Riverdale Performing Arts Center

The Award Winning
Riverdale Rising Stars
Proudly Presents

Grease

Book, Music, and Lyrics by
Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey

March 31 @ 2PM
April 6 @ 9PM
April 7 @ 2PM
April 7 @ 6PM
April 13 @ 9PM
April 14 @ 2PM

Sing along performance:
April 11th @ 7pm!

Ticket Information
Adults: $20
Students/Seniors: $15

The Riverdale YM-YWHA
5255 Arlington Avenue
Bronx, NY 10471
718-645-8200
www.riverdaley.org

Grease is Presented
by Special Arrangement
with Samuel French, Inc.
Director/Choreographer: Laurie Walton
Musical Director: Bob Walton

Keys 1: Bob Walton  Bass: John Convertino
Keys 2: Justin Fisher  Tenor Sax: Mike Rubino
Guitar: John Barry  Drums: Riley Palmer

Costume Designer: Penelope Margeotes

Lighting Designer: Shira Harris
Sound Engineer: Denise Eberly
Sound Operator: Simon Levine

Set Design: Steve Loftus
Scenic Painter: Arianne DeCerb

Co-Choreographers: Nava Schorsch & Eliza Fisher

Costumes by DB Productions Costume Rental, Ossining NY

Song Credits

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“GREASE” Words and Music by BARRY ALAN GIBB (c) SONGS OF UNIVERSAL, INC. ON BEHALF OF CROMPTON SONGS (BMI) / 100% interest for the Territory
DIRECTOR’S NOTE

Eighteen years ago the stage lights turned on and we looked at the faces of 25 young, anxious, excited, happy kids. They were the first group of Riverdale Rising Stars - performing the very first RRS show, GREASE!

Fast forward to today - to the faces of our 41 young, anxious, excited, happy kids. The lights are brighter, the choreography more fully realized, the sets and costumes more nuanced, a real orchestra, real microphones and the direction a tad more experienced - but the sentiment remains the same. This is a very happy place to be.

With a profound sense of both nostalgia and accomplishment, we celebrate a program that I love dearly. These 18 years have filled this theater with laughter and joy. With tears of happiness and sadness. With loss and accomplishments. With high school and college acceptances. With blossoming friendships and romances. With heartache and first love. With parent frustrations and school challenges. With kids fighting and kids making up. With cast parties and community service. With countless hours of hard work and dance challenges. With cell phones and bonding. With smiles and silliness. With the heartwarming beginnings of lifelong friendships. And for me...learning that I had a gigantic capacity to love, admire and respect a whole lot of kids.

Throughout these 18 years I have been blessed with some incredible teams of support. First and foremost, my family. My talented children, Emily & Alex, who grew up in RRS and have continued to contribute in and around their own budding acting careers and my husband, Bob, the true unsung hero of Riverdale Rising Stars - he provided the music for years when there was no budget to have any music! My thanks to them and my unending gratitude to Penny, Shawn, Eric, Denise, Justin, Marilyn, Kathy, Patrick and the RRS Alumni who come back to work whenever they can. And to the alumni that paved the way for all of the teens who followed. And to the 18 years of parents - without their constant support, this program would never have been able to grow and thrive.

Lastly, I ask that we take a moment to honor our Lighting Designer extraordinaire, David Pentz - who passed away suddenly on Christmas Day - the week after our fall production of Newsies. David worked with us throughout much of our RRS history and prior to that with the previous Y Adult Theater program, the Harlequins. David was a true champion of all theater and was a gifted, wonderful, funny, loving man. We miss him every day and we honor his memory with this production. He really did "light up our lives" and his sense of humor and laughter will always echo throughout the walls of our theater. He will forever be a part of the history in our little corner of the world.

Get ready! You will want to sing along.

I mean, come on....it's GREASE!

- Laurie
To Our Graduating Seniors:
Abby, Sam, Trevor, Nava, Chris, Shira, Katie & Leah

There is a particular melancholy that I am feeling as we say goodbye to this group of Seniors. I have come to know you to varying degrees but have crazy memories of you as little, little children. From a tiny Duckling in HONK to a miniature Tevye in FIDDLER to a determined first-timer tackling the role of Jud in OKLAHOMA to a headstrong, fearless, inquisitive 8 year old girl who quickly became a leader in Juke Box Journey to a shy, thoughtful and diligent boy who found his way to our stage in Summer Stage to an enthusiastic, devoted RRS sibling to a deeply committed high school newcomer to a young lady with fierce passion for RRS who realized that her sweet spot was in tech....you all touched my heart so long ago.

You have grown in ways that are hard to describe. As performers to be sure, but more - as a group of young kids who simply loved to perform and managed to stay in our Rising Stars program for upwards of 10 years. I do believe that you have set a record of some sort with your longevity and devotion.

There are no words to express my gratitude for all that you have brought to this sweet little theater. You have made me laugh and made me cry. You have inspired younger peers with your kindness, your talents, your enthusiasm, your leadership, your unending devotion and your pure love of Rising Stars. I have felt it keenly from each one of you throughout the years.

With much love we send you on to your next chapter in life. We want you to always remember our "little corner of the world" and to make sure you know that you will always have a home here. It is my hope that you will always look back with fondness and a wonderful sense of pride. You brought much happiness to an awful lot of people.

Take heart in knowing what you have meant to RRS. And to me.

Happy Trails, you sweet seniors. You will be missed.

-- Laurie Walton
TO OUR AUDIENCE – REGARDING GREASE

We live in a moment of cultural reckoning. Despite our tense and disappointingly polarized political climate, more and more women, LGBTQ+ people, and people of color feel empowered to come forward and share their voices with the world. This important and long overdue process has made us more aware of the way things that used to be thrown around in casual day-to-day conversations might hurt people or make them feel unsafe. As we continue to move forward, the question of what to do with older pieces of culture and entertainment becomes more complicated.

For our production of Grease, we’ve decided not to 2019-ify the script. Our presentation of traditional gender roles, homophobic jokes, and slurs like “Jap” or “Polack” is in no way an endorsement of them. We feel that to remove all that we find troubling in the script would be to overlook what it was to be an American in the 1950s. When you hear a line that feels outdated or that makes you uncomfortable, notice it. Consider why you hear it the way you do. Think about the ways we’ve moved forward and the ways we still should work to improve as a nation.

