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'Drowsy Chaperone' delights

Submitted by Lori Anders



From left, Diana Van Gilder, Rachel Rosenbaum, Finn Anders and Sofia Koepke. Photo Eموke Veres

On May 12 and 13, The Saklan School in Moraga presented its ninth annual Middle School Musical at Town Hall Theater. They presented the 2006 Broadway Musical "The Drowsy Chaperone."

The story centers around the Man in the Chair, who plays a record to take the audience on a personalized tour of his favorite Broadway show (the fictitious "Drowsy Chaperone"). Throughout the show the audience is privy to the Man's secrets and his life, and why the show is special to him. In dealing with emotions and complicated life themes, it is a prime example of the purpose of theater education in today's culture.

The middle school production is unique at Saklan in that the entire middle school collaborates to put together the show. From roles on the stage, to stagecraft, costume design, sound, and stagehands - all students work together to put on a high level musical production.

The production is directed and produced, choreographed, and musically directed by Grace Chaffey, the music and performing arts director at Saklan.

Students themselves have a lot to say about the process, "Theater is important because it helps you express your feelings. You can be yourself on stage," says Saklan student Kylie Choi. Sofia Koepke says, "Theater taught me social skills, like working with people and solving problems," and Casey Stevens comments, "I learned that a play relies on everyone for them to function properly." As these students move on to high school, they take these valuable life lessons with them.

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[back](#)

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