

# Summer loving...

*Couple ready to hit stage with Grease*

**T**ravolta and Newton-John. Danny and Sandy. Now two new names will fit into the list. Leach and Beeman. *Grease* is very much an ensemble musical, but it is also very focused on the central couple in the plot. It is a lot to live up to, even in the community theatre realm, because it is such a well-ingrained show.

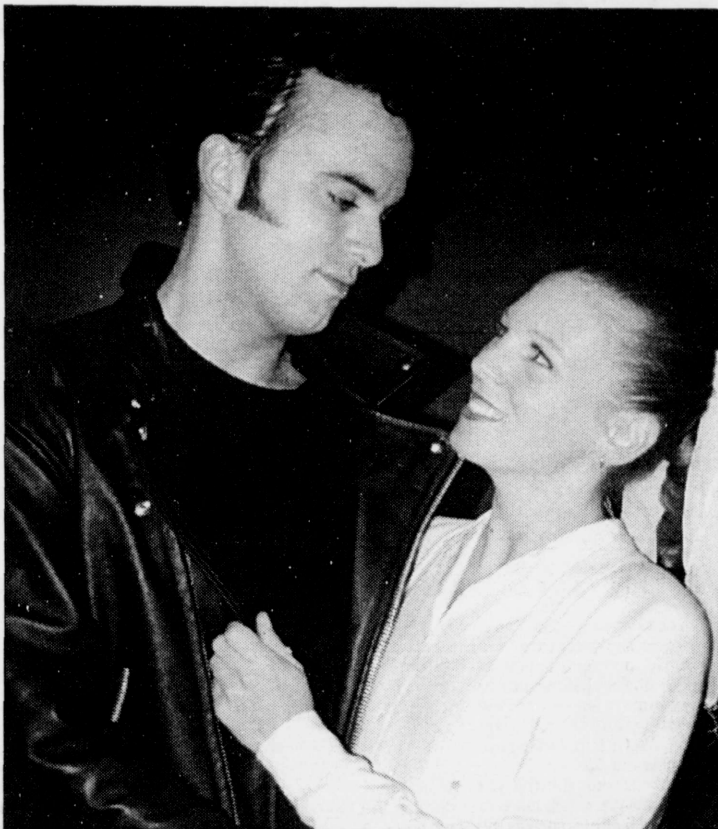
The show is based in the 1950s, but it translates without difficulty into today's situation. "Hey, the story never changes. Boy meets girl, boy falls in love with girl, boy and girl get together, boy loses girl, boy and girl get back together again...Freddie Prinze has been in like 15 of those already this year. We never get sick of them," says Amy Beeman.

"The play is so much about image," says Dave Leach. "Guys especially have to have that face they put on. 'I'm cool.' So this is a lot like going back to high school for me except kicking it up a notch because I was never that cool in high school."

Danny is "the coolest guy ever, but he is the most insecure little boy," which presents an acting challenge for Dave. He has to find that duality in his presentation of the larger-than-life character. Danny has to be believed as the aloof alpha male, but also the vulnerable romantic falling for Sandy. "It's cool to dance with those transitions," Dave says.

Dance is the operative word. This show is, even by musical theatre standards, a song-and-dance-heavy production. The soundtrack is commodious and ubiquitous on bubblegum radio.

"She (Sandy) tells a lot of her story through songs - especially 'Summer



Dave Leach and Amy Beeman play b3 b3

Nights' and 'Hopelessly Devoted'," says Amy Beeman. "Obviously there are parts of the character you can relate with - getting excited about a boy and telling all the girls about it, getting mad about a boy and telling all the girls about it... I think that holds true for a lot of characters, though. But that's the whole point of acting: what you don't understand you have to figure out and just go with it."

Amy has not been seen in a full production in a long time, although she has a long history of performance and she has maintained a profile in smaller dance events. She is also well-known as the face of PGTV in their community cruiser. In Amy, director/choreographer Bonnie Mathers spotted

the girl-next-door good looks she needed for Sandy. Bonnie looked to Dave after seeing his talent in her recent production of *Brigadoon* in which he held a supporting role.

"Jumping into a lead role is a little scary but mostly exciting. It's always a help to have a wicked cast behind you," says Amy. "Everybody is so much fun and very helpful. Some people have a problem with dance, some have a problem with singing, everybody has a strength so everybody watches out for each other. I don't think any of us would have lasted through all these rehearsals if we didn't like the people."

*Grease* runs October 4 to 15 at the PG Playhouse (it has been held over for two additional shows).

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1 X-Men	PG	2:20	4:40	7:30	9:45	coarse lang., violence
2 Gladiator	18A	3:00		8:00		frequent gory violence
3 Remember the Titans	G	2:00	4:30	7:05	9:40	no warnings
4 Urban Legends	14A	2:10	4:30	7:00	9:30	violence, suggestive scenes
5 Bait	14A		4:15	7:10	9:50	violence, coarse lang.
5 Chicken Run	G	2:15				no warnings
6 Almost Famous	14A	2:00	4:35	7:10	9:45	coarse lang., nudity