At its core, this show is about teens trying on different personas, trying to be cool, trying to fit in, and trying to become individuals. Even if the kinds of personas we try on have shifted, this experimentation with different selves is still a central part of adolescence. Grease fans and critics alike dislike Sandy’s “transformation” at the end. In our production, both Sandy and Danny change for each other, taking the average of the different personalities they’ve explored throughout the show.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, this show is loads of fun! Even as you keep all of this in mind, enjoy yourself. Let yourself enter the world of the show. We’re excited to welcome you into it.

*Abby Fisher (Senior) and the Grease Cast*
Cast List

Miss Lynch Cameron Herzfeld
Patty Simcox Shira Michaeli
Eugene Cameron Quinones
Jan Abby Fisher
Marty Tiarra Towns / Emma Jonas
Rizzo Leila Haller / Nava Schorsch
Doody Jacob Schorsch / Hillel Schwab
Roger Josh Milstein / Andrew Binder
Kenickie Trevor Scott
Sonny Davi Frank / Nolan Caile
Frenchy Renee Metzger
Sandy Lexi Wenger
Danny Sam Backer
Vince Fontaine Marcos Hidalgo
Johnny Casino & T-Bird Chris Carter
Cha-Cha & Pink Lady Eliza Fisher / Katie Ceniza-Levine
Teen Angels Neri Frank & Avery Haller
Raining on Prom Night Soloists Natalie Allon, Kayla Shapria-Stern, Alice Dupree, Romy Girzone, Aelflaed LoCicero

T-Bird Pledges Ethan Katz, Alejandro Diaz, Avery Haller, Neri Frank
Pink Lady Pledges Natalie Allon, Kayla Shapria-Stern, Alice Dupree, Romy Girzone, Aelflaed LoCicero, Etta Singer, Yael Michaeli, Catherine Mena, Liora Handwerger, Ellie Plotkin, Halleli Abrams Gerber, Emma Eis, Sarit Schwab, Beth Levin, Zoe Lohrasbi
**ACT I**

Grease
Rydell Alma Mater
Rydell Alma Mater (Parody)
Summer Nights
Hopelessly Devoted To You
Those Magic Changes
Freddy, My Love
Greased Lightning
Rydell Fight Song
Mooning
Look at Me, I'm Sandra Dee
We Go Together

**ACT II**

Shakin' At The High School Hop
It's Raining on Prom Night
Born to Hand-Jive
Beauty School Dropout
Sandy
Rock 'n' Roll Party Queen
There Are Worse Things I Could Do
Look at Me, I'm Sandra Dee (Reprise)
You're The One I Want
Finale: We Go Together
Jim Jacobs (Book, Music and Lyrics). Jacobs, who created Grease (in 1970) with Warren Casey, was born and raised on the mean streets of Chicago’s far northwest side. During the golden era of rock ‘n’ roll (1956-1960) he was a guitar-playing “greaser” student at Taft High School. In 1963, Jacobs met Warren Casey when they were both cast in a local theatre production of A Shot in the Dark. Seven years later they wrote what was to become one of the greatest musicals of all time. Grease opened in 1971 in a former trolley barn called the Kingston Mines Theatre in Chicago. A year later, Grease made it to Broadway and “Greasemania” took off, resulting in one of the longest running shows in Broadway history. The 1978 movie became and remains the highest grossing movie musical of all time. Originally an actor, Jacobs has been seen on television, in motion pictures, regional theatre, national tours, and on Broadway. He is the co-author of several other plays and musicals including Island of Lost Coeds, a musical spoof of the low budget sci-fi/horror/jungle movies of the 1950s, which he wrote with Warren Casey. In May 2014, Mr. Jacobs was presented with an honorary doctorate degree from Columbia College in Chicago. He currently resides in Southern California and remains active in the theatre, especially with the American Theatre Company of Chicago.

Warren Casey (Author, Composer and Lyricist) was born in Yonkers, New York, and attended Syracuse University. During the late ‘50s, he learned all about “greasers” while working as an art teacher in upstate New York. He moved to Chicago in 1962, where he hoped to pursue an acting career. He appeared in dozens of productions, including creating the role of Bernie Litko in David Mamet’s Sexual Perversity in Chicago. He supported himself with jobs in retail, including working as an assistant manager of a chain of apparel stores, and as a record salesman. In the meantime, he taught himself how to play the guitar and began writing songs. Mr. Casey acted with the Chicago Stage Guild (where he met Jim Jacobs), the Old Town Players, and the Kinston Mines Theatre. The latter company staged the original production of Grease which he wrote with Jim Jacobs. After the incredible success of both the musical and the movie, the two collaborated on Island of Lost Coeds, a musical satire of the B-movies of the 1950s. Mr. Casey died in 1988.
Halleli Abrams Gerber (Pink Lady Pledge), a 7th grader at Solomon Schechter, School of Westchester, thrilled to be a part of Grease! Before Newsies!, her first teen show in the fall, she was a dedicated member of the Junior program for over five years, where she played Andrea in Once on This Island Jr, and Edna in Hairspray Jr among other roles. She can’t count all of the memories, especially those from this year, and the commas used. Thank you to Laurie, Bob, Shawn, Penny, and all those who were crucial in the completion of this amazing production. Now it’s your turn to enjoy!!

Natalie Allon (Raining on Prom Night Soloist / Pink Lady Pledge) is a seventh grader at Kinneret Day School. She has been doing shows since she was in 5th grade. She has been Yentah in Fiddler on the Roof, Ursula in The Little Mermaid, Asaka in Once on This Island, Pepper in Annie, and many more! GREASE is full of dancing and mesmerizing songs that will take over you day in a heartbeat! The whole cast is so excited for you to see GREASE!!! We worked so hard and we hope it will make your day! Hope you enjoy our spin at GREASE the musical!!

