

Avondale Thespians ‘Shine Brightly’ in MIFA State Division II Title Win

by Irena Granaas

The Avondale Theatre Company, Avondale High School’s award-winning drama troupe, closed out the season last month in the best possible fashion, clinching the Michigan Interscholastic Forensics Association (MIFA) Theatre Division II State Title.

Avondale Theatre Company’s rendition of *Bullshot Crummond* proved to be a smash with audiences and judges alike. The troupe’s performance aced the win for the Avondale High School players when it was presented during MIFA’s annual, month-long, three-tiered festival that challenges schools from across the state to create traveling 45-minute productions to be performed for judges at various sites around Michigan.

Culmination for the festival included a two-day, 13-show extravaganza, which took place this year at Chelsea High School, Chelsea Feb. 15-16. State champs were named in Division I, Division II and Division III, the division based on school enrollment.

The Avondale Theatre Company’s production of *Bullshot Crummond* was not only left standing at the top in the Division II slate with the highest scores, clinching the state title.

“We are beyond excited,” said Avondale theatre director Edmond Guay, who has led the Avondale Theatre Company for 26 years, and has had a total of 31 years with MIFA. “It’s the first time since before most of these kids were born that the hardware comes home to Auburn Hills, and the first time ever that Avondale takes the top overall spot in the festival. This is great news for our program.”

Several students received individual recognition, notably Joe Danz, who earned “Superior Honors,” the highest individual award MIFA bestows.

Danz played Otto Von Bruno, the Teutonic villain. Guay commented that Danz “is one of the most talented, mature, humble, and dedicatedly hard-working students I have ever had the honor to have taught and directed,”

Others singled out for “Superior”

honors were Rachel Bruhn, set design; Nick Bush, stage manager; and the sound crew, headed up by Preston Polizzi. Garnering “Excellent” awards were actors Melanie Walters and Sal Chimenti; lighting designer Maria Macauley and makeup designer Amy Swansen.

“The Avondale Theatre Company put their heart and soul, and an incredible amount of talent, into their productions. The entire district joins me in congratulating them on bringing this coveted award home to Avondale,” said Avondale Superintendent Dr. George Heitsch.

Guay explained *Bullshot Crummond* is a spoof of 1930s Hollywood spy movies that stretches the humor to the nth degree by satirizing the character types and situations of British comedies and spy films.

The production hit its marks with audiences and with the judges as well, Guay said. He called the critique session a “love fest” as all three judges gave out compliment after compliment on the show.

“It was the strongest, most positive critique I’ve ever heard in my entire 31-year career with the festival,” he said.

Bullshot Crummond marks the 13th time Avondale has qualified for the state finals, and the school had productions in three prior years judged “most outstanding” of its division.

In analyzing the theatre company’s victory, Guay commented, “The stars aligned ... the script is hysterical. The company knew what it needed to do.

“We work very hard in the first several weeks of practice to build the company as a living, breathing cohesive unit,” he added. “I stress before we start every festival that the three priorities, in order are: One, have a good festival – if we are hosting, make everyone feel welcome, if we are visiting somewhere else, enjoy the day, thank those running the place and respect the process. Two, work together as a company to solve the problems. I saw that on a daily basis as each facet of the show learned how vital the



Audience excitement is apparent during Avondale Theatre Company’s performance of “Bullshot Drummond.”

next piece of the puzzle was and how each could make the other better; and three, have a good show.”

Guay said Avondale won its division state championship for three reasons: Because they had a good show; next, their direct competition set the bar very high

with a strong performance, putting the Avondale Theatre Group on notice that they had to top those scores; and third, Avondale’s grayscale design for the purpose of putting a black and white movie to life, something no one had seen before.

“I am so glad that these kids

got the chance to feel this feeling – this euphoria that I have seen so many other schools get over and over and over again – and especially the seniors, who have worked so hard for so long for this one chance to shine so brightly,” Guay said. “Thank God it happened!”

Stingray Convertible, Coupe Will Arrive Later this Year

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

The new Corvette Stingray is expected to improve upon the current model’s fuel economy of 13.6L/100km (EPA-estimated highway fuel economy of 26 mpg).

With the top up, the Corvette Stingray convertible is designed for what GM calls a refined driving experience. A thick, three-ply fabric top, along with sound-absorbing padding and a glass rear window, contributes to a quiet cabin and premium appearance.

With the top down, GM boasts that the Corvette Stingray’s signature profile is further accentuated. Behind the seat backs, dual black accent panels enhance the character lines of the tonneau cover. Corvette Stingray’s signature “waterfall” design originates in the valley between the nacelles, bringing the exterior color into the interior.

Additional highlights of the all-new Corvette Stingray coupe and convertible include a sculpted exterior with advanced high-intensity discharge and light-emitting diode lighting and racing-proven aerodynamics that balance low drag for efficiency and performance elements for improved stability and track capability.

The interior has genuine carbon fiber and aluminum trim, hand-wrapped leather materials, dual eight-inch configurable driver/infotainment screens, and two new seat choices – each featuring a lightweight magnesium

frame for exceptional support advanced driver technologies, including a five-position Drive Mode Selector that tailors 12 vehicle attributes to fit the driver’s environment and a new seven-speed manual transmission with Active Rev Matching that anticipates gear selections and matches engine speed for perfect shifts every time

Lightweight materials, including a carbon fiber hood on all models and a carbon fiber removable roof panel on coupes; composite fenders, doors and rear quarter panels; carbon-nano composite underbody panels and a new aluminum frame help shift weight rearward for an optimal 50/50 weight balance that supports a world-class power-to-weight ratio

Also available is a track-capable Z51 Performance Package, including an electronic limited-slip differential; dry-sump oiling system; integral brake, differential and transmission cooling; as well as a unique aero package that further improves high-speed stability.

“We wanted the driving experience of the Corvette to live up to the performance expectations that come with the ‘Stingray’ name,” said Tadge Juechter, Corvette chief engineer. “Because it was designed from the beginning as an open-top car, the Corvette Stingray delivers an exhilarating, connected driving experience – no matter what configuration you choose.”

CCF Home Equity Loans...

the smarter way to make your home work for you

Locations in:

- Auburn Hills
- Troy
- Somerset
- Center Line
- Perrysburg

2.99% APR

Fixed or Variable
No Closing Costs

www.CCFinancial.com
800-777-6728

*APR=Annual Percentage Rate. Rates are “as low as” and based on credit score, term of loan and loan-to-value (LTV). Loan approval dependent on home’s current value. Featured rate only eligible on loans over \$25,000 with a Cornerstone checking account and direct deposit of at least \$200. **\$375 appraisal fee due at application, but will be refunded at closing. Other restrictions and fees may apply.