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Port Summer Show Presents *Curtains*



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Who murdered Jessica Cranshaw? That will be the question running through viewers' minds at Port Summer Show's performance of *Curtains*, a musical comedy whodunnit, running Aug. 2

through 4, at 7:30 p.m. and Aug. 5 at 2 p.m. in the Schreiber High School auditorium. The Port Summer Show's 47th annual production combines a cast of Port teens from seventh through eighth grade who will perform a professionally directed, choreographed and conducted murder mystery set in 1959 Boston, MA.

Curtains begins with the murder of Jessica Cranshaw, the untalented star of *Robbin' Hood of the Old West*, and follows Lieutenant Frank Cioffi, a police detective and musical theater fan, as he tries to solve the case and save the

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The cast of the Port Summer Show *Curtains*. (Photo by Linda Nutter)



(Photos by
Linda Nutter)

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show without getting himself killed.

The show was chosen by co-presidents and producers Linda Nutter, Sam DeMarino and Sandy Woods, along with director of 15 years Jason Summers for its large cast, ensemble numbers and many sets and costumes.

"The real reason, though?" said Nutter. "Because it made us laugh. We could imagine our group of kids—many whom have great comic timing—not only having fun with it, but also being able to convey that fun to an audience. Last year, with *All Shook Up*, we were all about the rock and roll. This year we're about classic, Broadway fun."

"Who doesn't love a good murder mystery?" added Summers. "I also love the fact that many of those in our audience won't know the show, so it will be a new adventure for them."

Auditions and callbacks for the show were held in late May and cast members have been rehearsing Monday through Thursday from 6:30 to 10 p.m. since the last week in June.

"The students are remarkable," said Summers. "Everyday I arrive for rehearsal, the students are already practicing. They are so dedicated and want the show to be so good. You can tell by how seriously they take it. Their energy and desire to be the best they can be is truly inspiring for me."

Three of the production's cast members spoke out about their roles and the Port Summer Show as a whole, all explaining that the reason they keep coming back year after year to perform is the feeling of community and family they get being part of the cast.

Second-year cast member Ian Miller will be playing the choreographer and lead dancer Bobby Pepper.

"I didn't really have my eye set on any particular role and just went into auditions wanting to give everything I had," said Miller.

Miller said the most challenging part of the production for him would be learning and practicing the choreography, but he decided to join the Port Summer Show again because "the shows are always interesting, the directors are so amazing to work with, rehearsals are always the best part of my day



and I've gotten to know some incredible people."

Recently graduated Schreiber High School senior Julia Gurlitz had similar sentiments about the show, explaining she will miss "the atmosphere created by Jason [Summers], Jesse [Pellegrino, choreographer] and George [Croom, musical director] and the chance to work so intensively with so many close friends" as this is her final year with the show. Her only regret is that she didn't join the first year she was eligible for a production. Gurlitz, who is in her sixth year with the show, plays Georgia Hendricks, the female half of the *Robbin' Hood* song-writing team—with the other half being her ex-husband Aaron played by her friend Jack Gilsenan.

"I like this role because I get to play a more mature and balanced person than I usually play," said Gurlitz. "But I still get to have my more fun and crazy side come out when the character steps into the lead of the show within the show."

Next year, junior Piper Woods will have completed the most number of shows possible before graduating.

"I love the opportunities the Summer Show provides us," said Woods. "Jason [Summers], our

director, treats us like professional actors and not high school performers. It feels like a real Broadway show and we are expected to work at that level.

This is very beneficial for someone like me who has decided to continue with theater and musical theater in college."

Woods is featured in the *Robbin' Hood* cast ensemble and explained that her favorite part of her role and the most difficult part are one in the same—dancing.

"We are on stage for almost the entirety of act one and we can't take a breath or break character," said Woods. "Despite that, I have never had a role that dances as much as I do this year."

Tickets to *Curtains* can be purchased at the door at Schreiber High School located at 101 Campus Dr., Port Washington. For more information about the Port Summer Show, visit www.portsummershow.org.

"*Curtains* is a very funny murder mystery comedy musical, full of memorable dialogue, clever jokes and fantastic dancing," said Miller. "If that's not reason enough to come see the show, then I don't know what is."

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retirement."

Ronell joined the board on Feb. 27, 1967, to use his professional background as an engineer to contribute to the "rational growth of the village for the benefit of its residents." While Ronell explained that the

camaraderie and commonality of purpose among his planning board colleagues made it a "joy to be part of that team" throughout the years, two major accomplishments with the board stuck out to him.

"Under Mayor Tom Pellegrino, planning board chairman Tom Imperatore and fellow planning

board member Irwin Kellner, the creation of Bay Walk which over the years under Mayor Bob Weitzner evolved into a 'gem' in Port Washington North," said Ronell, explaining his first accomplishment. "Pressuring then-LILCO to bury their power lines under ground along Bay Walk was another 'crowning glory'

which I advocated for years. A first, and so far the only one in the village."

Ronell will be moving to Great Neck after 54 years of living in Port, having resided on Dock Lane with his wife Eileen and children, and said he may look to getting involved in his new local village, continuing his advocacy where he left off.