Sam Backer (Danny), is a senior at Westchester Hebrew High School, he has been part of RRS for the past 10 years and the idea that this is his last bio he will be writing for RRS is unfathomable. This small place and group of individuals has become like a second family and a second home and he knows that RRS will always have a place in his heart, because it’s helped so much to shape him into who he is today. Sam has performed in 23 shows during his many years, this includes: Thoroughly Modern Millie Jr., Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, Fiddler on the Roof, Once Upon a Mattress, Pirates of Penzance, Oklahoma Jr., Mulan Jr., Seussical Jr., A Chorus Line, RENT, All Shook Up, Urinetown, The Sound of Music, The Wedding Singer, Les Misérables, Zombie Prom, Gypsy, Into The Woods, The Drowsy Chaperone, Little Shop of Horrors, The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Newsies, and now his last show with the Rising Stars, Grease. All of the people in this program have had a major effect on my life. Trevor, you are probably my closest friend in RRS we have been together for so many years and have shared so many funny moments and events together. I'm gonna miss flicking my cheek and going to talk to you when something happens that, to say the least, we don't agree with. Abby, we have gotten way closer over the past year and you have become a really good friend. I'm so happy that we were able to be the torch bearers together, even though we may
disagree on certain subjects at times, you’re still a great friend. Nava, it’s crazy that you’re in my final show with me. I remember when we were Tevya and Golda years ago, those were the days, I can’t wait to see you at Muhlenberg. Christopher Carter, you are one of the funniest people I know who puts in the least amount of effort into being funny, you are and will always be a legend and a great friend. Katy, I wish we talked more, but from the times that we have I can tell how much of a kind and talented person you are, I’m really happy you joined the program. Shira, you always want to help and we all truly do appreciate it, you are really kind to everyone and want to make all of us feel happy, it’s truly an amazing thing, I know I can always talk to you if I have problems. To all the members of RRS, each and every one of you has had an impact on me and my life, thank you. Bob, thank you so much for making us sound so good and always being there to help when I can’t find the note. Penny, your creativity in the realm of costumes and everything else is amazing, you always make sure we look our best even if we may not be the biggest fans of our costumes we know if you think we look good, we look good, thank you so much. Shawn, you truly care about my acting and want me to succeed, your advice for my roles has always helped me to become the best I can be. We have such funny and interesting conversations, whether it’s me telling a stupid joke or just talking about life, it’s always a good time, thank you so much for helping me over the years. Laurie, you have created something that brings so many people joy and happiness, you give us the space to perform and express ourselves in theater. You have a program that is beyond amazing, and even though we may talk a lot and get on your nerves you still have a smile and are able to help us grow in theater and in our daily lives. You have helped me grow and change as an individual and I will forever be thankful for that. Even though this is the end of my years as a rising star, I will always love this program and always call it home. Have fun and enjoy Grease!!

Andrew Binder (Roger), is a 15-year-old sophomore at Stuyvesant High School and loves this theatre program with all his heart. He has done many shows with RRS and Jr RRS, some of his favorite being Les Miserables, The Drowsy Chaperone, and Newsies. Andrew has thoroughly enjoyed putting together this fun show in a (rather hectic!) eight weeks, a record short time for any show rehearsal process Andrew has ever experienced. Andrew would like to thank his entire crew (namely Laurie, Shawn, Bob, and Penny) and cast for yet another amazing experience.
Andrew is deeply saddened that many of his good friends are leaving the program this year. He has known Nava, Sam, and Abby since his very first show here (Fiddler on the Roof Jr), Trevor since Oklahoma!, Chris since It’s Easy, Shira since his first teen show (The Wedding Singer), and Katie since The Drowsy Chaperone. Andrew has loved growing up with these people and forming relationships that will last a lifetime, and although he would go into more detail, the show must start at some point, and there is limited paper on this Earth. He wishes happy trails to them all and hopes that they will go out with a bang and leave this program with all of the happy memories that they have made over the years they have been here.

Andrew hopes the reader thoroughly enjoys the show and wants them to remember one thing: Grease is the word! Enjoy the show!

Nolan Caile (Sonny / T-Bird) is a sophomore at Bronx Science, and this is his sixth show with RRS, having been with the program for 2 years previously. He has been a part of Les Misérables, Into the Woods, The Drowsy Chaperone, Newsies, and The Mystery of Edwin Drood. He is very excited to be a part of this performance and is so proud of all the work everyone in the show has done. He would like to thank Laurie, Shawn, Penny, Bob, and Justin for helping us put on this amazing show, in addition to his castmates for all the hard work they have put into making this show the best it can be! He hopes you enjoy the production!

Christopher Carter (Johnny Casino & T-Bird) is age 18 and a Senior in RKA 141. He started performing while attending PS. 81 then moved on to roles in Legally Blonde and Thirteen at the Riverdale Kingsbridge Academy. His first show at the Y was Mulan Jr. where he played Captain Shang. Chris has gone on to perform in several plays at the Riverdale Y, namely: Rent, Peter Pan, A Chorus Line, Can You Dig It, The Wedding Singer, Zombie Prom, Bang, Bang You’re Dead, Les Misérables, Into the Woods, The Drowsy Chaperone, The Mystery of Edwin Drood, and Newsies. He is excited to perform in “Grease” and would like to thank Bob, Justin, Penny, Shawn and Laurie for all their hard work and dedication.

Katie Ceniza-Levine (Cha-Cha / Pink Lady) is a senior at Baruch College Campus High School and is very excited for Grease! Her past shows include The Drowsy Chaperone, Mystery of Edwin Drood, and Newsies. Although she hasn’t been at RRS for very long, she has really enjoyed her time here. A thank you to Bob and Justin; it takes a lot of
patience to teach us all of those vocal parts. Penny, your costumes are comfortable and look amazing. I always feel great onstage thanks to you. Shawn, thank you for keeping everything organized. We would all be lost without you. Eliza and Nava, the choreography you created was wonderful. You showed true leadership and talent. To my other castmates, I have never met a kinder, more accepting bunch of people. And Laurie, I cannot thank you enough for all of the hard work you have put into these shows, or the respect you have shown to everyone in the cast. One big thank you to everyone at RRS. It has been a pleasure and an honor to work with all of you. Break a leg, everyone!

AJ Diaz (T-Bird Pledge) aka “Hully Gully and Scientist”, 12 years old in 7th grade - will be turning thirteen on April 7, is happy to be a part of the teens program at the Riverdale Y. His theatre experiences include Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory Jr. (Mr. Bucket), Beauty and the Beast Jr. (the Beast), Newsies (Les), and The Little Mermaid Jr. (Grimsby). AJ would like to thank Laurie, Shawn, Bob, Penny, Justin, and his mom and dad for making this happen. AJ and the cast worked hard to put this show together, so “we hope you enjoy what our program has brought up for you guys!!” . . . “No, too wordy.” . . . “We hope you enjoy the show?” Yeah! That’s perfect! Sorry: “We hope you enjoy the show”!!

