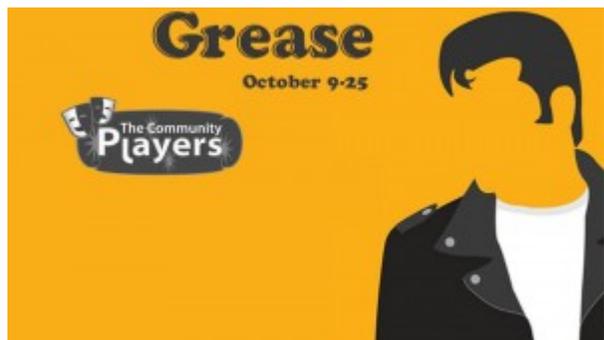


Grease: Not So Rockin' Rydell



The Community Players have recreated the world of sock hops, convertibles, greasers, and teenage romance in their production of *Grease*.

The guys and gals of Rydell High are obsessed with cars, celebrities in movie magazines and falling in love. Fresh-faced newcomer Sandy Dumbrowski (Kiki Maples) becomes friends with the Pink Ladies: Frenchy (Aubrie Bagdasarian), Marty (Courtney Contente), Jan (Heather Vieira) and Rizzo (Bethany Giammarco). Meanwhile, leather-jacketed hoodlum Danny Zuko (Ed Benjamin III) and his fellow T-Birds Kenickie (Kenneth Densmore), Roger (Ryan Leverone), Sonny (David Ghioni) and Doody (Chris Margadonna) find the car of their dreams - "Greased Lightnin'." Both groups meet in the school cafeteria, when Sandy and Danny reveal their summer romance to their friends.

Rizzo, who is somewhat more sexually experienced than Sandy, has designs on Danny and mocks Sandy for being so squeaky clean and innocent. Whether Danny and Sandy's love will endure is beside the point in *Grease*. What matters is the fashion, the songs, the dancing and the humor. This is where *Grease* comes up short.

The performers did what they could with the fluffy material, but it wasn't enough to enliven the show, which seemed rather low-energy. There were a few moments that were entertaining. I enjoyed Danny's dance with Cha-Cha (Joanna Gonzalez) during "Born to Hand Jive." Giammarco displayed some terrific vocals on "There are Worse Things I Could Do." Maples sang beautifully on "Look at Me, I'm Sandra Dee."

Sonya Joyner, who was outstanding in The Community Players' production of *Doubt* last July, turns up here as Miss Lynch, a teacher at Rydell High. Joyner is such an engaging and likable performer that I wished the show could've focused more on her character instead of the bubble-headed teenagers.

So is *Grease* worth seeing?

If you're looking for a few laughs and fun songs, sure. But considering how many amazing shows are currently playing in local theaters, I wouldn't put this at the top of the list.

Grease is running through October 25 at the Jenks Auditorium, 350 Division St. Pawtucket. For tickets, call 401-726-6860 or go to thecommunityplayers.org.