

'Wizard of Oz' returns to stage next weekend

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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Don't assume everyone has seen "The Wizard of Oz."

Gothenburg High School music teacher and musical director Ernie Blecha was surprised when he surveyed classes and discovered that a fourth of high school and elementary students had not seen the legendary production.

"I believe it was an important part of all of our childhoods to watch it on TV when it was aired every year," Blecha said.

As a result, the music director chose "The Wizard of Oz" as this year's high school musical.

The public can revisit Dorothy's adventure to the magical land of Oz on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, Oct. 19, 20 and 21, in the performing arts center.

Blecha said the last time the play had been performed on the local stage was the first year of the new high school in April of 2004 under the direction of Leah Purdy.

Former music teacher Lyman Anderson also directed performances of Oz in 1987 and 1995.

Another reason for choosing the musical, he said, was wanting to produce a larger-scale musical than the "25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" in February of 2013 that had a smaller cast.

"This musical has more than 40 students—all singing and dancing their hearts out for any audience that chooses to attend," he said.

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Tickets for Oz are \$7 in advance and \$10 at the door and are available at First State Bank, Gothenburg State Bank, at the high school office or at the door on the day of the performance.

Performances will be at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 19, and Monday, Oct. 21, and at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 20.

Blecha noted that there are scenes in the show that may be scary for young children and babies.

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OZ CAST MEMBERS		
Dorothy.....Abbie Mazour	Oz Wicked Witch.....Shaylee Scott	Loustron.....Emily Keiser
Aunt Em.....Rachel Rice	Oz Man #1.....Eric Linnemeyer	Kyann LeViner, Jenny Malina,
Uncle Henry.....Cody Cooper	Oz Man #2.....Dennis Long	Jessica Rudolph, Courtney
Hunk/Scarecrow.....Brett Mann	Nikko.....Trevor Mazour	Mohr, Baiter Richardson,
Hickory/Tin Man.....Rhett Lindholm	Winkie General.....Cape Taylor	Ashley Wilkerson, Jessica
Zeke Lion.....Drake Langley	Winkies.....Tyler Baker,	Bonnie Kevly Lecher,
Miss Gulch.....Satos Potter	Roman Schmidt, Dominic	Holly McPhatters, Holly
Wicked Witch.....Kayla Trevino	Long, Mylas Mendell, Chad	Hudson, Madeline Good, Blayr
Professor Marvel/Wizard of Oz.....Dylan France	Schmitt, Jayden Miller,	McMichael, Taylor Rosell,
Gina, the Good Witch.....Alayna Collins	Patrick Messersmith, Eric	Alyssa Johnson, Kasey
Crows.....Joseph Darfino,	Linnemeyer, Joe Darling, Jett	Wallman, Sydney Gruber,
Jett Seimer, Marcus Fritton	Seimer, Marcus Fritton, Alex	Kyrsten Russell, Makyla
Trees.....Hailey Ding, Shelby	Jorgenson, Cole Orsman	Linnemeyer
Loustron, Leuten Andrus	Ozma.....Shaylee Scott, Betty Potter,	Spooks.....Kyrsten Russell,
Tot....."Snuggles" Volkman	Rachel Rice, Haley Giv,	Bailey Rickertson, Martina
	Lauren Andrus, Shelby	Mayers, Ally Johnson,
		Courtney Mevin, Jett Seimer