Alice Dupree (Raining on Prom Night Soloist / Pink Lady Pledge) is super exited to be in Grease with the Riverdale Y. This is her 10th show with at the Y. Previous shows include Once on This Island (Ti-moune), Seussical (Bird Girl) and Newsies, her first show with the teens. Alice is at Riverdale Kingsbridge Academy, and in the 7th grade. When she is not in rehearsals Alice enjoys dancing and singing. She would like to thank Shawn, Laurie, Penny, Bob, Justin, and anybody else who worked in this amazing show.

Emma Eis (Pink Lady Pledge) is a 12-year-old at SAR Academy in 7th grade. This is her 15th show at the Y, 2nd in the teens. Previous roles have included: Erzulie in Once on This Island, Young Louise in Gypsy and July in Annie. Emma would like to thank Laurie, Shawn, Bob, Justin and the rest of the Grease cast and crew for putting together this amazing show.

Abby Fisher (Jan) is beyond excited to welcome you to this production of the musical theater staple that is Grease. She is a senior
at the Heschel School and will attend Wesleyan University in the fall. Because this is her 28th and final show at the Riverdale Y, she would like to take this opportunity to express her immense gratitude for the Riverdale Rising Stars program and the people who shaped it. She will now switch to the first person. First, a huge thank you to the entire production team that makes this show possible. To Justin and the band, Arianne for our beautiful set, Shira for lights, our spotlight operators, and Denise for sound, thank you for devoting yourselves to making this show look and sound as great as it does. I would also like to commemorate David Pentz who designed the lights for every show I’ve been in until this one. He passed this winter, but his riotous running commentary and his dedication to this program lives on in our hearts and minds. Bob - thank you for bringing humor and lightness into our music rehearsals. Your puns and that dreadful ‘We Go Together’ intro make potentially tedious rehearsals so much fun. I will certainly miss your quick wit and your calm patience. Emily - although you didn’t choreograph this show, you’ve been a central part of my RRS experience. Your patience, your jokes, (and of course your choreography) made me enjoy each rehearsal with you! While I’m sad we didn’t have you this season, I’m so glad that people are recognizing your immense talents! Shawn - I remember the first time I met you. I was in sixth grade in Seussical Jr. and you walked into a rehearsal where I was singing one of my songs. Since that moment, you’ve been pushing me to let go of my inhibitions on stage and off. You have taught me how to really inhabit my characters as well as myself. I’m so grateful for your mentorship. Penny - You always work to ensure that everyone looks good and feels confident on stage. Since the moment I met you, I’ve felt comfortable around you. You are not the least bit judgmental, and you are unrelentingly warm and kind. Thank you for helping me look and feel like the best version of myself in every show since I was seven years old. Laurie - Without you, none of this could have existed. Without you, I wouldn’t exist in the world in the way that I do. Thank you for finding the light and the talent and the joy in kids and teens who struggle to find it on their own. Thank you for creating, nurturing, and sustaining a corner of the world in which I can be unequivocally myself. Feeling your devotion to our group and your genuine interest in our development as human beings has been an unbelievable privilege. Not to mention the fact that you’re an incredibly talented director who has directed some pretty remarkable shows in the process. To my fellow seniors - I can’t believe we’ve gotten to this moment. Whether I’ve known you since I was seven or we’ve only recently met, this program has forged a powerful connection between us. Shira - I’m amazed by the way you
give everything you have to everything you do. Trevor - your passion and zeal shine through on stage and off. Sam - your smile is infectious. Thanks for being an awesome co-torch-bearer. Chris - your quiet resolve always anchored me. Thank you for sharing yourself with us. Katie - your joy and commitment are a constant. Thanks for being another senior in the short-people row! Leah - thanks for being part of the team since Honk. Onstage or off, you’ve always been there cheering us on. Nava - thank you for coming back into my life with an openness, vulnerability, kindness, and brightness. You make me feel so comfortable and accepted as myself. You are so talented and so in tune with what yourself and others need. I’m so grateful for our rekindled friendship. I love you lots. Ethan Katz - you inspire me. Your strength and self-assuredness is astounding and beautiful. Leila & Renee - you two have been such an important support system for me. Thanks for all the late-night snapchattting and amazing apparel designs. Both of you are so talented. Your sweetness and caring have gotten me through this year. I love you both beyond. Eliza - you are a force. You are hilarious and so genuine. You show a radical kindness to the people around you, and you push me to be better. You are oh so incredibly intelligent and talented. I love you an unquantifiable amount. Keep being you, kid. Mommy & Daddy - thanks for the countless rides to rehearsal and for putting up with my tech week tantrums. Thanks for allowing me to pursue my passions and cheering me on along the way. Sammy, thanks for dealing with all of the craziness. You better join next year! To my dear cast, I could say something about each and every one of you. I won’t because this is already incredibly long, but thanks for making my last show an amazing experience. I’m grateful for each and every one of you. If you made it to the end, congratulations! Enjoy the show!

Eliza Fisher (Cha-Cha / Pink Lady) is an eighth grader at the Heschel School in Manhattan. This is her fifth show with RRS, previous shows being Into the Woods, The Drowsy Chaperone, The Mystery of Edwin Drood, and Newsies. Additionally, she was in RRS Jr. since the second grade. She is so thankful to be in another show with the people she calls her second family. She cannot express how much she will miss the seniors, especially her older sister, Abby. Abby introduced her to this life-changing program, and she cannot imagine what it will be like without her contagious positive energy. In addition, she had an especially amazing and memorable time collaborating with Nava on choreography. Although it is hard to wish them happy trails, she knows that Nava, Abby, Chris, Trevor, Sam, Shira, and Katie are off to do
great things and will be using their creativity, kindness, and leadership skills wherever they go. She would like to give a special thanks to Shawn, Penny, Bob, Justin, and of course Laurie for all working so hard to make Grease as great as it is.

