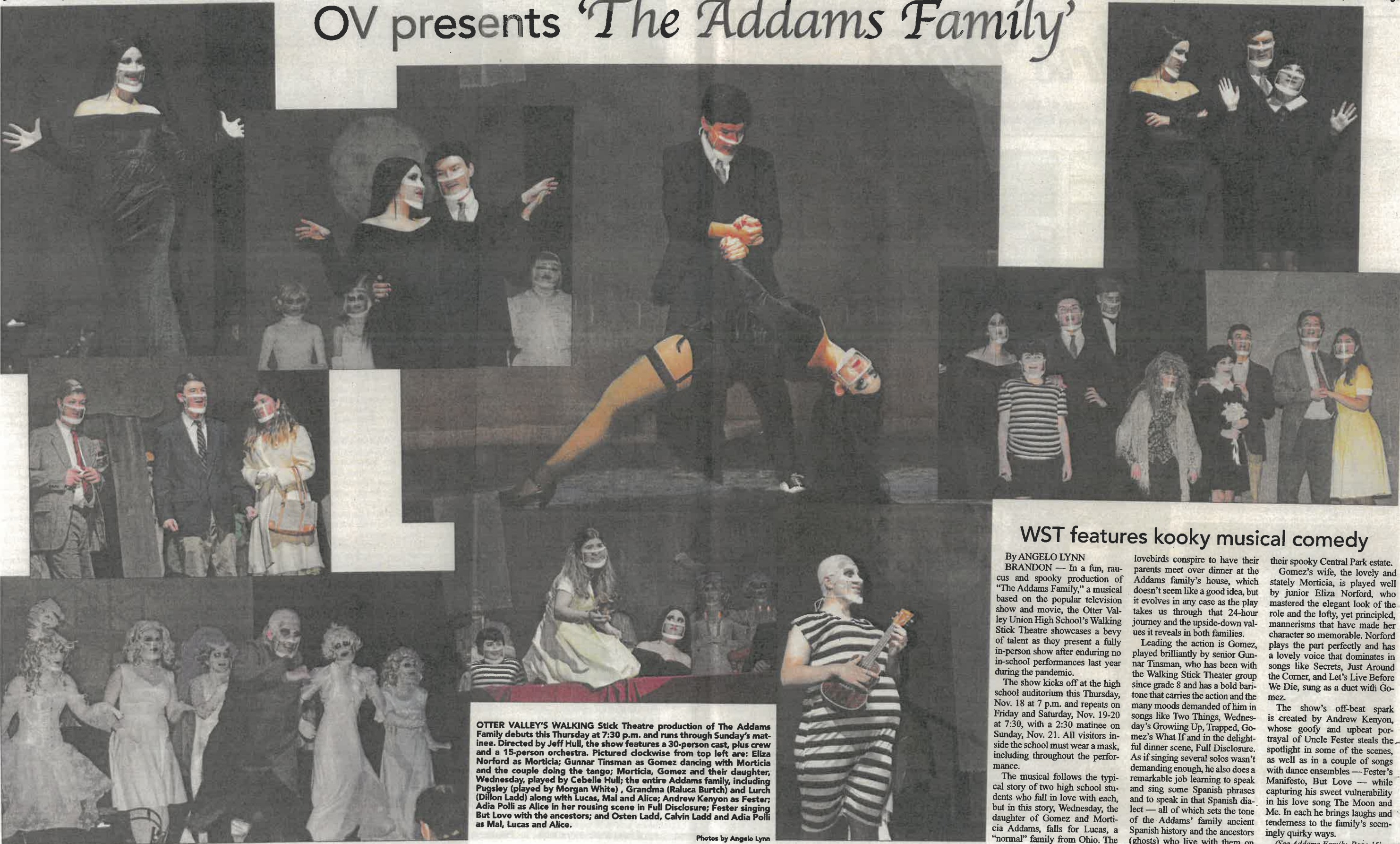


# OV presents 'The Addams Family'



OTTER VALLEY'S WALKING Stick Theatre production of *The Addams Family* debuts this Thursday at 7:30 p.m. and runs through Sunday's matinee. Directed by Jeff Hull, the show features a 30-person cast, plus crew and a 15-person orchestra. Pictured clockwise from top left are: Eliza Norford as Morticia; Gunnar Tinsman as Gomez dancing with Morticia and the couple doing the tango; Morticia, Gomez and their daughter, Wednesday (played by Cebelle Hull); the entire Addams family, including Pugsley (played by Morgan White), Grandma (Raluca Burtch) and Lurch (Dillon Ladd) along with Lucas, Mal and Alice; Adia Polli as Alice in her rousing scene in *Full Disclosure*; Fester singing *But Love* with the ancestors; and Osten Ladd, Calvin Ladd and Adia Polli as Mal, Lucas and Alice.

