

CVHS drama club feeling 'Rosie'

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By Thomas Franz 



Chippewa Valley senior Tori Miller plays the role of Rose O'Connell during rehearsal April 20 with cast members Samantha Krolewski and Tylor Skelcy. (Photo by Deb Jacques)

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CLINTON TOWNSHIP — For the first time in about 20 years, Chippewa Valley High School is hosting a spring play from its drama club.

Chippewa has hosted numerous musicals in that time, but its production of "Rosie the Riveter" May 2 is the school's first play in roughly two decades, said drama club chair Nick Marinello.

"It's very new in terms of the process and building that culture and getting kids used to not being in a musical," Marinello said.

Marinello added that the school had long went without a drama club until he started one last year after the school's winter musical.

"This is a play, so things are different. In building the drama department here at the school, I thought it was very important that we kind of dive in head first and get started, and this seemed like a very good project to do that with," Marinello said.

"Rosie the Riveter" is a fictional telling of the woman behind the famous World War II poster. Marinello said the poster doesn't specifically reference one woman, but the play tells the story of Rose O'Connell, a woman who works in an Illinois auto parts factory.

Rose ends up convincing her boss, Eddy, to convert the factory to create plane parts for the military, and she also recruits numerous other local women to join her in contributing to the war effort.

“It’s really interesting. It’s a play the officers of the drama club stumbled upon. It appeals to me because I’m a history teacher, but we don’t see many stories with women as strong protagonists who are making decisions for themselves and their community,” Marinello said.

Senior Tori Miller will play the role of Rose, and junior Ethan Gettings will play Eddy. Miller is also the president of the drama club, and Marinello said she wasn’t sure if she should tryout for the play because of her responsibilities as president.

“It’s very good to see her (Miller) in an environment where she really excels. She took on the challenge and kept her leadership position to help with fundraisers and all of those other things that we have to do to sustain ourselves,” Marinello said.

Rose’s main adversary, Helen Henley, will be played by senior Amber Galvano. Henley is a traditional woman who disagrees with the Rosies working in the factory.

“Over this past year, I’ve seen her (Galvano) grow amazingly in her acting ability. She’s always been a talented singer, but her progression in acting has been amazing,” Marinello said. “She embodies her role very well.”

Senior Christian Boni will play the character of John Stanley, who is Henley’s fiance and is tangled in a love triangle with her and Rose.

Sophomore Pam Jones will play Katherine Hartley, who takes drafting classes and works with Rose.

Marinello said 28 students in total were cast for the production, and their work will benefit the drama club for many years.

“They won’t realize the benefit of it now since they’re graduating or will be soon, but putting in that effort for future generations links Rosie to that, contributing for the future, so that’s very exciting,” Marinello said.

Tickets for the show will only be available at the door the night of the show, which is scheduled for 7 p.m. May 2 at Chippewa’s auditorium. Tickets cost \$10.

There will also be historical exhibits in the lobby of the auditorium, and Rosie tribute groups are also scheduled to be in attendance.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Staff Writer Thomas Franz covers Macomb Township, Chippewa Valley Schools and the Macomb County Board of Commissioners for the Macomb Township Chronicle. He also covers sports primarily for the Shelby-Utica News. He has worked for C & G Newspapers since 2013 and attended Michigan State University.

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