

ALBUQUERQUE, JUNE 1, 2008



Jamie Hawkes, left, plays Sandy and David Storey is Danny in "Grease, the Musical." Both are of Belen.

You're the one that they want at show

■ *Local group puts on production of Broadway fave 'Grease'*

BY AURELIO SANCHEZ
Journal Staff Writer

For some members of the New Mexico Special Orchestra, starring in "Grease, the Musical" is the realization of a lifelong dream.

"For others, it's exciting because it embodies their aspirations to play with a real band," said Gair Linhart, orchestra founder and director of the musical.

Special Orchestra and Adelante Arts and Animals Program presents "Grease, the Musical" in a free performance June 7 at the

If you go

WHAT: "Grease, the Musical"

WHEN: 1:30 p.m. Saturday, June 7

WHERE: Downtown Library theater at Fifth and Copper NW

HOW MUCH: Free

"Greased Lightning," "Beauty School Dropout" and "You're the One That I Want."

"Elvis" will be performing "All Shook Up" and "Hound Dog," and "Ritchie Valens" will perform "La Bamba" during the high school hop portion of the show, Linhart said. Copeland will be performing magic between scenes.

The orchestra has launched its ninth spring performance

Downtown Library theater.

"We have been making music since 1999, and in the last few years we've also developed a wonderful dance troupe, so we thought we'd put it all together and do a musical play," Linhart said.

"It's been very exciting for our performers, and it's been very exciting for me," he said.

He predicted the audience will be entertained and impressed by the show, featuring members of the Albuquerque and Valencia County chapters of New Mexico Special Orchestra.

The show premiered last week at the Valencia Sheriff's Posse Hall near Belen, he said. "It went fabulously."

As for Saturday's performance in Albuquerque, Linhart said the audience can expect "a fun and inspiring afternoon in a performance by some of New Mexico's most talented performers."

Linhart said he adapted the play from the popular musical, making it a "scaled-down version" that will last about an hour and a half, including a magic show by magician Robert Copeland.

"He's a really wonderful and fun magician," Linhart said.

The show will feature some of the songs from the 1978 movie blockbuster movie starring John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John, including "Summer Nights,"

season. "Grease" will feature vivid set designs by Anna Zollinger, choreography by Azita Creighton, and a performance by Dani Miller's dancing therapy dogs.

Linhart said, adding that signs and parking assistants will be provided to help playgoers find parking.

The Special Orchestra's mission is to help people of all abilities share in the joy of making music and performing, using special adaptive techniques developed in New Mexico, Linhart said. The orchestra has been featured at events like the global Special Olympics in Dublin, Ireland and the dedication of the New Mexico Rail Runner train.

The event is made possible by New Mexico Arts, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

For more information, go to www.specialorchestra.org.