



The cast of "Little Shop of Horrors" surrounds Seymour and Audrey during rehearsal on Friday afternoon.

JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

# DHS to perform 'Little Shop'

By Jolene Guzman  
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Thankfully August's total solar eclipse didn't bring us anything like Audrey II.

New York City "Skid Row" neighborhood residents aren't as lucky.

Audrey II, a wholly different kind of Venus fly trap plant, arrives during a full solar eclipse. Shy and nerdy Seymour Krelborn, an employee at Mushnick's Skid Row Florist, discovers the mysterious plant. Soon, he finds the grim truth about what the plant needs to grow: Blood, preferably human.

Dallas High School stages "Little Shop of Horrors" and its timely themes starting Wednesday (today) through Sunday.

The show kicks off Dallas High School theater's 100th season, which director Blair Cromwell decided to begin a few weeks early this year to bring the creepy musical to audiences before Halloween.

Cromwell said the timing with the eclipse in August made putting on the show too much to resist.

"I thought, wouldn't that be fun?" Cromwell said.

Dylan Bauman, who plays Seymour, said the musical is fun — and like nothing he's ever starred in before.

"I'm interacting with a plant through the entire story. I'm singing to a plant and at first, it's something that's kind of weird to do," he said. "You talk to a person, or

## Showtime!

**What:** Dallas High School presents the musical "Little Shop of Horrors."

**When:** Wednesday (today) through Saturday at 7 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m.

**Where:** Bollman Auditorium, 1250 SE Holman Ave., Dallas.

**Admission:** Tickets are \$6 at the door or online for \$5 at: <https://goo.gl/kHEVrn>.

you talk to an audience, but this time you are talking to a puppet. In that sense it's been a new experience, so in that sense it's a cool thing that we got to do."

Making the plant's interactions seem real is the responsibility of three cast members: Alex Fawcett and Isaac Monroe, the puppeteers who orchestrate Audrey II's movements — and, uh, meals — and Grant Burton, who provides the plant's booming voice.

Timing and chemistry, especially between Burton and Fawcett, is key to making Audrey II come to life.

"Just watching Alex, I know when to speed up and slow down based on his ca-

capacity for movement," Burton said.

Fawcett, who can't see Burton, said timing was difficult at first.

"It gets easier the more you run it," said Fawcett, who works with both Audrey II puppets, "It's fun and it's a work out."

Monroe helps with the larger Audrey II puppet that dominates the florist shop set. His role is smaller, but it's just as essential.

"When people come through, I help them get eaten," he said, meaning he helps pull them through the plant's mouth.

Audrey II doesn't start with whole humans. The clever plant builds up, encouraging

Seymour to give it blood. Once he starts feeding it, it grows and begins to grant hapless Seymour's wishes.

The cast likens the story to a modern-day Doctor Faustus, a story about a magician and alchemist who sold his soul to the devil. In Little Shop, Audrey II gifts Seymour the love of the plant's namesake, Audrey, a fellow florist employee he's long had feelings for.

"It goes from a situation that it's an innocent plant that he's feeding it a little bit of blood here and there and it's bringing him all this fortune," Bauman said. "All of sudden it starts speaking. (Seymour) is scared because a giant plant with teeth is talking to him and telling him to feed people to it."

Seymour resists — at first — but soon he finds a suitable first victim. After that Audrey II becomes insatiable and an even more sinister plot is revealed.

"It brings him all the fortune in the world ... but it comes at a great cost," Bauman said.

# SCHOOL NOTES

## Dallas school holds Make-a-thon

DALLAS — LaCreole Middle School in Dallas hosts an all-day Make-a-thon on Nov. 4, which focuses on learning about programming electrical circuits — and using the skill.

Anyone is welcome to join the event, which starts at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m.

Supported by Innovate Oregon and SparkFun Electronics, this event will bring together students, teachers and industry professionals from Dallas to spend a day learning about and creating solutions with electronic circuits.

The morning session will teach the basic of programming. In the afternoon the class will break into teams to use the skills learned earlier to solve a real-world problem.

Teams present their prototypes during a showcase session at the end of the day.

To sign up for the make-a-thon and learn about make-a-thons in other communities, go to: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/BXURNTY7sX3zY/>.

## Pedersen named Distinguished Educator

DALLAS — Candi Pedersen, third grade teacher at Lyle, is September's Distinguished Educator for Dallas schools.



Pedersen

Heidi Clegg, parent of a former third-grade student, nominated Pedersen.

"She takes each student under her wing and helps them achieve goals they themselves don't think they can," Clegg said of Pedersen. "She never gave up on my daughter who was having a very hard time reading and comprehending."

Pederson colleagues shared more observations, saying she "has such a heart and empathy for her students," and "she prepares her students for the real world."

The Distinguished Educator program recognizes "excellence in teaching and learning" in Dallas School District Schools.

## Chemeketa makes list for Aspen prize

SALEM — Chemeketa Community College has been invited to apply for the Aspen Prize.

Every two years, the Aspen Institute evaluates nearly 1,000 community colleges in the U.S. to recognize high performing institutions, according to a Chemeketa Community College press release.

Chemeketa is on the Institute's list of 150 colleges eligible for the Aspen Prize and the only one in Oregon under consideration. The school serves Polk County and has a Dallas campus.

The Aspen Prize is an indicator of community college achievement. To do its assessment, the Aspen Institute convenes a panel of education experts and uses nationally available data on institutional performance, improvement and equity in student retention and completion.

Chemeketa plans to accept the Aspen Institute's invitation to apply for the prize. The Aspen Prize selection committee will select 10 finalists for site visits and further review. The finalist awarded the Aspen Prize will receive \$1 million.

## Arts and crafts at Western on Saturday

MONMOUTH — Western Oregon University will host an arts and crafts market Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Pacific Room at Werner University Center.

There is no cost to attend.

There are 32 vendors scheduled to attend, including local artisans and student vendors.

For more information: 541-992-8700.

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