



Ariel and her Mersisters rehearse Oct. 18 at Chippewa Valley High School for upcoming performances of “The Little Mermaid.” Ariel is played by senior Bianca Gojcaj, standing in the center.

Photo by Deb Jacques

## CVHS students bring ‘The Little Mermaid’ for theater

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A group of sailors rehearse a scene in which the character Prince Eric, played by R.J. Kilcher, falls overboard and is rescued by Ariel.

Photo by Deb Jacques

CLINTON TOWNSHIP — Get ready to go “Under the Sea” with Chippewa Valley High School.

At 7 p.m. Nov. 7-9 and 14-16, students will perform the classic Hans Christian Andersen story “The Little Mermaid” onstage. It’s one of the school’s biggest-ever productions, featuring more than 100 students in all grade levels between the cast and crew.

CVHS theater director Nick Marinello said it’s the first time this musical will be performed at this level. He called it a “feel-good” story, known by cast members from the Disney iteration. The challenges come from staging a show with numerous environments.

“I think that sometimes classic stories need to be told in classic ways,” Marinello said. “There is certainly room for imagination, but at the end of the day, sometimes you just want to jam out to ‘Under the Sea.’”

Senior Bianca Gojcaj will play the lead role of Ariel. Senior Nicole Danna said she is “super excited to freak people out” through her role as Chef Louis.

“Chef Louis is a colossal and energetic character that is also completely insane, and I can’t wait to see how people react to his bizarre nature up close and personal,” Danna said.

Senior Sofia Taylor will play the role of the evil sea witch, Ursula. Due to public familiarity with the production, she said the cast has been working “feverishly” to give the audience a new and different kind of show.

“The great thing about this show is that most people already know the movie version; however, this musical has many new moments the audience will love,” Taylor said. “Many new character backstories and relationships are introduced as well, such as with my character, Ursula, and King Triton.”

Senior Raine Larrew is playing the role of King Triton as part of his fourth and final high school musical.

“King Triton’s role in the movie version is a very worrisome dad, while in the musical version, the story gets a little darker, tapping into the grieving mind of Triton,” Larrew said.

Freshman Courtney Serra will play the role of Flounder, and sophomore R.J. Kilcher will play the role of Prince Eric.

“Every last person on the cast has been giving their all to make sure that the show we put on is something you won’t find at any other high school performance,” Kilcher said. “I’m so happy that I have had the privilege of working with this amazing, crazy family.”

In addition to the performances, Marinello said the theater team is raising funds and will aid with beach cleanups with this year’s chosen charity, Alliance for the Great Lakes. Each year, a different charity is chosen.

“We have such an amazing platform for outreach into the community that we feel it’s important that we shine a light on organizations doing great work,” Marinello said. “Alliance for the Great Lakes seemed a natural choice this year.

“The work that is being done to restore and promote the health of our vital waterways is a huge part of the Michigan story. We are very proud of our resources here in Michigan, and we felt it was important for our students to have the opportunity to give back.”

A matinee performance will also take place at 1 p.m. Nov. 16. For tickets, visit [cvhsmusicals.org](http://cvhsmusicals.org).