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Mystery meets melody: Osage High School prepares for 'Curtains'

BY SHAELY ODEAN
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Osage High School students are preparing for their upcoming spring musical, *Curtains*, which will take place March 27 and 28 at 7 p.m. and March 29 at 1:30 p.m. in the Krappek Family Fine Arts Center. The production is a murder mystery set within a musical, following a detective as he investigates a theater troupe during a performance gone wrong.

Directed by Laurie Hoepfner, the show presents a unique "show-within-a-show" dynamic that has challenged the cast to balance multiple layers of performance.

"It's been tricky because... they have two roles," Hoepfner said. "They have the role as their character, and then they have the role that they're playing in the show within the show. It can be kind of confusing, but I think we're getting the hang of it."

The decision to perform *Curtains* was finalized in January, a later start than previous years that required students to master a



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY LAURIE HOEPPNER

The cast of Osage's spring musical rehearses *Curtains* in preparation for opening night. The shows will take place on March 27 and 28 at 7 p.m. and March 29 at 1:30 p.m. in the Krappek Family Fine Arts Center.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dr. Jacob Staudt will return to Mitchell County Regional Health Center as a full-time family medicine provider in August after completing a residency rotation at the hospital this month.

New family physician, Dr. Jacob Staudt coming to Mitchell County Regional Health Center

ALYCIA DIONEDA SCHNEEDLE
The Osage Oracle

Dr. Jacob Staudt is completing a residency rotation at Mitchell County Regional Health Center this month and will return in August as a full-time family medicine provider.

Staudt, who grew up in Forest City, said returning to practice medicine in a rural community feels like a natural fit. Having grown up in a small town, he said he appreciates the connections that come with practicing medicine in a close-knit community.

"I really like the community aspect that working in a small town can bring, especially for me and my family," Staudt said. "Getting to know patients and being integrated into the community that way is really important to me."

Mitchell County Regional Health Center serves residents throughout Mitchell County and surrounding communities. Family medicine providers often serve as the first point of contact for patients, providing routine check-ups, preventive screenings and care for chronic conditions.

Staudt said he first began thinking about becoming a doctor in middle school, and the idea grew as he took more science and anatomy classes in high school.

He later studied biology and played football at Buena Vista University before earning his medical degree from Des Moines University.

Growing up in a small town also helped shape his career goals.

"Our local town doctor would come to sporting events and things like that, and everyone just knew him as 'Doc,'" Staudt said. "He had great relationships with people in the community, and that's what initially sparked my interest."

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Grocery cart race collects food donations for Mitchell County food pantries

ALYCIA DIONEDA SCHNEEDLE
The Osage Oracle

Teams raced through the aisles at Randy's Neighborhood Market during the Mitchell County Farm Bureau Grocery Cart Races on Friday, March 13, in a friendly competition that helped collect food and donations for local pantries.

Five teams competed in the event, racing to gather grocery items totaling as close as possible to \$100 while answering agriculture-related questions along the way. Teams were timed, with penalties or bonuses applied depending on whether their answers were correct.

The competing teams were Mitchell County Regional Health Center, Home Trust & Savings Bank, A to Z Drying, Valent and Farm Bureau Financial Services — Nathan McRoberts.

Each team was guided by a Mitchell County Farm Bureau board member or an Osage FFA member who asked agriculture questions and helped direct them to the correct aisles as teams filled their carts with food items.

In total, \$516 worth of food was collected during the race and donated to the Osage Food Pantry. The Mitchell County Farm Bureau will also match up to \$500, with those funds split between the Riceville Food Pantry and the North Cedar Food Bank in St. Ansgar.

"Supporting the food bank through this annual event allows



Groceries collected during the Mitchell County Farm Bureau Grocery Cart Races were donated to the Osage Food Pantry. Photo courtesy of Mitchell County Farm Bureau.

us to highlight agriculture's commitment to feeding and strengthening our communities," said Katie Elgin, president of the Mitchell County Farm Bureau.

"It's a fun way to connect farmers, families and local businesses around a shared purpose — ensuring that everyone in our community has safe and nutritious food."

The winning team was Mitchell County Regional Health Center. They were presented with Grocery Cart Champion T-shirts donated by S&S Meats and Spirits and created by CREATE.

Organizers said the annual event brings together local businesses, agricultural groups and community members while supporting food assistance programs across Mitchell County.



PROVIDED PHOTOS

Katie Elgin, president of the Mitchell County Farm Bureau, reviews the rules with participants before the 2026 Mitchell County Farm Bureau Grocery Cart Races at Randy's Neighborhood Market in Osage on March 13. Photo courtesy of Mitchell County Farm Bureau.



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