

& COVER STORY

LTHS Porter Players perform 'Antigone'

FELICITAS CORTEZ, Staff Writer

Without fancy sets or all-out musical numbers, Lockport Township High School students relied on their acting skills and delivery of dialogue to impress audience members.

The LTHS Porter Players did that and more during their opening night performance of Sophocles' "Antigone" Thursday, Nov. 1, at the Lockport school.

Set in the ancient Grecian city of Thebes, the story is a continuation of the famous tragedy of Oedipus. After a brutal battle for the throne leaves brothers Polynices and Eteocles dead, it is up to their sister, Antigone, to make sure both brothers are given a proper burial.

Eteocles is given a hero's burial, while Polynices, under King Creon's decree, was left unburied. Regard-

less of the consequences, Antigone defies Creon, choosing instead to fight for what she believes is right — justice and love — over power and hubris.

Students — Alexandra Alontaga (Antigone); Kaitlynn Altmann (Ismene); Michael Sheldon (Haemon); Matt Babicz (Tiresias); and Alaina Frederick, Antonio Rivera, Julisa Scotland, Bob Lallky, Tom McNally, Mitch McLaughlin, Erin O'Callaghan, Courtney Plante, Madalen Strumpf, Adrielle Tardecilla and Rachel Watts (Choragus and Chorus) — delivered passages translated from ancient Greek.

Junior student Bobby Turnbough's strong presentation of King Creon, going from arrogant leader to devastated father and husband, was a standout performance.



Matt Babicz (front, left) talks with Bobby Turnbough (front, right) while John Michael Verhoeke (left to right, middle row), Erin O'Callaghan, Courtney Plante, Alaina Frederick (back row) Antonio Rivera and Julisa Scotland watch. TRISTAN ZEIER/22ND CENTURY MEDIA

Senior student Jeremy Grachan's interpretation of his character, the sentry, added a bit of comic lightness to the evening.

"When I read the script the first time, I knew it needed something energetic and different, something to lighten

the mood," Grachan, said, adding he is a lover of comedy. "I gave it the 'Jeremy touch,' just as I've done in past shows."

Grachan and Babicz had responsibilities off-stage, as well. As co-student assistant directors, they were charged



with getting cast members organized and making sure students were on time for rehearsals. Both were also responsible with helping cast members with diction and projection — not a small task considering the play's complicated dialogue.

"The language was hard to work with because you're not using your modern English, especially verb placement," said Grachan, who added dialogue skills were practiced from the first day of rehearsals all the way to opening night.

One of the longest and most difficult solo passages of the play — Tiresias' prophetic warning to Creon — belonged to Babicz.

"I had to look up many of the references to gods, Greek culture and history on the Web to find pronunciations and meanings," Babicz said. "It helped the cast deliver their lines."

Claire Barker, a freshman student, came to the performance in hopes of earning extra credit for her English class. She said she was pleasantly surprised.

"At first the language was a bit confusing, but I ended up liking the play," Barker said. "It was very good."

After months of rehearsals, LTHS instructor and the play's assistant director and producer, Patrick Deane breathed a sigh of relief.

"I thought the kids did an excellent job," Deane said. "And I couldn't be more proud of them."

Pumpkin Dunkin' gives kids unique way to celebrate Halloween

JESSICA CILELLA, Staff Writer

Dozens of kids stood around the edge of the Challenge Fitness Pool on Saturday, Oct. 27, chatting loudly with friends and excitedly eyeing their prize.

More than 100 pumpkins floated in the water, which was dyed red to go with the Halloween-themed decorations around the room.

When given the cue for their age group from aquatics and fitness supervisor Jennifer Williams, the children jumped in.

Amidst the chaos, they swam over to their perfect pumpkin, grabbed it victoriously and dragged it back to their family members, who waited for them on the sidelines.

"Pumpkins float, so we decided to make a fun, little, special event

for kids," Williams said, adding that the participants had the option of decorating their pumpkin with craft supplies provided at the event or at home.

A total of 121 children were registered for the two-hour event, Williams said. The park district hosts a similar event at the pool during Easter, too, she said.

Five of the pumpkins had special markings on them that resulted in the child who found it winning a prize basket, Williams said. After all the pumpkins — which were donated by Konow's Pumpkin Farm in Homer Glen — were out of the pool everyone was welcome to get back in the water for an open swim.

"They like this activity because it's unique," Williams said, adding that most other park districts do their Halloween events outside.

Tracy Barajas of Romeoville brought her 9-year-old daughter and 7-year-old son to the event for a second year. This time around she also brought a group of friends.

"It's phenomenal," Barajas said, adding that it is the only Halloween event her family spends money on each year. "This is something [the kids] want every year. This is their Halloween event."

Ann Marie Thomasson watched from a bleacher as her 6-year-old grandson from Crest Hill took in everything, as he debated about going into the water.

"It's the first time I've ever seen anything like this," she said. "This is nice."

Cheryl Reyes of Lockport also brought her two kids for a second year, along with some friends who had never been to the event.



"It's something fun," Reyes said. "They can't go swimming ordinarily in October. So it's something fun, and they get a pumpkin, they get to play games, be with their friends and it's family friendly."

Rebecca Lorkiewicz (left) takes 3-year-old Farrah into the pool to pick a pumpkin Saturday, Oct. 27, during the second annual Pumpkin Dunkin' event at Challenge Fitness in Lockport.

JEAN LACHAT/22ND CENTURY MEDIA