

Press Release



Battle Ground Public Schools

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All-district musical ‘Bye Bye Birdie’ opens Nov. 12 at PHS

You don’t have to have lived through the Elvis Presley era of the 1950s and ’60s or have sweated out the former U.S. military draft to enjoy “Bye Bye Birdie.” But a bit of that historical knowledge will add to the pleasure for those attending this all-district musical that opens Nov. 12 in the Prairie High School auditorium and runs for two weekends. Regardless of your age, it’s a fun show.

Performances are at 7 p.m. Nov. 12 and 13 and again Nov. 17– 20. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for seniors and students with ASB cards. They will be sold at the door beginning at 6:30 p.m. each night and online in advance at www.seatyourself.biz/prairiehighschool.

After last year’s rousing production of “The Music Man,” students and directors at Prairie and Battle Ground high schools are again combining their substantial talents to produce this show, which opened on Broadway in 1960 and won several Tony Awards. Dick Van Dyke, who would later star in the long-running TV sitcom “The Dick Van Dyke Show,” played the lead on Broadway and in the 1963 movie version.

The play satirizes the Elvis frenzy of the era and one of the biggest culture-shock developments of 1957: The drafting into the Army of the King of Rock and Roll. In this production, the lead role of the sultry Rosie Alvarez is played by Kenzie Schilling, a Battle Ground High senior. Her romantic interest (to say the least) is Albert Peterson, the scheming, gold-digging business manager of Conrad Birdie, the Elvis character. Peterson is played by A.J. Maynes, a Prairie High junior.

BGHS junior Austin Ebert plays the hip, leather-jacketed Birdie—the kind of teen idol who gave parents of that era fits of high anxiety. Sherry Henry, PHS senior, is Kim MacAfee, the sweet young thing from Sweet Apple, Ohio, who wins the opportunity to be kissed on “The Ed Sullivan Show” by Elvis before he heads off for the Army. Her nerdish boyfriend, Hugo Peabody, is played by James Martine, a BGHS junior. Albert Peterson’s snarling and domineering mother, Mae Peterson, is played by Emily Gehrke, a PHS senior.

The play dredges up lots of memories for those of a certain age, and is lots of fun for all ages. It is directed by Claire Verity of the PHS faculty who is also the drama advisor at BGHS. Verity also directs the show’s choreography. Music directors are Darcy Schmitt and Monika Tabor of the Battle Ground and Prairie high faculties respectively. The pit orchestra is directed by BGHS band director Greg “Count” McKelvey.



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