**Davi Frank (Sonny / T-Bird)** is a junior at SAR High School. He is so excited to play the role of Sonny in his 8th show in the RRS teen program. Davi wants to thank Laurie, Shawn, Penny and Bob for all of their hard work in Grease. He hopes you enjoy the show and will deeply miss the seniors!

**Neri Frank (Teen Angel / T-Bird Pledge)** is so excited to be in Grease and his nineteenth show at RRS! He is in 8th grade at The Heschel School. Previous roles include Crutchie in Newsies, Tommy Djilis in The Music Man, Ben /Lisa in Disaster, Shrek in Shrek the Musical Jr., and Jimmy in Thoroughly Modern Millie Jr. He would like to thank his family for supporting him, his fellow cast members, and the entire RRS team. Sit back relax and enjoy the show!!!

**Romy Girzone (Raining on Prom Night Soloists / Pink Lady Pledge)** is thrilled to be a part of her nineteenth show at the Riverdale Y! Some of her previous roles include Laurey (in Oklahoma), Asaka (in Once on this Island), and Chava (in Fiddler on the Roof). She is in seventh grade at Kinneret Day School. Romy would like to thank Laurie, Bob, Justin, Penny, Shawn, Nava, Eliza and everyone else involved in making this show such a fun experience (and if she does say so herself) an amazing show. But that will be up to you to decide! So, sit back, relax, and enjoy Grease!!!

**Avery Haller (Teen Angel / T-Bird Pledge)** is an 8th grader at Westchester Day School. This is his third Show with RRS, and he has also been in many RRS Jr. shows. Previous roles include, Spot Conlon in Newsies, Link Larkin in Hairspray Jr, and Sky Masterson in Guys and Dolls Jr. Avery is thrilled to be in Grease, and he would like to thank the entire RRS cast and crew for making this performance possible.

**Leila Haller (Rizzo / Pink Lady)** is an 11th grader at SAR High School, is thrilled to be performing for the 9th time with Riverdale Rising Stars! Many thanks to the family and friends who constantly support her and come to all the shows. Leila would also like to thank everyone who helped with the show; Laurie, Shawn, Justin, Bob, and Penny, we
wouldn't be here without you! And of course, thank you to the outstanding cast of Grease for their hard work, phenomenal talent and joy they bring to the stage (even with so little rehearsal time)! This show has been a truly enriching, incredible, and exciting experience. Lastly, happy trails to the incredible band of seniors. Each of them shed light onto the program with their tremendous talent, kindness, and wit. To the seniors, continue to express your creative selves as you step out into the world. We will miss you dearly. Wishing you only the best! Thank you and enjoy the show!

**Liora Handwerger (Pink Lady Pledge)** is so excited to be performing Grease at the Y! She’s excited to perform her second show here, but she’s done another show in the past, and looks forward to doing more! Her first show was Newsies, and she had a lot of fun doing it. She is in 7th grade at Kinneret Day School in Riverdale, New York. She hopes you enjoy Grease!

**Cameron Herzfeld (Miss Lynch)** is a student at Westchester Hebrew High School and is in the 11th grade. She is thrilled to be a part of the cast of Grease. This is her 12th show, but 8th at RRS. She would like to thank everyone who was a part of the cast and crew for creating this masterpiece.

**Marcos Hidalgo (Vince Fontaine)** is a junior at Yonkers High School, who is celebrating his 9th show with the Riverdale Rising Stars. Previous roles he has played include Man In Chair for The Drowsy Chaperone, a street urchin in Little Shop of Horrors, and Race in Newsies. When he isn’t spending all of his time at the Y, he is an amateur photographer. He would like to thank all of the RRS/RPAC team for making a show like Grease possible. He would also like to bid a warm farewell to the outgoing seniors and thank them for some wonderful shows!

**Emma Jonas (Marty/ Pink Lady)** is thrilled to be a part of this wonderful production of Grease! Emma is an 8th grader at the Heschel Middle School. This is Emma’s 4th show in the teen program and her 9th show at the Y. In the teen program Emma has been in The Drowsy Chaperone, The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Newsies, and now Grease! She would like to thank her parents for allowing her to come up to Riverdale from Manhattan, to Bob and Justin for helping us sound amazing, and to Shawn for stepping in when needed and doing a wonderful job. She also shows great gratitude to Laurie for directing
this wonderful production and to all of her amazing cast mates who all work together to make this show as great as it is!

**Ethan Katz (T-Bird Pledge)** is elated to finally shake at the high school hop. They are a 15 years old freshman at The Heschel School. This is Ethan’s seventh show with the RRS teen program, and they love every second of it. Ethan has most notably been seen as Crutchie in Newsies. In their free time, Ethan like to debate and sleep. Ethan would like to give massive props to the entire crew for their incredibly hard work to make this production what it is. Ethan also wants to thank the entire cast for making Grease such a fun show to be a part of. Ethan would like to thank their family for speaking to them, even after the endless number of rama lama lama-ing in preparation for Grease. Enjoy the show!

**Beth Levin (Pink Lady Pledge)** is so excited to be involved in this year’s cast of Grease! She is in eighth grade at Kinneret Day School and is so excited to perform all the dances that were put together in this adventurous performance! This will be Beth’s 8th show in the Riverdale Y (RRS), and Beth would like to thank everyone in the cast who made this show a wonderful experience. She would especially like to thank Laurie and Bob Walton for making our show an incredible performance and would also like to thank Shawn Renfro for dealing with our cast and helping us move along with the show. Beth could not have done this performance without the wonderful cast that stood beside her through all the rehearsals and would like to thank everyone who was involved in this production, for making Grease a truly memorable experience!

**Aelflaed LoCicero (Raining on Prom Night Soloists / Pink Lady Pledge)** has been in the Riverdale Rising Stars program for three years, and she can say that she is thoroughly enjoying being in Grease. As she has played in the show, she has come to love all the fun dances and songs. She has previously been in RRS productions such as The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Newsies, The Drowsy Chaperone, and now she is ecstatic to perform in Grease.

**Zoe Lohrasbi (Pink Lady Pledge)** is thrilled to be doing Grease! She is 13 years old and a 7th grader at Farragut Middle School and though she has done various performances at the Riverdale Y, this is only her second with RRS. Her most recent show was Newsies (Nun/Newsie). She is going to miss the graduating seniors who she
loves and adores so very much and wishes the best for them in college and beyond. She would like to thank her friends and family for supporting her and the entire cast and crew (especially the wonderful director, Laurie Walton) for making this show possible and making it come to life! Enjoy the show!

