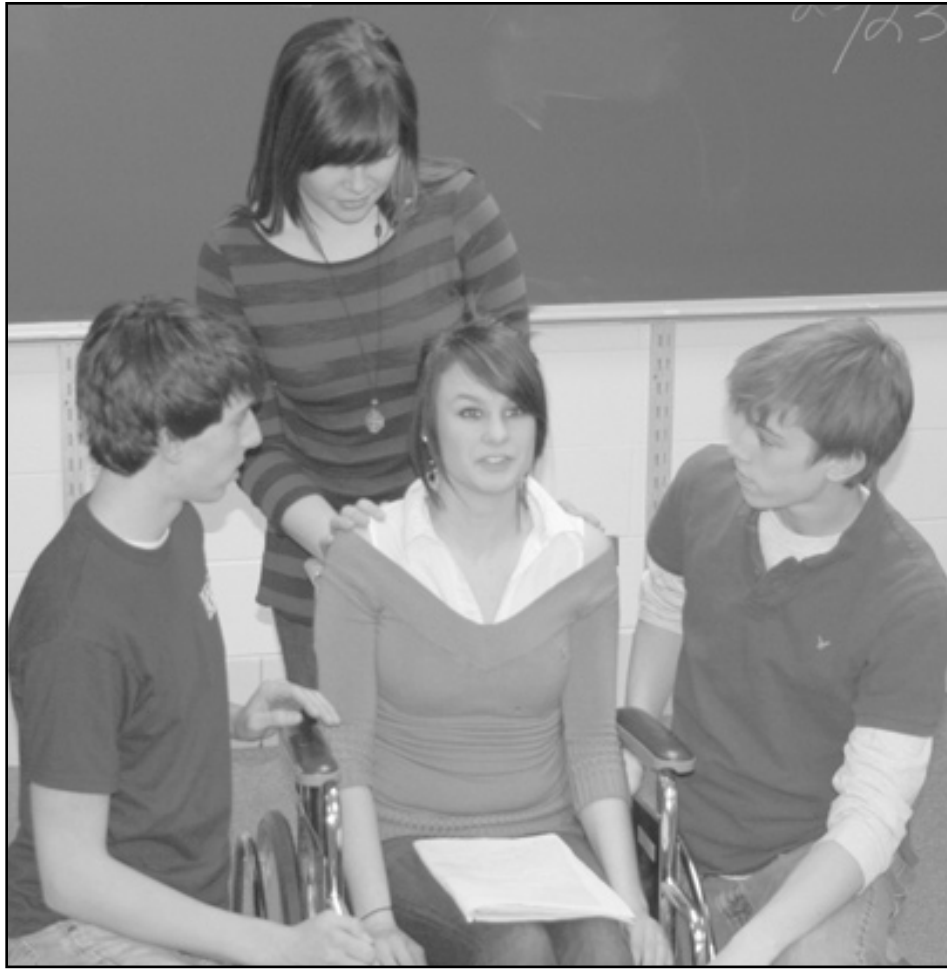
"I change characters by changing my gestures, my voice and the way I interact with other characters," junior Jacque Piccolino explained.

Strict rules don't only apply to Contest Play. Group Interpretation, directed by English teacher Marilyn Berdick, faces similar restrictions.

"Their challenge is to make the characters come alive to the audience without the use of costumes, set, props or the ability to directly relate to one another onstage," Dennhardt said.

The 15 Group Interpretation students will portray pre-teen spelling bee contestants in the *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* without the usual visual effects of a production.

"We have to know the story line well enough to play it genuinely even though it may seem out of context," senior Jenny



Logue photos by Christine Chen

ACTING OUT OF THE BOX. Group Interpretation and Contest Play rehearse for competitions that limit the actors' costumes, props and movement.

Levin said.

One unique element of the Group Interpretation competition is its requirement that all group members remain onstage and facing the audience throughout the performance.

"It can be kind of awkward at the beginning, but as we practice more and more, we gradually get used to it," sophomore Jimmy Schiffer said. "The actors become more comfortable performing in that style."

The unusual circumstances of these competitions, as well as their extensive time commitment, bring students together as teams, according to Dennhardt.

