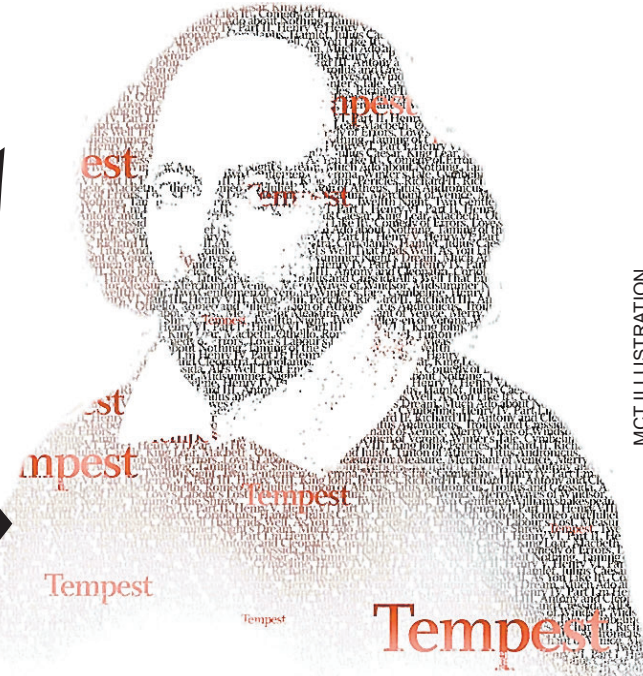




The Bard of Avon gets a once over in Yankton High School's fall theatrical production of "The Shakespeare Project." CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Madisen Mines and Hunter Baugh wrestle during the wooing scene from "The Taming of the Shrew"; seniors Brandon Folkers and Calvin Wampol enact the death scene following their "Star Wars"-style light sabre swordfight while doing "Henry IV Part I"; junior Shane Wright contemplates the meaning of life and physics while performing the famous "To Be or Not To Be" soliloquy from "Hamlet." To see or purchase images from this event, visit spotted.yankton.net. (Kelly Hertz/P&D)

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BARD!



MCT ILLUSTRATION

YHS Gives Classical Literature A Facelift In 'The Shakespeare Project'

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Yankton High School is about to bring William Shakespeare into the 21st century.

The school's fall theatre production, "The Shakespeare Project," will feature an ensemble group of actors and musicians performing famous speeches and scenes from Shakespeare's major plays — with a little twist.

"We're keeping the language from the original plays, but we're taking the scenes and we're doing them imaginatively in a modern setting," said Bob Beard, YHS English teacher and director of this production. "For example, with Mark Antony's speech in 'Julius Caesar,' instead of doing it in the Roman Forum, we're doing it as a press conference at the Pentagon."

The performances will take place at 7 p.m. today (Friday), Saturday and Monday at the YHS/SAC theatre. Tickets are available at the door.

The production is built on a play written by James Zager, with alterations made by Beard and his students.

"I've added some things in. Some scenes I've changed and added my own interpretation," Beard

said. "And I've got students who have put in music. They've created their own music for scene changes and things like that."

Various props and settings will be used to bring Shakespeare up-to-date, including skateboards, cell phones and boxing rings.

■ "I enjoy teaching the students Shakespeare, but I've always felt students get a little intimidated with him. I'm just trying to make them understand that this guy's a human being and he just uses language in an interesting way."

BOB BEARD

This is the first year the school has attempted to contemporize a classical play. However, Beard said the change won't detract from the goals of the fall production.

"Typically for the fall show at Yankton High School, we do a play from the classical tradition. High school is an educational institution, and we feel our job is to not only entertain but to also educate," he said. "So it is from the classical tradition — we're just updating the scenes that particular way."

Beard said he chose this production because he believes it will help his students relate to the English poet and playwright.

"I enjoy teaching the students Shakespeare, but I've always felt students get a little intimidated with him," he said. "I'm just trying to make them understand that this guy's a human being and he just uses language in an interesting way."

The idea seems to be working, as the students have responded positively, Beard said.

"They're excited and they've been working really hard," he said. "Doing the language is always challenging for high school students, but they've worked really hard and I think they have good interpretations."

Contemporizing the play should also be big hit with the audience, Beard said.

"I think the Yankton community will be pleased with the students' efforts to provide both comic and tragic presentations in a modern way," he said.

Assisting Beard are fellow YHS teachers Sheena Eggers and Pam Kallis. Student leaders for the production include Dylan Steffen (stage manager), Alex Heglin (sound and lights) and Hunter Baugh and Steffen (music directors).

The cast includes: Baugh, Dillon Beckman, Brandon Folkers, Tanisha Hollingsworth, Gabrielle Horton, Kelsey Huntley, Cebrina Kruse, Liz McMillen, Madisen Mines, Jackie Pajl, Emily Popovich, Carrie Pospishil, Cassie Pospishil, Nathan Rausch, Paden Schmidt, Jasmine Snoozy, Kayla Sylvester, Aaron Swanson, Payton Terca, Mikayla Vetter, Calvin Wampol, Nicole Westerman and Shane Wright.

The set construction/painting crew includes Shannon Brasel, Beth Braun, Tucker Kennedy, Maddy Logue, Selena Olvera and Abigail Schmidt.

The costume/props crew includes Morgan Dolejsi, Lexi Fokken, Kaylie Hladky, Ally Johnson, Kirsten Muhmel, Eileen Mullican, Tara Richardson and Lesley Stone.

It's that time of the year — changing colors, days are getting shorter and it's time for **flu shots.**

Flu shots are now available, you must be 18 years or older. **No appointment necessary.**

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