**Catherine Mena (Pink Lady Pledge)** is an eighth grader at M.S. 118 and is excited to be in her 14th production with RRS. Many thanks to the entire RRS team and the most love to our departing seniors Shira, Abby, Katie, Sam, Trevor, Chris, and Nava.

**Renee Metzger (Frenchy)** is so excited to be in Grease!! Renee is a junior at SAR High School. She would like to thank the entire cast and crew for making this show what it is! Renee wants to especially thank the seniors — we’ll all miss you guys like crazy!! Enjoy the show!!

**Shira Michaeli (Patty Simcox)** This is Shira’s tenth show at the Riverdale Y and she is thrilled to be back performing with such an incredible cast. Shira is a senior at SAR High School Previous roles include Urchin in *Little Shop of Horrors* and Jack’s Mother in *Into the Woods*. On the rare occasions that Shira is not at rehearsal, she enjoys participating in an extraneous number of other extracurricular activities, not including sleep.

Shira is struggling to remain in the third person for what is bound to be an emotional and extraneously long bio, so she will now switch to the first person.

Ok, I’m going to start with thank yous, so I don’t start crying immediately.

**Our lighting crew, sound crew, and orchestra!** We would never shine without you. From behind the scenes, you have elevated our shows with the magic you do seamlessly. A special thank you to Shira (my name twin) for taking on the light board. I can’t wait to see the amazing work you will do. David Pentz, we miss you very much, and I know you are looking down at this show with your ever-present love and sense of humor. Leah, you were my first new friend at RRS, and even though we make jokes about it all the time, you made me feel like I was a part of the community, even when I stepped on your toes (literally). I will miss you endlessly. Justin, thank you for dedicating your time to making us sound our best! Bob. You are the best musical director we could ask for. Your endless patience, subtle musical references, and incredible dad jakes have really made our
cast feel like family. **Shawn**, thank you, thank you, thank you for sharing your skill and empathy with us every day. **Penny**, you help us transport the audience into every show, working with our picky tastes and insecurities and make us all feel special. More personally, you have accepted me, and all of my boundless energy, since day one. From the seven costume changes of Wedding Singer to my current crinoline cheerleader extravaganza, I have fallen in love with each thing you have put me in. Working with you in the teen program and helping you in the juniors has been one of my favorite parts of being a part of RRS. I love you so, so much, and the invaluable lessons you have taught me, love, and support will stay with me for the rest of my life. **Laurie**, thank you for being our fearless leader through and through. I know this has been a particularly difficult time for you, but you have still helped put together an incredible show. You will always be my personal Patty, my cheerleader, through and through.

**To my family and friends** Thank you for showing up to every performance and listening to non-stop musical buzz. Your presence at each performance has meant the world. Whether it’s muttering lines during meals or practicing dance routines during gym class, your love which sustains even during tech week means the world. Thank you. Special thank you to Aviva and Yael, who each shared some of this journey with me. Yael, this is just the beginning. I love you very much and I’m so proud of you.

There are too many goodbyes to this incredible cast to put them here, but know that there are more personal thank yous coming soon.

It has been such a pleasure to be the cast cheerleader, over-enthusiastic mom, and crazy secretary. You have loved me as I am, and I love you all so, so much back.

RRS has always been a place I can call home, and I am in complete denial that this is the end. It has helped me feel loved and accepted, teaching me invaluable lessons about myself and introducing me to my closest friends. I will always be grateful for this incredible ‘corner of the world,’ I know that it is time to close this chapter of my life and move on. But in my heart, we’ll always be together! (yeah, yeah, yeah).

**Yael Michaeli (Pink Lady Pledge)** is an eighth grader at SAR Academy. This is her sixth show at the Riverdale Y, and she is thrilled to be performing with this fantastic cast and crew! She would like to
thank Laurie, Shawn, Penny, Bob, Justin and all of the light and sound crew who worked so hard to make this such an incredible show. She would also like to say a special thank you to all of the seniors. They are all such kind, fun, and talented people who make the shows such an amazing experience. A specific senior Yael will miss is Shira. Besides for being a loving, helpful, and supportive sister, she is also the most iconic annoying cheerleader of all time, and her energy will be missed. Go Rydel and enjoy Grease!

**Josh Milstein (Roger)** is a Junior at SAR High School and is thrilled to be in his 4th Rising Stars show! He has previously been in *The Drowsy Chaperone* (George), *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (James Throttle), and *Newsies* (Romeo). He would like to immensely thank Laurie, Bob, Shawn, Penny and everyone else who worked so hard to make this show happen. He would also like to thank his cast for their hard work, laughs, and camaraderie that has brought this show to life. Lastly, he would like to thank the Seniors, Abby; Katie; Chris; Trevor; Sam; Nava; and Shira for leading our cast through this show and just being amazing people, friends, and role models. He will miss them so much. He thanks you for coming and hopes you enjoy Grease!!

**Ellie Plotkin (Pink Lady Pledge)** is extremely excited to perform in her first teen show with Riverdale Rising Stars. Past (Junior) Shows being, *The Wizard of Oz, Annie, Gypsy*, and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. Ellie is a seventh grader at Kinneret Day School. Ellie would like to thank her family and friends for encouraging her to join RSS, and the RRS team for making this show possible.

**Cameron Quiñones (Eugene)** is a Junior at St. Raymond High School for Boys. Cameron has been a member of RRS since the 7th Grade. His past performances have been in *Urinetown, Wedding Singer* as Mr. T impersonator, *Zombie Prom* as JC, *Les Misérables* as Thenardier, *Into the Woods* as The Wolf, *The Drowsy Chaperone* as Mr. Feldzieg, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, and *Newsies* as Mr. Pulitzer. Cameron would like to thank Laurie, Shawn, Penny, Bob, Justin and everyone else involved to making this show happen. Hope you all enjoy Grease!

