

Cast enchants audience in spring musical

Written by Darci Tomky

Once upon a time some brave and noble Holyoke High School students took the stage, portraying prince and princess, knight and lady, king and queen. This is their story...

An impressive castle scene and magnificent costumes transported the audience back in time to a hilarious take on the classic fairy tale “The Princess and the Pea.”

Even if the audience had had their own soft, fluffy bed 20 mattresses high, there was no going to sleep during the wild antics of the HHS Drama Department’s “Once Upon a Mattress” on stage Friday, March 22 and Sunday, March 24.

The annual musical was directed by Eric Conklin with music director Pat Wiebers and assistant director Penny Dockins.



Prince Dauntless (Jacob Vasa) meets a spunky Princess Winnifred (Eva Penzing) after she swam the moat and climbed the castle wall. —Enterprise photo

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A charming Princess Winnifred, played by Eva Penzing, captured the hearts of audience members—and of Prince Dauntless, played by Jacob Vasa—with her amazing singing voice and playful personality. This girl (who swam the moat!) proved she was worthy of her title with each test that came her way.

Vasa's innocence and spunk was a perfect match to Penzing, portraying on stage a young prince simply in need of a wife, despite his uncooperative mother, Queen Aggravain, played by Molly Brandt.

And speaking of the queen, no one could seem to get a word in edgewise, especially King Sextimus, who was left utterly speechless at her fast-flying words and no-nonsense attitude.



A smiling wizard (Ryan Parker, at right) follows around Queen Aggravain (Molly Brandt) as she angrily plots a plan to eliminate Princess Winnifred before she can win her son's heart. —Enterprise photo

The king, played by Jack Gorwitz, didn't even need to utter a word to make the audience laugh. His man-to-man "talk" with his son about the birds and the bees was the best game of charades I've seen in a long time!

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James (left) and Kyle (right) play the roles of King and Prince, respectively, in the musical.



Michelle (left) and Zach (right) play the roles of the Queen and Prince, respectively, in the musical.



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The cast members in various medieval-style costumes.