

LIL'BITS

All The World's A Stage

BY SARAH WETZEL
For the Plain Talk

In the words of Shakespeare, 'All the world's a stage' which included Prentiss Park in Vermillion last weekend as the South Dakota Shakespeare Festival drew crowds from far and near.

Though the majority of the actors in the production of Macbeth were seasoned veterans of the stage, a few younger company members stepped up with the rest.

"I have done some theater stuff in the past," said Auggy, 14. "I haven't been in something with mikes before. It's more professional than anything I've done before. It's been fun so far."

Auggy played Fleance, an apparition and a messenger in the production.

"I've learned a lot about acting and Shakespeare," he said. "It's fun being around really good actors too and watching them. I've learned stuff like it's important to keep your lines fresh."

Rylan, 10, also took part in the production playing Macduff's son and one of the ghosts.

"It's been really cool," he said. "I'm actually one of the two kids in that play. Shakespearean acting is different because when you're acting you just act and the words are normal. Shakespeare has harder words because they're older. They're all pretty weird."

Rylan also enjoyed learning from the more experienced actors.

"Some of the things I learned is some exercises to do before you warm up and how to project instead of yelling," he said. "Projecting you're actually using your lungs. Yelling you're using your voice box."

The hardest part according to Rylan, however, was not the words or projection.

"Probably laying on the ground with all the bugs," he said.

A hardship which actually complimented his death scene according to his sister.

"It looks like he's really dead with all the bugs swarming around him," said Renae, 7.

To an outsider it might seem intimidating for the younger actors but Rylan said that is not the case.

"Some of the other plays I've been in have had adults," he said. "I've been in a whole bunch of other children's plays like Miracle on 34th St, Treasure Island, Law and Order, Princess and the Pea, and Tortoise and the Hare."

Participating in any theatrical production begins with auditions, as did Macbeth.

Auggy reported nerves but has discovered how to accept them and move through the experience.



THOMAS HATZENBUHLER/FOR THE PLAIN TALK

Tony Garcia (who played the role of Macduff), left, and Michael Straino (who played the roles of Malcolm and the 1st Murderer), right, instruct a course on stage combat during a workshop held during the South Dakota Shakespeare Festival.

"I've heard that it's good to be nervous for something but not too nervous that you can't talk," he said. "You try to relax."

Rebecca, 14, also auditioned for the show saying the auditions were very different from previous community theater ones.

"Usually for that they hand you a script and say turn to this page and then you be this character," she said. "For the Shakespeare auditions we had to have a prepared monologue and we had to go in and say our monologue and when we were done they said thank you and we were done and there was no exchange of conversation between me and the other people in the room. If there's another opportunity I definitely would try it."

Though Rebecca and many other kids and youth did not get to participate in the production of Macbeth, there was plenty Shakespeare to go around at the festival's youth workshops.

Rylan, Renae and Rebecca all participated.

"These workshops were really fun to learn all this stuff about Shakespeare," Rylan said. "Some of the classes they had were Music in Shakespeare's times. I think they had acting Shakespeare and they had stage combat and characters."

Rylan reported learning a lot, especially in the stage combat class.

"Probably the safety of it and how careful you have to be so you don't hurt anybody," he said. "You've got to know that your partner's ready and everything about your partner and you really need to communicate."

Renae also enjoyed learning the stage combat, practicing using wooden rods in lieu of swords.

"You block with parrings," she said, demonstrating. "We learned how to attack the head, the right thigh, the left thigh, the right arm and the left arm."

Music classes were held at the National Music Museum where participants got to see actual instruments and music from the time period.

"They actually had old-fashioned guitars," Rylan said. "Actually the guitars had two strings instead of one for each melody thing. They also had harpsichords. They sound very different. The harpsichord is plucked string and the piano hammers it."

The music classes were Rebecca's favorite part.

"I really like music," she said. "I play piano and I started playing guitar so it was interesting seeing the early guitars they had during Shakespeare's time. It was interesting seeing how they changed from then till now."

Acting instruction was also a favorite.

"It was pretty fun to learn how to read Shakespeare and then translate that into what you're going to do with your hands and your facial expressions," Rebecca said. "They gave us a section of the Macbeth play, one person was Macbeth and the rest of us were his conscience and then we had to persuade him that what he's saying and thinking is right. Spellings were different and that was a challenge reading the monologue."

The younger children had simpler acting tasks.

"We could pick whatever we wanted," Renae said. "One group was acrobatics. Rylan's group was the Avengers. He was Flash. We were supposed to do a pose. I don't know what a bald eagle's noise is. I just guessed."



COURTESY PHOTO

Five South Dakota high school students represented the state at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair. Competing students included, from left, Kashfia Rahman, Kia Witt and Dhvani Kharel, all of Brookings High School, Morgan Kohl, Waverly-South Shore, and Rylan Brue, Unity Christian School, Orange City, Iowa. Not pictured: Elena Giorgio, Elk Point-Jefferson High School, attended the event as a student observer

Area Student Among State Winners At ISEF

BROOKINGS – Five high school students from eastern South Dakota and northwest Iowa recently had the opportunity to join 1,702 students from 78 countries at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair, held May 10-15 in Pittsburgh.