Photos by Angelo Lynn

## WST features kooky musical comedy

By ANGELO LYNN

**BRANDON** — In a fun, raucous and spooky production of "The Addams Family," a musical based on the popular television show and movie, the Otter Valley Union High School's Walking Stick Theatre showcases a bevy of talent as they present a fully in-person show after enduring no in-school performances last year during the pandemic.

The show kicks off at the high school auditorium this Thursday, Nov. 18 at 7 p.m. and repeats on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 19-20 at 7:30, with a 2:30 matinee on Sunday, Nov. 21. All visitors inside the school must wear a mask, including throughout the performance.

The musical follows the typical story of two high school students who fall in love with each other, but in this story, Wednesday, the daughter of Gomez and Morticia Addams, falls for Lucas, a "normal" family from Ohio. The

lovebirds conspire to have their parents meet over dinner at the Addams family's house, which doesn't seem like a good idea, but it evolves in any case as the play takes us through that 24-hour journey and the upside-down values it reveals in both families.

Leading the action is Gomez, played brilliantly by senior Gunnar Tinsman, who has been with the Walking Stick Theater group since grade 8 and has a bold baritone that carries the action and the many moods demanded of him in songs like *Two Things*, Wednesday's *Growing Up*, *Trapped*, Gomez's *What If* and in the delightful dinner scene, *Full Disclosure*.

As if singing several solos wasn't demanding enough, he also does a remarkable job learning to speak and sing some Spanish phrases and to speak in that Spanish dialect — all of which sets the tone of the Addams' family ancient Spanish history and the ancestors (ghosts) who live with them on

their spooky Central Park estate.

Gomez's wife, the lovely and stately Morticia, is played well by junior Eliza Norford, who mastered the elegant look of the role and the lofty, yet principled, mannerisms that have made her character so memorable. Norford plays the part perfectly and has a lovely voice that dominates in songs like *Secrets*, *Just Around the Corner*, and *Let's Live Before We Die*, sung as a duet with Gomez.

The show's off-beat spark is created by Andrew Kenyon, whose goofy and upbeat portrayal of Uncle Fester steals the spotlight in some of the scenes, as well as in a couple of songs with dance ensembles — Fester's *Manifesto*, *But Love* — while capturing his sweet vulnerability in his love song *The Moon and Me*. In each he brings laughs and tenderness to the family's seemingly quirky ways.

(See *Addams Family*, Page 15)



# Addams family

(Continued from Page 9)

The show's theme revolves around Wednesday, played by junior Cebelle Hull, and Lucas, played by sophomore Calvin

Ladd. Lucas's father, Mal, is played by Olsen Ladd, (Calvin's real-life brother), while Lucas's mother, Alice, is played by Adia Polli. Each of the four has stand-out roles as Wednesday struggles with her feelings of first-time love in the song

Pulled, with her brother Pugley (played wonderfully by Morgan White) worried that his sister won't be around to torture him any more and make his life delightfully miserable. Wednesday comes into her own in her more defiant song Crazier Than You, sung as Lucas was resisting running away together without their parents' blessings.

Lucas, Mal and Alice each have their moments in the spotlight, but it's Alice, whose character is

transformed at dinner, that carries the show's closing scene in the first act with a dramatic performance in Full Disclosure and sets the stage for Malto rediscover his former self.

Raluca Burtch portrays a funny and delightful character in Grandma, and the seven-foot-tall butler, Lurch, is portrayed well by Dillon Ladd (another brother), who has to master walking on some form of stilts.

OV Director Jeff Huff said the cast features 30 students, about half of whom are new to the program and which includes several middle schoolers, along

with a stage crew of 14, as well as a 15-member orchestra made up of student musicians and local professionals — all of whom have spent the past several weeks working tirelessly to get this complicated and technical musical in fine shape for Thursday's opening night. The extensive choreography throughout the play was led by Michaela Newell, the vocal director was Keeny Cifone, and Patrick Roberts was the Music Director.

Tickets are available at [ovwalkingsticktheatre.com](http://ovwalkingsticktheatre.com). Cost is \$13 for adults and \$10 for students and senior citizens.

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