

St. Charles teen lands first professional gig in 'Over the Tavern'

By Jack Helbig | Daily Herald Correspondent

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Careers can bloom from small chance events. Take the case of Alex Adams, 16, of St. Charles East High School. He is currently appearing in Noble Fool's production of Tom Duzick's comedy, "Over the Tavern."

His interest in theater started back in the fourth grade. It was summer, and he had little to do.

"My mom had this booklet from the (St. Charles) park district," Adams says. "She looked over the classes they offered. She marked a few I might be interested in and showed them to me."

Adams took an improv class, liked it and went again the following summer. He followed it up with a class at Steel Beam Theatre in St. Charles and then moved on to the Noble Fool Theatricals Youth Ensemble, also in St. Charles.

As part of the ensemble, Adams came to the attention of the Noble Fool artistic staff. Which is why, when the folks at Noble Fool decided to do "Over the Tavern," they contacted Adams about a role in this family drama.

He auditioned and, to his delight, landed his "first professional show" with a professional pay check.

"'Over the Tavern' is a dramedy," Adams says. "It is a very deep comedy. It is about a very Catholic family. For generations they have been going to the same school."

He plays Eddie Pazinski, the oldest of four. Eddie and his sister are both teenagers experiencing the first traumas of puberty. "My character and his sister think they are going to go to hell," Adams says, "because they keep thinking impure thoughts."

Eddie's story is entwined with several other plots, including one involving the precocious, pre-adolescent middle child and the uproar he causes when he starts to question the existence of God.

"It's a very fun script to do," Adams says. "My favorite thing about it is that it is not sacrilegious."

Did Adams draw on a Catholic upbringing to do this show? "No, I am Lutheran," Adams says. "I had to get some help from Catholic friends to find out what was going on. And how to pronounce certain words, like they keep talking about venial sins."

Adams also watched episodes of the old TV show, "Leave it to Beaver," on the Internet.

"I didn't copy the characters," he says. "I wanted to see how they moved and the tone of voice they used - to get a '50s feel."

Now that Adams has found theater, he plans to do a lot more of it - both in high school and in college. "I love the rush, the thrill of being on stage," he says. "And I love the camaraderie."

• "Over the Tavern" opens in previews Thursday, Feb. 4. The show runs through March 28 at the Pheasant Run Resort Mainstage Theater, 4051 E. Main St., St. Charles. For tickets, call the Pheasant Run Box Office at (630) 584-6342, or ticketmaster.com.