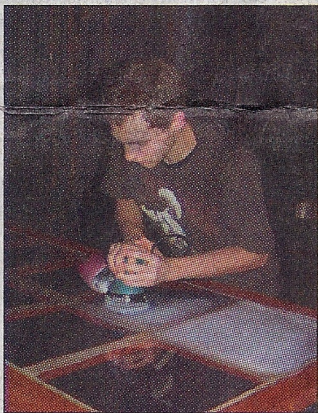




Jessica Selby/Daily Times

Above: (L-R) Leah Eccleston, Tyler Vigeant, Laura Howard, Sam Stiles, Ryan Vigneau and Sara Kingsborough are part of the cast.

Below: (L-R) Behind the scenes, students are preparing the set and having a little fun getting ready for the weekend performances.



Coventry High presents a murder-mystery-comedy

This is no ordinary high school drama production

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COVENTRY—Sure you’ve likely heard of a murder mystery dinner, but have you ever attended one?

If you haven’t, and you would like to, or if you previously have and know what fun they can be and want to partake in another, this weekend might just be your next chance...

The only difference is that this time, you will not be an active participant; instead, you will be a spectator.

A select group of student actors from Coventry High School will be presenting their version of Bone Chiller, a comedy-thriller by Monk Ferris. The students who are a part of this fall play said that the play is comparable to a murder mystery dinner and has many similarities to the game “Clue.”

What happens in the play, which is acted out by 13 students from Coventry High

School, is that one of the characters, Josiah Travers, gets murdered. He leaves behind a will that is fought over by one obstacle after the next.

The other characters in the play have to figure out who murdered him, but also who it is that will receive the fortune that he has gifted in his will.

The problem, the actors explain, is that the will is written in the form of a rebus, a picture puzzle of sorts, they said. And somewhere in the puzzle lies the answer to who it was that murdered him and also who shall receive his fortune. The characters are perplexed and mystified by the challenge.

The student actors, half of which are first time performers in Coventry High School plays, others which have held several roles in past productions with CHS cast, said that this play was a bit of a challenge to prepare for. The group began eight weeks ago with auditions.

Once the cast was selected by the schools drama teacher,

Myke Wilkinson, they immediately got to work preparing for this weekend and opening night, which is Thursday. One of the biggest challenges, the actors said, is that all 13 characters hold a lead role. There is no one character that stands out from the others or that has more lines. They all, they said, “have a good amount of lines.” And many of the lines, the actors said, run one after another not as conversational text would, but rather as unrelated statements making cues a bit challenging to follow.

“It’s almost like popcorn popping,” Laura Howard, who plays Pippi Dixon in the play. “Our lines don’t really flow together, but are just kind of intermingled.”

This is Howard’s first ever performance as part of the CHS drama cast and she said that she is extremely excited about it.

With only hours before opening night, the cast, which have

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More than just a high school performance

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been working around the clock, tried to enjoy a little down time on Thursday morning. The students said that they really needed it because they had been at school for an average of 14 to 16 hours each day this week trying to complete last minute tasks on the set, to brush up on lines and to rehearse.

The students said that Wilkinson expects more than just high school level performances for his drama productions and pushes the students to deliver.

It is so professional and so much expected of the performers that one of the student actors, Tyler Vigeant, who plays

Mauvins, was asked to shave his head to play the role of the Butler.

"Mr. Wilkinson makes it very clear that we are not a high school drama club," said Leah Eccleston, who plays Connie Travers, Josiah Travers' grand niece. "He holds us to very professional theatre level standards and always pushes us to the limit, but in the end it is worth it; just watch the performance."

"Yes it can be stressful and it is definitely demanding in terms of our time, but this is what we do and have committed ourselves to doing," Sam Stiles, who plays Daniel Denton, a homicide detective who was invited to the dinner, said. "NO

one forces us into it and we knew going into it that Mr. Wilkinson is very professional and he makes that come out in us."

The play will open on Thursday evening in the auditorium at Coventry High School at 7 p.m. There will be two additional performances, one on Friday evening at 7 p.m., and a final showing on Saturday evening, also at 7 p.m.

Tickets for this show can be purchased at the door to Coventry High School, but those who do not have tickets in advance are encouraged to arrive a bit earlier to secure tickets and seats. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$7 for CHS students. Anyone with questions should call Coventry High School at 822-9499.