Five student competitors and one student observer attended the event after winning the Eastern South Dakota competition, held at South Dakota State University earlier this year. The student attendees included Morgan Kohl, Waverly-South Shore; Rylan Brue, Unity Christian School; Orange City, Iowa; Elena Giorgio, Elk Point-Jefferson; Kashfia Rahman, Kia Witt and Dhvani Kharel, all of Brookings High School.

"Both the Intel ISEF competition and Eastern South Dakota Science and Engineering Fair that precedes it give students an opportunity to explore the world around them with real-life project-based learning," said Brad Blaha, director of the Eastern South Dakota Science and Engineering Fair and coordinator of Recruiting and Academic Services for the SDSU College of Agriculture and Biological Sciences.

At the Eastern South Dakota Science and Engineering Fair, students showcase projects that exhibit not only scientific, but also creative, ideas. Students are able to select projects in categories ranging from engineering and behavioral science to environmental science and astronomy. The students perform experiments, test theories, record observations and learn more about the scientific process.

"It is fun to watch these amazing students grow as scientists," Blaha said. "Some of them spend years developing their projects, every year taking what they have learned before and testing a new idea. It is especially rewarding to watch students from rural South Dakota be competitive with students at an international level."

Blaha accompanied the South Dakota students to the international competition.

Rahman's project on addiction to cell phones placed third in the behavior and social science category. She also won the National Institute on Drug Abuse award, National Institutes of Health and Friends of NIDA cash award and a trip to Washington, D.C., to present her poster at the National Institutes of Health. In addition, she received an honorable mention award from the American Intellectual Property Law Association.

Kohl's project entitled "The Fuel Ethanol Potential of Barley" was one of 50 projects recognized by the Organization of American States in the innovative ideas category.

The South Dakota representatives are selected from more than 500 students competing in the Eastern South Dakota Science and Engineering Fair from 15 counties in South Dakota and Iowa. Ranging in age from 6th to 12th grade, students compete for more than \$7,000 in awards and scholarships from SDSU colleges and departments, local businesses and community organizations.

"People are always surprised how supportive both SDSU and businesses are for this event, but I think they see the need in training the next generation of both scientists and engineers," Blaha said.

The grand champions in the senior division were awarded a trip, with expenses covered by SDSU, to attend the Intel ISEF. The South Dakota Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research sponsored a trip to Intel ISEF for the student observer and her teacher in order to help inspire competition.

The Intel ISEF, a program of the Society for Science & the Public, is the world's largest international pre-college science competition. The students showcased their independent research and competed for more than \$5 million in prizes.

Pearson Graduates With Honors From Eastern New Mexico University

PORTALES, New Mexico – Sarah Pearson of Vermillion, graduated with honors from Eastern New Mexico University on May 16, 2015 with a BSE in Elementary Education\ Special Education.

Eastern New Mexico University, a state institution offering 91 associate, bachelor and master degree options, serves students from around the world. Courses are offered on-campus and online.

VCT Summer Workshop Preparing The Next Generation Of Thespians

BY JAMES COOPER
For the Plain Talk

When an audience member considers a theatre production, their mind might go straight to bright lights, colorful costumes and organized execution. However, behind the scenes of every show, there toils a busy team of people planning, running, wrangling, and fretting in order to give the audience the experience they desire.

For the Vermillion Community Theatre (VCT) Children's Workshop, that team is not only responsible for helping put on a knock-out show, but also for keeping forty actors between six and twelve years old safe, productive, and happy.

The VCT Children's Workshop is running from June 15-19 at the Jolley Elementary School.

The week consists of auditioning, casting, rehearsing and having fun while preparing "You Look

Marvelous," written by local resident, Steve Miller.

The team that is taking this show head on consists of Sandy Dickenson, VCT treasurer and official contact to the Dakota Players, Gretchen Burbach and Connie Nelsen, daily coordinators for the workshop, and the two guest workshop directors, Jada Fisk and Eli Corbett.

Fisk, a recent graduate of Chadron State College in Nebraska, and Corbett, a senior at Northern State University in Aberdeen are spreading their talents around South Dakota as they go town to town to work with the community's children for a week, culminating in "You Look Marvelous," a redesigned telling of the story, "The Emperor's New Clothes."

After a long and in-depth meeting to discuss the logistics of the stage, snacks, performances and safety, the production team and directors begin the process

of checking in and funneling the actors into the gymnasium to start their week of work and play.

Of course, keeping the minds of young actors engaged is a tricky business, but one that Fisk and Corbett have had several weeks perfecting.

Prior to their visit to Vermillion, the two began their tour in Fort Pierre, then to Huron, and Pierre again. Following their journey, they still have another show in Pierre, Belle Fourche, Lennox, Rapid City, Sisseton, then back to Rapid City to close the tour. By the end, these two young directors will have Children's Theatre down to a science, as well an art.

Like a well-oiled machine, the VCT Children's Theatre Workshop will take care of all the auditioning and casting at 1 p.m. on Monday and rehearse until the performance, Friday, June 19 at 7 p.m.

For the first two days

of rehearsal the actors will be split into two groups meeting at different times in the afternoon, so as to better facilitate the attention spans of the young artists involved.

For the final rehearsal days and until the performance, the week's effort will be tested as all of the children will be running full rehearsals of "You Look Marvelous."

Corbett mentions that the Vermillion youth are, "a well behaved group of kids," and Fisk positively looks forward to, "a good performance and rehearsals. We always want to have fun and get work done at the same time, but good performances, that's all we work for."

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