**Jacob Schorsch (Doody / T-Bird)** is 15 years old and a sophomore at the Horace Mann School. This is his 17th show at the Riverdale Y and he could not have asked for a more incredible group to do it with!
Some of his favorite roles include: Bazzard in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, Kurt in *Sound of Music*, and Mayor Shinn in *The Music Man*. I would like to thank the seniors who have dedicated so much of their time to this wonderful program: Abby, Katie, Trevor, Chris, Sam, and Shira, you guys are incredible performers and mean the world to this community. I love each and every one of you and can't wait to see the leaders you become. Now, to the final senior, my sister, Nava. I can't describe how grateful I am to have you in this program once again. From the age of seven, when you introduced me to the wonderful world of RRS, I have cherished every moment on stage with you and have missed you these past two years. I utterly adore you and can't express what a joy it is to finally get the chance to perform with you for the first time in six years. What a journey it's been, from *Fiddler on the Roof Jr.* in 2011 to *Grease* in 2019. I already miss you and this program and my life will change dramatically with you away at college. I love you from the bottom of my heart. Finally, I would like to thank Laurie, Penny, Bob, Justin, and Shawn for helping create another wonderful show, we couldn't have done it without each and every one of you. Enjoy the show!

**Nava Schorsch (Rizzo / Pink Lady)** Hi! I am a senior at the Hyde School in Bath, ME and will be attending Muhlenberg this coming Fall. This is my 18th show with the Riverdale Rising Stars, having been in this sweet program since the ripe age of 6. I want to start this long-awaited senior bio by thanking my older sister for swinging so gracefully on a little wooden swing during *Oklahoma* in 2007. It is as a result of her 7th grade ensemble member/swinging abilities that I remain inspired to express myself. To Bob, Emily, Shawn and Penny, otherwise known – in my mind – as the fabulous four. Each of you bring unwavering love and insane talent to this beautiful space, and together you have remained the backbone of support I have needed to develop myself both as a performer and person through these many years. You are deeply patient and loyal, always challenging the best from those you work with. You are astonishingly kind, and willing, always extending a hand, ear, or shoulder. Thank you for giving this program undeniably gifted teachers, ones with impressive and enviable resumes but more importantly, a whole lot of heart. You are undoubtedly four of the most special people I have ever known. Moving right along, there is this random woman named Laurie Walton (haha). There isn't a whole lot I haven't said, as over this decade and a half I have written many unexpected love letters, however, here, I'll summarize. Laurie, you bring light to others with your goofy humor,
your overflowing generosity, your sage advice, your gentle temperament, and your seemingly never ending, remarkable artistry. Thank you for being a piece of sunshine in a world of frequent darkness. Thank you for your commitment to fostering my best self. Thank you for continuing to show up with your boppy blonde hairdo, ready to give your all to this work (and us), regardless of the crashing waves that may be outside this theater. Thank you for giving me the gift of your mentorship. I will forever be in awe of how much magic you create. To Jacob, you are an incredible performer and an unbelievably beautiful person. Thank you for remaining my goofy and insightful little brother through every up and every down. I couldn't ask for better. Lastly, I would like to share the endless amounts of gratitude I have for my parents. You are simply the most selfless and wonderful human beings. Thanks for letting me do this for so long and for the boundless support and sing-alongs that have come along with it.

P.S. Abby, Leila, and Eliza: I cannot explain how appreciative and lucky I feel to have received your sweetness, understanding, and perspective. You are phenomenal women. Thank you for always showing up with an open mind and heart.

This show is a total blast, enjoy it!

**Hillel Schwab (Doody / T-Bird)** is a Sophomore at SAR High School. He has been performing with RRS and RRS Jr. since he was 7 years old. He previously appeared in *The Wedding Singer, Zombie Prom, Les Misérables, Into the Woods, The Drowsy Chaperone, The Mystery of Edwin Drood,* and *Newsies* with the teens. In his free time, he enjoys playing guitar, playing baseball, and most importantly performing with RRS! He would like to thank Laurie, Shawn, Penny, Bob, Justin, and his fellow castmates who all worked very hard to make this show come to life. As Hillel writes this bio, he is having a mental breakdown and crying, because the seniors are graduating! He will miss them so much and wishes them happy trails and luck in all their future endeavors. In particular, he will miss Shira and her DMC’s and mind-reading magic, and he will especially miss Abby and her love, care, and wise mentorship. Finally, he hopes you enjoy the show. Grease is the word!

**Sarit Schwab (Pink Lady Pledge)** is a 7th grader at the Shefa School. Sarit has been in many shows at the Y and she is very excited to be in *Grease*. In her free time Sarit enjoys dancing, hanging out with friends and family, and watching the TV show "Friends." Most of
all she loves to perform in RRS shows. She would like to thank Laurie, Shawn, Penny, Bob, Justin and her fellow cast-mates for working so hard to make the show happen. Enjoy Grease!

**Trevor Scott (Kenickie)** is thrilled to play Kenickie in his final show with RRS. His most prominent roles include Jud Fry in *Oklahoma!*, Paul in *A Chorus Line*, Enjolras in *Les Mis*, and most recently Jack Kelly in *Newsies*. In his free time, Trevor writes his own music, and is extremely passionate about doing so. He is going to be studying Musical Theater at Catholic University next year – a choice made as a direct result of the fabulous Riverdale Rising Stars program. He would like to thank his cast-mates for working so hard, Shawn Renfro for all his help over the years, Penny for her encouragement and extravagant costume design, Bob Walton and Justin Fischer for their fantastic musical direction both in the shows and for Trevor personally, Emily for her incredible choreographic direction and of course Laurie Walton for her guidance, help, kindness and love – he thinks the world of her!!! Finally, to his fellow seniors, he wishes them all the happiness and success in the world on their new journey. He is going to miss his time at RRS but is so grateful to have been part of it. Now sit back and enjoy the show!

**Kayla Chapira-Stern (Raining on Prom Night Soloists / Pink Lady Pledge)** is thrilled to be performing in her fourth show with Laurie and the Riverdale Rising Stars. Kayla is an eighth grader at SAR academy. Previous shows include: *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, and *Newsies*. She would like to thank Laurie, Bob, Shawn, Penny, Eliza, Nava and the rest of the cast of Grease for making this production as amazing as it could possibly be!

