

Kenworthy dubbed Mr. Lakeland 2007

By Amber A---- and Melissa V-----

Music, shouts, and laughter could be heard from the Lakeland Auditorium on April 27. That Friday evening, Lakeland students, as well as other Ringwood and Wanaque residents, returned to the school to witness a pageant of nine nominated male students for the annual Mr. Lakeland Show.

Little did most of Lakeland know that planning was occurring several weeks ahead of time. The week of the show, Student Council and other student volunteers stayed several hours after school each day, decorating the auditorium and holding rehearsals. The effort of the Student Council and Mr. Placenti, their adviser, was very much appreciated by the audience and the school as a whole.

"It was a large undertaking, but it was all worth it because it seemed to have been well received by all those who attended and participated," said Placenti.

Hosted by Sam Vanni, senior, and Mr. Novak, history teacher, each contestant was introduced and their skit was performed. Scattered between Mr. Lakeland performances were a number of acts for the Talent Show portion, including Stephanie S---- singing Carrie

Underwood's "Before He Cheats" and Kelly O----- singing "Defying Gravity" from the musical *Wicked*. The winner of the Talent Show was Jackie Tozzi for her acrobatics/dance routine.

Having been dancing since she was two years old, Jackie was prepared for the show. She was nervous, however, competing against singers, as opposed to other dancers. "When I got on stage, it just felt like another competition for me and my nerves calmed down," said Tozzi. Performing against and in front of her students, and winning, felt just like "winning title at a dance competition".

Second runner up was singer Teresa T--- for her Latin medley. Mr. Lakeland continued with a dramatic reading of "Smeagal and Golem" by Stephen B---, and a flawless DDR game by Anthony C----. More musical numbers were performed by Zack Kenworthy and Joe Lerro singing "Total Eclipse of the Heart," and Brian Wunk's rendition of "Redneck Yacht Club". Other contestants Dave Loftus and Craig Parmenter, with two of their friends dressed up as the Spice Girls, paraded throughout the audience, singing "Wannabe."

The performances were outrageous and creative. Wunk used props such as an actual rowboat that dragged him and four girls on stage. Throughout the song, they passed beach balls across the audience, fished from the stage, and square danced with each other, as well as some of the judges.

When time needed to be filled, Lerro and Kenworthy sang "Livin on a Prayer" with the entire audience. An improvisational performance by Kenworthy, assisted by Joe Caravaglia, was also performed.

The Formal Wear and Question and Answer portions provided more amusement, with Kenworthy in a Tuxedo T-Shirt, and Wunk in flannel and dirty jeans.

After the final eliminations were made, Joe Lerro placed First Runner Up and Zack Kenworthy won the title of Mr. Lakeland 2007.

"Winning Mr. Lakeland was probably the greatest honor of my high school career," said Kenworthy. "It was nice to see that my talents mean something to others and not just me."

And it was his talented performances, as well as his "presence and charisma" that Mr. Lakeland judge, Ms. Kohmuench said made him "well deserving of the honor."

The judging was difficult, but the contestants displayed their talents and personality for everyone to see. "I wish I could have voted for everyone as number one, as they were all winners," said Kohmuench.



Photo and graphic by Amber A---- and Melissa V-----
Kenworthy takes the crown while rocking out to a custom version of "Smoke on the Water."