"You usually don't expect competitions to foster relationships, but they do," Den-

nhardt said.

After all of the rehearsals, the teams will put their work to the test at the sectional tournament at Lake Park High School on March 8.

"We're the school to beat in our sectional," Dennhardt said.

After sectionals, the state tournament will be held at the University of Illinois in Springfield on March 13-15.

As an additional rehearsal prior to competition, both groups will practice at school next week.

Contest Play will perform in the auditorium during periods 1-3 on March 5 and 5-8 on March 6, while Group Interpretation will perform during periods 5-8 on March 5 and 1-4 on March 6.

Turnabout offers decades of dancing

Sarah Ostman
Staff Writer

Instead of one theme this year, Turnabout has 10: "Dancing through the Decades," ranging from the 20s to the future. Attendees can expect to hear tunes spanning all the years but mostly contemporary music.

Turnabout differs from the other dances in attire and attendance.

"Turnabout is a lot less formal," junior Meagan Murphy said. "I don't get my hair done, and most people wear shorter dresses. It also seems like an underclassmen dance. Not too many seniors attend."

Unlike Homecoming and Prom, Turnabout tradition involves girls asking guys.

"I like the concept of Turnabout," sophomore Kelsey Loden said. "It offers the ladies a point of view on what it's like to ask someone, and we don't have to wait to be asked."

Following the tradition, Loden asked a friend with a creative plan.

"One thing we do is give each other movie lists, so I made a movie list, and when certain words in movie titles were highlighted, it spelled out 'Will You Go to Turnabout with Me,'" Loden said.

Freshman Brittany Cieplinski expressed her excitement for her first Turnabout dance.

"I'm looking forward to just having fun and hanging out with my friends," Cieplinski said.

In order to accommodate for the new 11 p.m. weekend



Logue photo by John Beyer

PUT YOUR DANCING SHOES ON. Turnabout's new time, attendance rules and ticket sales reflect security concerns.

curfew, the hours have been changed from 8-11 p.m. to 7:30-10:30 p.m.

Additionally, tickets will not be sold at the door and guests must present a valid high school ID to get in.

According to Social Studies teacher and Student Council sponsor Amanda Schmidt, the new changes are for safety reasons.

"The changes are for greater security and protection of the students," Schmidt said.

Although students may not appreciate the changes, Schmidt says there are several logical reasons for them.

"We feel like we have better control of what goes on at our school if we can communicate with other schools and parents," Schmidt said. "With guests over 21 especially, there is not necessarily a school to contact, and their parents are no longer liable for them."

Schmidt doesn't think the new rules will affect attendance.

"I don't see them really impacting the dance. Also, looking at the numbers, there were not a significant number of people who were bringing guests over 21 anyway," Schmidt said.

Tickets for Turnabout will be sold outside the cafeteria during all lunch periods and until 4:30 p.m. today.

Leapling turns four today

Shannon Fitzgerald and Beth Delany
Contributing Writers

Those born on Feb. 29, known as leaplings, include sophomore Michael Rumps, who was born on Feb. 29, 1992. Counting only leap year birthdays, Rumps is the youngest student at Fremd.

"Technically, I will be turning 16. But since Feb. 29 rolls around every four years, I am turning four this month," Rumps said.

Having a leap year birthday means Rumps cannot always celebrate on the actual day.

"On a non-leap year, I guess technically I celebrate a day early. I celebrate my birthday on Feb. 28, but most people celebrate on March 1," Rumps said.

"On a leap year, I just celebrate on a grander scale, but nothing extraordinary, maybe hang out with my friends or something," Rumps said. "My friends all get me birthday cards that would be geared for someone of my leap year age. I got a Barney card when I turned 'three.'"

Rumps says being born on Feb. 29 isn't as special as people might think.

"I think that it is pretty cool being born on Feb. 29, but I don't think it is amazing or anything," Rumps said. "It's not like I got to choose when I was born. It was just dumb luck."

So what is the worst part about having his birthday on leap day? Everyone makes a big deal about it.

"When somebody finds out that I am a 'leap day baby,' they always say, 'Oh my gosh, that is so cool. You must be like six years old, right?' Nobody ever guesses it right," Rumps said.