



OFF TO SEE THE WIZARD

**NPSS students head down
the Yellow Brick Road in
The Wizard of Oz**

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Duncan Cran students get dramatic

KATE MILLS
Staff Writer

Duncan Cran Elementary School students are ready to be under the big top

The gymnasium is turning into a circus on Tuesday for the school's performance titled, *Under the Big Top*, the result of a week-long drama intensive the whole school participated in with artist-in-residence, local actor Ted Sloan.

Sloan met with each class everyday last week for 30 to 45 minutes to work on acting techniques, vocal exercises and the play itself.

"The kids love Ted, he is really engaging and he does some really great activities and I think it's really important for kids to have hands on, engaging activities that draw them in," said Christine Todd, vice-principal and science teacher at Duncan Cran. "It's really interesting because some students are really kind of shy about drama and they're like, 'I am not doing that', but they're starting to do their little, small part and starting to enjoy it."

The students have made their own costumes and done their own blocking. The primary students have made their own play, while the intermediates are performing a play that Sloan wrote.

Grade 2 student Maggie May really enjoyed the acting classes from Sloan. She said would like to continue to do more acting after the program.

"You get to see yourself as another person, and you get to do different voices, its really fun," May said.

That's music to Sloan's ears because fun is something he hopes they'll get out of it.

"If you remember that you had fun at something maybe you'll have the courage to go a little bit further and this town is fantastic and I'd love to see the arts grow in this town," Sloan said.

He also hopes the students will develop self-confidence and the mindset that anything is possible.

He said the first day he started last Monday he did an activity where are the students pretended they were an animal at the zoo. Instead of saying, 'Well we can't actually be lions, we can't actually be hippos' the students just did it, point being made that anything is possible.

"Theatre is you need a person and you need a person watching," said Sloan. "If you can do it in front of someone, for someone ... you're proving to yourself that you can do it and get over your fear of doing it in front of someone, and the really cool part is if you do it in front of someone that person is going to take something away and they're going to learn, so you've shared something."

Students will be performing their show in front of each other, with each class performing one at a time, Tuesday afternoon. There will be a show for the parents and the public Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

Sloan will be teaching another drama intensive at CM Finch Elementary in February.

NPSS is off to see the wizard

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Staff Writer

Follow, follow, follow, follow, follow the Yellow Brick Road, all the way to the North Peace Cultural Centre.

Students from North Peace Secondary School will debut the classic tale of *The Wizard of Oz* tonight at the cultural centre.

Director and musical theatre teacher Melissa Paakkonen said the cast this year has been especially great.

"Definitely nice energies and everyone's willing to do things, which is super nice," she said. "I have a great crew, musical direction is going really well, and ... it's been a good one this year and I'm really excited about it."

This year the students had the opportunity to work with choreographer Garrette Smith from Studio 2 Stage Dance Academy, who choreographed the dance numbers.

Paakkonen said even though the students are just in high school, the quality of the production is right up there with the best in community theatre.

Paakkonen said it's been challenging at times because the cast didn't have a set until they moved into the cultural centre – knowing where to move on the stage was somewhat confusing without a set

to give context.

Despite this, she said with the use of props and sketches of what it would look like, the students have been able to overcome that challenge.

For the performances there will be two Dorothy's – each will alternate every night. Grade 11 student, Chelsea German is one of the Dorothy's.

She said she has enjoyed picking up acting skills from the other Dorothy observing how she acts in the play and then trying to emulate it, but put her own spin on it at the same time.

German said leading into the show she is most nervous about the performing with a live dog. It's not the most behaved dog – it likes to do it's own thing.

"When it barks we have to be like, 'Oh what's wrong Toto?, even though it's not part of the script, just trying to work it in ... improving the dog into the scene," German said.

Trinity Truscott, also in Grade 11, plays the other Dorothy and said the show is really relatable, especially for younger kids.

"Kids can relate to her like how's she lost and she doesn't know what to do and everybody kind of goes through that," Truscott said.

The Wizard of Oz runs Dec. 6, 7, 12, 13 and 14 at 7 p.m. at the North Peace Cultural Centre.



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2013

Chelsea German plays one of the two Dorothy's in North Peace Secondary School's production of *The Wizard of Oz*.

KATE MILLS PHOTO

North Peace Secondary Presents

WIZARD of OZ

Directed by
Melissa Makkonen

Musical Direction by
David Price



December 6th, 7th, 12th, 13th, 14th
Ticket Prices Adults \$20 | 7pm shows at the
Students \$15 | North Peace
Children & Seniors \$11 | Cultural Centre
Inclusive of NPCC Fees

Book: William M. Waud; Lyrics: E.Y. Harburg; Music: Marc Conner