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Tim St. Clair, II, director of the homeschool musical.

Honk! Musical performed by homeschool students

(Submitted by Tim and Sunflower Swan)

Living Books Homeschool theater performed a musical comedy called *Honk*, based on the story of the ugly duckling. The play was performed in Muskegon at the Beardsley Theater inside the Frauenthal Center on April 16, 17, 23 and 24. This year's production, the ninth year for Living Books Homeschool Theater, was directed by Tim St. Clair II, of Zeeland, with Faith Hinken as the producer and Diane Anderson as manager. More than 50 gifted and talented homeschool students participated in this year's play. We are extremely proud to say that most of the six performances were completely sold out.

The cast and crew of this year's production of *Honk* were made up of homeschooled students from Fruitport, Muskegon, Spring Lake, Grand Haven, and the surrounding area. Each year, many parents partner with the director to help students gain knowledge of theater arts and to develop communication skills as well as to provide an enjoyable social outlet in a Christian environment. Scripts are chosen based on classic literature with the intent to bring literature to life on stage. Besides being exposed to great classics, students learn many theatrical skills including blocking, voice, singing, characterization, improvisation, crew work, and choral work.

Past productions have included Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Anne of Avonlea* and *A Little Princess*, among others. Last year, our cast and crew were pleased to present Victor Hugo's great classic, *Les Miserables* to our community.

The main character, Ugly, was played by Tyler Stevens; Lowbutt was played by Samantha Baldwin; Kyle Thomas played Turkey and Jay Bird; and our daughter, Rachel Swan, played one of the ducklings named Billy.

Our homeschool productions are made possible through the generous support of local businesses. We are thankful for donors like Orchard Market, Target, WalMart, Meijer, Sam's Club, Hage's Christian Store, and many others.

Seven steps to protecting our children

(Submitted by the Child Abuse Council of Muskegon County)

Child sexual abuse doesn't have to happen. A guide for responsible adults:

Step 1: Learn the facts. Understand the risks.
 Become aware of the significant threat that children face from child sexual abuse. Make decisions for children based on the facts of child sexual abuse rather than on level of trust in others.

Step 2: Minimize opportunity.
 If you eliminate or reduce one-adult/one-child situations, you'll dramatically lower the risk of sexual abuse for your child.

Step 3: Talk about it.
 Children often keep abuse a secret, but barriers can be broken down by talking openly about it.

Step 4: Stay alert.
 Do not expect there to be obvious signs when a child is being sexually abused. Signs of sexual abuse are often present — but the signs are often emotional or behavioral, not physical or verbal. It takes an alert adult to recognize these signs.

Step 5: Make a plan.
 Learn where to go, whom to call, and how to react in the best interest of your child even if you have no suspicions that your child is being sexually abused. Formulating plans in advance can be of significant benefit to your child should abuse occur.

Step 6: Act on suspicions.
 Being a silent bystander to sexual abuse could contribute to a lifetime of psychological and emotional problems for a child victim.

Step 7: Get involved.
 Volunteer and financially support organizations that fight the tragedy of child sexual abuse. Use your voice and your vote to make your community a safer place for our children. •



Homeschool cast members: Rachel Swan (left) played Billy Duckling. She is a 13-year-old ninth grader who plans on becoming a doctor or nurse practitioner. She loves music, playing the piano, violin and guitar. She has served by playing music at many churches, nursing homes, and individual homes. She is a member of the Holland Area Youth Orchestra and continually wants to bless others through her music. Samantha Baldwin, who played Lowbutt, is 17 years old, and is a graduating senior. She has been a part of drama since she was eight years old. Her previous productions include *Anne of Avonlea*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Les Miserables*, among others. This fall, Samantha will attend Cornerstone University to study English and American Sign Language. She hopes to become an ASL interpreter. "Sam" enjoys writing, reading, walking, spending time with friends and family, and attending her youth group. Tyler Stevens, who played Ugly, is in the 10th grade. He has been in many plays, including *The Ransom of Red Chief* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Some of Tyler's hobbies are basketball and hanging out with friends. One of his future goals is to play basketball for a college team. Kyle Thomas (Turkey/Jaybird) is a 15-year-old freshman. Music is an important part of his life. He loves to play guitar and hopes to start a metal band some day. Free-style biking has always been a big part of his life. He always enjoys dirt-biking, long boarding and paint balling.



The cast of Honk, a musical comedy of the Ugly Duckling.

United Way seeking Day of Caring projects

(Submitted by United Way of the Lakeshore)

United Way of the Lakeshore is seeking project requests for the 2010 Day of Caring to take place the second week in September. United Way of the Lakeshore invites any interested organizations in Muskegon, Oceana and Newaygo counties to submit their project requests by June 4, 2010.

United Way of the Lakeshore will recruit volunteers and coordinate marketing and registration. The agency/organization will be responsible for getting the site ready for volunteers and providing them materials to complete the project(s).

Past projects included working at Heritage Landing, the LST-393 and the YMCA in downtown Muskegon in 2009; Veterans Memorial Park along the causeway, the USS Silversides, Catholic Charities West Michigan, various local parks, Every Woman's Place, and the Muskegon Heights District Library. Day of Caring projects have been completed in Muskegon County since 1994.

Project guidelines: Organizations may have a single or multiple projects at one or more sites. Projects must better the organization. Projects in the past have included, but aren't limited to: cleaning, window washing, painting, sorting goods, office organization, making packets, building ramps and picnic tables, landscaping, etc. Organizations must ensure that proper safety procedures are followed and must provide necessary safety materials (gloves, goggles, etc.). Volunteers will not be permitted to operate heavy machinery, perform specialized labor projects (masonry, electrical repair, roofing, etc.) or work in unsafe areas. There will be no scheduled rain date for the Day of Caring. The date may be able to be rescheduled; organizations should prepare alternate projects in case of rain.

To obtain a request form, call Erin Patrick at United Way of the Lakeshore (231) 733-3134, extension 229; or email erin@unitedwaylakeshore.org. Fill out the project request and return it to United Way of the Lakeshore no later than June 4, 2010. •