**Etta Singer (Pink Lady Pledge)** is a 7th grader at Horace Mann. This is only her second show with the teens but she has been in productions at the Y since she was 9. She is super excited to be in another show with so many of her friends and such an overall talented group of people. Past shows include, *Newsies* (Scab 1), *Beauty and the Beast* (Madame de la Grande Bouche) and *Once on this Island* (Storyteller) as well as many others. She loves singing and dancing and is always super enthusiastic. She would like to thank, Laurie, Penny, Bob, Justin and Shawn. She hopes you love the show!

**Tiarra Towns (Marty / Pink Lady)** is a 15-year-old student at Sacred Heart High School. She is so excited to participate in her 20th
production with the Riverdale Rising Stars. Previous productions include Peter Pan Jr. (Peter Pan), Honk Jr. (the Cat), and Fiddler on the Roof Jr. (Tzeitel). She would like to thank Laurie, Bob, Shawn, Justin, Penny, and others for making this show the best that it can be. She would also like to take a moment to say goodbye to the lovely seniors: Chris, Abby, Shira, Sam, Nava, Katie, and Trevor. Much love to you all. Break a leg everybody and enjoy the show!

Lexi Wenger (Sandy) is a sophomore at the Heschel High School. This is Lexi’s seventh show at the Y, and she is so incredibly excited to be doing Grease with this amazing cast! Previous roles include Medda Larkin in Newsies, Rosa Bud in The Mystery of Edwin Drood, and Trix in The Drowsy Chaperone. She would like to thank Laurie, Shawn, Penny, Bob, and Justin for making each show we do fantastic! She would also like to express how much she will miss the wonderful seniors and say that next year RRS just won’t be the same without them. Break a leg everyone!

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Zoe,

You never stop amazing us! Stay sweet and true to who are, always. We love you and are so proud of you!

With love,
Mom and Dad

Cameron,

We love you!!!

Mom, Dad, Bailey & Sean

Our Dear King Of The Mooners!

We hope you will spend your days not just mooning. You are one of a kind and we sure that your name will shine and be remembered forever, especially when you go together with all your wop-baba- lu-bop!

Be full of love, thanks to the angels up above!

Your old lady and old man so happy to drag our carcasses out of bed for ya anytime you need us!

With all our love,
Truly yours: Mom, Dad, Max, grandmas, and grandpas!
DEAR ETHAN,

From a tree to a T(-bird pledge), you always shine and command attention.

We are HERE FOR IT

Mazal tov

Love,
Ema, Abba, and Talia
Congratulations to the amazing cast of Grease! We are so thrilled to see you all go together!

JOSHUA,

We are Mooooooooning over you! We are so proud of you!

Thank you thank you Laurie, Shawn, Bob, Penny and everyone else who helps our children shine in every way.

Sarah, Stuart, Eitan, Matthew and Ella Milstein
Go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go

NAVA AND JACOB!

We are hopelessly devoted to both of you and so happy to see the two of you sharing the stage together.

Love,
Ima and Abba
(and Emanuel, Michal, and Gedalia)
Sam,

You’ve come a long way from playing Tevye at age 10 to now Danny in Grease, with so many great roles in between. Watching you grow into such a caring, funny, talented and confident young man has been a true joy for us. With that beautiful smile your sweet way always shines through. We are so proud of you!

And of course, we must thank Laurie. Your never ending love, support and encouragement for our children has made an incredible difference in their lives!

Love,
Mommy, Daddy,
Harry & Hannah Frimet & Bryan, Seth & Amira, Brooke, Josh & Isaiah, Naama, Zach & Hadas & Kayla, Shira, Leora & Ma
ABBY

For the past ten years you have poured your heart onto this stage and entertained us all in the process. From a baby duckling to a rapping grandma, from Veruca Salt to Fruma Sarah, from Gertrude McFuzz to Little Red, from “Four Foot Ten” Connie to an iconic Jan, your performances are always electrifying and unforgettable.

Whether it’s singing, acting, dancing, wisecracking, shrieking, or geriatric aerobicizing, you always manage to bring your whole amazing self—your sparkle, your wit, your kindness, and your fierceness—to this cherished stage and everything you do.

We could not be prouder.

Congratulations on your final RRS show from your most devoted fans,

Mom, Dad, Lizey & Sammy
congratulations
T R E V O R
on your
magnificent run at
R R S
Wishing you and the senior class of 2019 all the best on your new endeavors.

A special thank you to Emily, Penny Shawn Bob & Laurie for all the guidance and love you’ve shown our children – I am so grateful.

Much Love – Kathy Scott
Eliza / Cha Cha

You were definitely born to hand jive, baby!

(And also, to teach everyone else how to hand jive)

We love watching you go Higher
Higher Higher with each show.

We are SO proud of you!

Love,
Mom, Dad, Abby & Sammy

Special congratulations to the whole cast and crew of GREASE, and “happy trails” to all the amazing seniors from the Mesch Fisher family.
KAYLA SHAPIRA-STERN

We are so proud of you!

Congratulations to the entire cast of Grease, and thank you Laurie, Shawn, Penny, Bob, and Justin for putting on another terrific show!

The Shapira-Stern Family
Emma
our love

We love you more than words can say

Hearing you sing can make the day so much better

Love Mom, Dad, Zachary & Alex
Born to hand jive,

Halleli!

You have always been our favorite Pink Lady!

Congrats to you and the entire cast and team!

All our love,
Ema, Abba, Mama, Papa, Nana and Popop
CONGRATULATIONS!!!

ABBY AND ELIZA FISHER

for outstanding performances in "Grease"

Best wishes and thank you to Abby and the other seniors for their amazing performing careers at the Riverdale YM-YWHA theater.

You brought joy to many people who were privileged to be in your audience.

And a special thank you to Laurie and Shawn for making it all possible.

We love you the mostest!
Nana & Papa

---

Congratulations

to our own Rising Star

Josh

Love,
Bubbie & Bob
Congratulations

Emma

Love Bubby & Zayde

Grease is the Word!

To the Pink Lady Pledges,

who have all the right moves at Rydell

Congratulations to

Beth

& to the entire Cast and Crew!

Love Mom, Dad, Grandma & Grandpa
Congratulations to
Etta
and the entire cast and crew of Grease!

You go together like lama lama ka dinga da dinga dong.

— Todd, Emily, and Desmond

Can’t believe this your last show!!!

Break a Leg, TREVOR!

Love,
Your Summit Family

"WE GO TOGETHER!"

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love RRS

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