

KeizerCommunity

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McNary opens drama season Oct. 18

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

The McNary drama department will have a guest director when it opens its 2018-19 season with *Death by Design* on Thursday, Oct. 18 at 7 p.m. in the Ken Collins Theatre.

McNary English teacher Laura Reid serves on the Keizer Homegrown Theatre Board of Directors but hasn't directed a show at the high school since Linda Baker was the drama teacher.

"I really enjoy directing and it's great to be back," Reid said. "This is a really good bunch of kids and it's been really fun to interpret the script and see what the kids bring to it. It's kind of an artistic party."

Death by Design: A Comedy with Murder, written by Rob Urbinati, is set during a weekend in an English country manor in 1932.

Edward, a playwright played by Connor McCormack, and his wife Sorel, an actress portrayed by Rachel Herriges, flee London and head to Cookham after a disastrous opening night. But various guests arrive unexpectedly – a conservative politician (Crash Diavmet), a fiery socialist (Michael Zwemke), a nearsighted ingénue (Elise Myers) and a zany modern dancer (Mercedes Feinauer) – each with a long-

held secret.

When one of the guests is murdered, it's left to Bridget (Madelyn Hurst), the feisty Irish maid with a macabre interest in homicide, to solve the crime.

Jonathan Echavarria Valadares plays Jack, a cockney, charming, clever chauffeur.

Stage managers are Kaitlyn Duncanson, Kendall Tacchini and Hannah Collee.

Additional performances of *Death by Design* are scheduled for Friday, Oct. 19 at 3 and 7 p.m. and Saturday, Oct. 20 at 2 and 7 p.m.

Tickets are \$5 and available at mcnary-theatre.ticketleap.com.

McNary's entire performing arts department (drama, orchestra and choir) will combine for a Holiday show on Dec. 14-15 at 7 p.m.

For the school's musical, drama teacher Tom Cavanaugh wanted to pick a show that would draw interest from the entire student body.

"I'm really trying to reach out to students who don't traditionally do theatre and I thought *Grease* would bring out a bunch of kids," Cavanaugh said.

Although he wasn't able to announce the show before auditions last spring, 94 students came out.

"We got a lot of kids who had never done a show before but I think we could



The McNary drama department will present *Death by Design: A Comedy with Murder* on Oct. 18-20 in the Ken Collins Theatre. BELOW: Connor McCormack and Rachel Herriges play a playwright and his wife.

have gotten even more if we would have been able to say out loud we're doing *Grease*," said Cavanaugh, who was able to cast 76 students, including 26 boys.

"It's the most (boys) I've ever had in any show," Cavanaugh said. "That's pretty impressive."

Grease is scheduled for Jan 10-12 and 17-19.

McNary will then hold its annual One Act Festival on March 14-16.

The final show of the season, *Treasure Island* on May 16-18 and 23-25, will give Cavanaugh the chance to teach sword fighting.

"The first couple of years I just really wanted to pick some stuff to showcase a bunch of different things we're capable of doing," Cavanaugh said.

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