

# ONCE UPON A MATTRESS

by Amaya Taylor  
and Hannah Miller



Dauntless holds Fred's hand. Photo by Amaya Taylor

Palmer Ridge High School's drama program, The Bear Necessity Theatre Company, opened up this year's performances with their rendition of the musical "Once Upon a Mattress." The musical, a love story revolving around a princess named Fred and a prince named Dauntless, was extremely fun, inclusive, and absolutely hilarious! The musical was performed four times over the course of three days in a row. As with any drama production, this show required an immense amount of preparation.

"During the rehearsal process I take attendance, blocking notes, choreography notes, and tech notes so we can be as prepared as possible. Because we practice for ten weeks, our company is very prepared for performances," said Grace Carlander (12), the stage manager of the show.

All of this preparation not only inspires group bonding, but also forms an attachment to the story. In fact, when asked how he would describe the performance in one word, Michael Carlson (12), who plays Dauntless, said, "authentic." Evidently, the show was also very funny as over the course of three nights, the various audiences continued to hoot and holler at the hidden jokes and puns throughout the show.

One character that really seemed to have the audience doubled over was Dauntless. "I basically played a naive thirty-year old that acts like a child

and throws tantrums," said Carlson. Carlson's performance was especially comedic and amusing.

One character that added to the hilarity of the musical was the minstrel, played by Riley Burton (11). "My character is basically the narrator, who is actually a girl disguised as a guy, because during that time girls were not allowed to be minstrels or actors," said Burton.

Burton was involved all throughout the musical, from the opening scene to the closing bows at the end. But her favorite scene of all was "the Wizard's scene because the Wizard is my icon. He's so happy and cheery and excited and I love it."

The Bear Necessity Theatre Company's take on "The Princess and the Pea" was an extraordinary performance. And, of course, we are anxiously awaiting the company's spring production.



Lady Larken, played by Georgia Lawrence (11), singing  
Photo by Hannah Miller



Princess Fred, played by Celeste Woody (12), performs a musical solo.  
Photo by Amaya Taylor

# THE PERFECT DUET: MARK BERNARD AND HIS CLARINET

by Amaya Taylor  
and Hannah Miller

Palmer Ridge High School is known for its academic excellence, insane sports teams, and outstanding music and art programs. And Mark Bernard (12) is no exception, as he is one of Palmer Ridge's most talented students. Bernard is quite the gifted musician in a variety of instruments, (including the flute, oboe, saxophone, and English horn, to name a few) but he has found extreme success in his true passion; the clarinet.

In fact, Bernard and his clarinet have earned two collegiate scholarships, one at the University of Northern Arizona, and the other at the Peabody Conservatory of Music. Of course, all success comes from somewhere. And for Bernard, this "somewhere" was Palmer Ridge High School's very own band department. "High school band has given me a wide range of musical experience to play with different musicians," said Bernard.

Even though Bernard's career in music is just beginning, he already has a pretty good idea of where he sees himself in the future.

"I want to major in Clarinet Performance. Hopefully, after that, I will be getting a Masters in Clarinet Performance," said Bernard. "Career trajectory wise, I want to be a Principal Clarinet of a top orchestra in the U.S."

Bernard, however, has his sights set on something bigger than what he's been offered. "As of right now, the University of Northern Arizona is out of the window. Even though I got that scholarship, I don't think it's enough for me to go to a school that's less prestigious. Peabody is ranked second on my list, so that is very much still in the goings," said Bernard.

Of course, this level of talent comes with an immense amount of dedication, and Bernard is the perfect example. "Band has really consumed my life in the past year. I really have no idea what I would do without band. The only things I do are school, music, and work," he said. Bernard's hard work and ambition has no

limit, as he holds a job at the Great Wolf Lodge, does well in school, and still searches for even more music opportunities. "I'm auditioning for eleven more schools... having all this music to prepare, record, edit, and essays; it's a lot."

With Bernard being just one of so many seniors to graduate in the spring, Palmer Ridge and the Monument community is very excited to see where life takes them next!



All photos provided by Mark Bernard



Mark Bernard playing his clarinet during a concert.