Eden Prairie Players brings 'Legally Blonde The Musical' to life

Performances set for June 20-21 and 25-28

NATALIE TRIMBLE
natalie.trimble@apgecm.com



(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

From left: Andrew Daniels (Emmett Forster), Chris Wells, Asher Thompson (Aaron Schultz), Andrew Schmidt, Henry Hiltner (Chad), Courtney Klein (Elle Woods), and Emily Kautz (Kate) practicing a choreography at rehearsals for Eden Prairie Players' production of "Legally Blonde The Musical."

Elle Woods is exiting the courtroom and heading to the main stage in Eden Prairie Players' production of "Legally Blonde The Musical." Audiences can enjoy performances at Eden Prairie High School Auditorium June 20–21, and June 25–28.

Inspired by the 2001 movie "Legally Blonde," the award-winning musical follows the nostalgic storyline of Harvard Law student Elle Woods as she faces scrutiny and scandal while in pursuit of her dreams.

"This has been one of my bucket list shows," said Farrah Buffington, the musical's director. "I absolutely love the music of 'Legally Blonde.' I love the story.I love the fact that Elle embodies that femininity and, at the same time, she's able to be strong and an independent woman, and I love how that happens within the context of the show."

Local actors will bring the iconic characters to life after a six-week rehearsal process that began in early May. The fiercely fabulous Elle Woods will be portrayed by Courtney Klein, the warmhearted salonist Paulette Bonafonté will be played by Jennifer Gilligan, and Elle's preppy ex-boyfriend Warner Huntington III will be played by Ben Phipps.

"There's so much enjoyment in watching people form these bonds and this community within the show, and I think that's my favorite part, is watching people become friends and, during the rehearsal process, being able to have those fun moments; and laugh, and talk, and get stressed out together," Buffington said. "We're all in this together. It's probably one of the best parts of doing community theater as a whole, is building an actual community within the process."

Audience members can rock out to 20 iconic songs, including "What You Want," "Omigod You Guys," and "Whipped into Shape," which is accompanied by an energetic jump-rope dance number.

In addition to the musical's catchy song list, Buffington also credited Klein and Gilligan for their hysterical one-liners that pop up throughout the show, including during Paulette's rendition of "Ireland," as she narrates her romantic history to Elle, following her unexpected breakup from Warner.

While it is Buffington's first production with Eden Prairie Players, it isn't her first rodeo as a director. When she isn't directing community theater productions, she works as the theatre program director for Hopkins Public Schools. The upcoming production marks the 100th show under her direction over the course of her career. She excitedly referred to the upcoming musical as one of her "bucket list" productions.

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April 19, 1775: Protest Becomes War

Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill proved the imperial crisis had crossed a line.

Minuteman at the Old North Bridge, Concord, Massachusetts

The fighting at Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775 did not begin with a formal declaration of war. It began with movement, rumor, and fear. British troops marched to seize military stores; colonial riders spread the alarm; militia companies mobilized across the countryside. By the end of the day, what had begun as a military expedition had become a running battle.

The significance of Lexington and Concord lies in more than the famous phrase "the shot heard round the world." The day revealed that local resistance could assemble quickly, fight effectively, and make British movement costly. British troops reached Concord, but their retreat to Boston turned into a punishing gauntlet.

Two months later, at Bunker Hill, colonial forces again showed that they could stand against regulars in a pitched fight. The British won the field, but at a terrible cost. Roughly 1,000 of about 2,400 British troops engaged were killed or wounded. That casualty rate shocked observers on both sides.

Together, these engagements changed the political equation. Reconciliation still had defenders in 1775, but the logic of armed resistance was now unmistakable. Once blood had been shed on Massachusetts soil, the debate was no longer only about rights inside the empire. It was about power, force, and ultimately sovereignty.

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As opening night approaches, Buffington encourages "Legally Blonde" fans and local families to come out with their lawn chairs or blankets and partake in a night of laughter.

"It's a true multi-generational musical, which people will just find enjoyable. I think in this time, in this day and age, we all need a little community and to find our communities, and I think there's no better way to do that than engaging with your community," Buffington said. "Eden Prairie Players does an amazing job of just creating that environment and giving to the community, something to be a part of, something to watch."

All performances will begin at 7 p.m., with an additional 2 p.m. matinee June 21. Free parking is available at Staring Lake Park, with additional parking across Pioneer Trail at Flying Cloud Fields. A shuttle service will be available. Tickets are free and only required for those attending indoor performances. For tickets, visit bit.ly/4eIGg0k.

