

Exploring independence

Story by: Sarah Hirsch

Three BVNW students take advantage of the opportunity to build their own curriculum and pursue the career of their choice. An independent study is a unique option offered during school where students benefit from a more hands-on approach to learning.

Stepping behind the scenes

A simple sketch. Computer software. A rampant imagination. These three things, paired with a brain full of ideas, are all senior Riley Ewing needs to bring his dreams to life on the stage. Ewing is studying under drama teacher Steve Landes to learn about more aspects of theatre.

"I'm very interested in musical theatre in particular," Ewing said. "Set design has always been one of those things where I feel like it can make or break a show. I thought I would try my hand at set [design] just to see what it was like to get the other side of acting."

Ewing said his forte is acting, but Landes exposes him to new elements of theatre. Landes said they are collaborating on designing the set for "Into the Woods," which will be the musical in February.

"[Landes] gave me a skeleton of what he wanted and now it's my job to run with it and see little nuances in the set I can make to just give that extra flair," Ewing said. "We're going to meet and compare notes and our sketches. It's

really just kind of hit and miss right now."

There are several approaches to designing a set. Ewing said he has very specific preferences for set design.

"I like room for the actor to play, where it's not just your solid enter right, enter left — there's lots of different areas," Ewing said. "I like a cluttered set because I think it's more appealing to the audience."

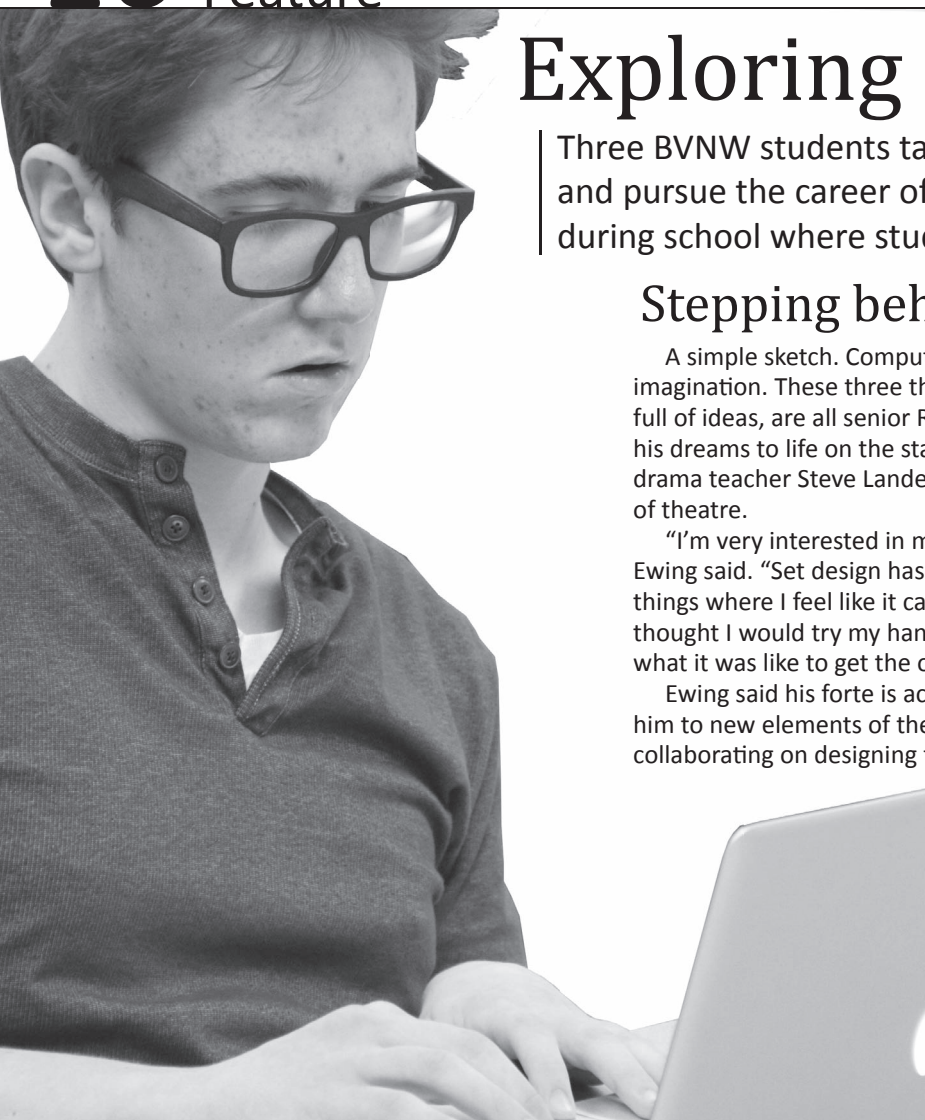
Ewing said he goes through a series of sketches before even getting to the nitty gritty details. Landes said he edits the drafts and then they brainstorm together.

"Doodling has always been one of my hobbies," Ewing said. "I like to carry around a little notepad and I use it whenever my imagination sparks up."

While independent studies can give students experience in their ideal career, Ewing decided to take it from a different approach. He said he views it as an opportunity to make himself a more well-rounded actor.

"I'm planning on majoring in musical theatre, and I think having this aspect of theatre on a collegiate level will help with some of the courses I'll have to take," Ewing said. "It'll give me that leg up to other people."

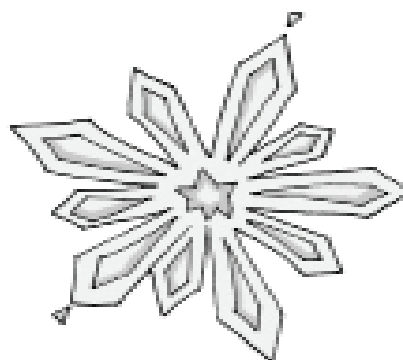
Creating the stage design on his computer, senior Riley Ewing takes his sketches and makes them 3D. Ewing said he wanted to see what went into the productions he acted in (photo by Riley Obetz).



THE

Ice

AT PARK PLACE



The Ice at Park
Place Opens
11/15!

Visit www.ParkPlaceLeawood.com
for more information or call
913.663.2070!

Open 11AM to 10PM Monday
through Saturday, and Noon to 8PM
Sunday.

Great for parties and fundraisers.
Group rates available.

Park Place Leawood
117th & Nall