Eden Prairie Players is a program available through the city of Eden Prairie's Parks and Recreation Department.

For more information, visit edenprairieplayers.com.

COMMUNITY BRIEF

'Honkathon' in Minnetonka advocates for Boundary Waters protection

The Fund for the Public Interest hosted a "Honkathon" rally near the intersection of Minnesota State Highway 101 and State Highway 7 in Minnetonka on Saturday, June 6, to raise awareness about policies threatening the future of the Boundary Waters.

The event was held in partnership with Environment Minnesota, a statewide environmental advocacy group focused on protecting natural spaces.

"It's all just about getting people to think about [the Boundary Waters] more frequently in their daily lives, just reminding people that there is a solution out there," said Annika Fredeen, canvass director at Fund for the Public Interest. "Obviously the events at the federal level, overturning the mining band that was on the area, was not the update that we wanted to see. But what we're looking to do is show people that there is hope. There is still a chance to pass this state-level legislation that would still protect the area and keep it preserved for future generations."

In April 2026, President Donald Trump signed a resolution into law that revoked a 20-year mining ban. The original ban had protected 225,378 acres of public land in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness watershed from industrial toxins and pollutants.

U.S. Rep. Pete Stauber, who represents Minnesota's 8th Congressional District in northern Minnesota, introduced Joint Resolution H.J. Res. 140 using the Congressional Review Act to overturn the Biden administration's 20-year moratorium in January. Stauber introduced the measure with the goal of bringing economic opportunities back to the region by utilizing the area's mineral resources.

Through the use of signage and flyers, event organizers informed passersby of the harmful risks that mining poses to the wilderness and the surrounding areas and advocated for its protection. They also highlighted Fund for the Public Interest's advocacy work and mission.

FUND FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST

Fund for the Public Interest is a national nonprofit attempting to tackle important social and environmental issues impacting the country through its partnerships with leading organizations, including Environment America and Public Interest Research Group. More information at www.fundforthepublicinterest.org.

ENVIRONMENT MINNESOTA

Environment Minnesota is a nonprofit advocacy organization that aims to guide the country onto a greener, healthier path. Its network includes 30 state environmental groups promoting clean air, clean water, clean energy, wildlife and open spaces, and a livable climate. For more information, visit www.environmentamerica.org

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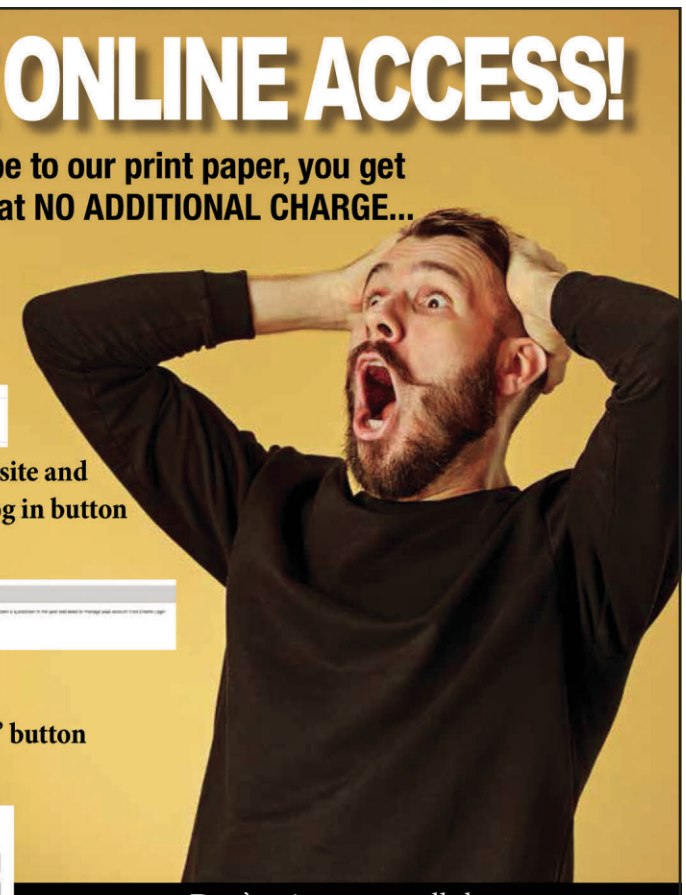
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