

A day on the set

Photographs and text by D. M. Flynn
for Westside News Inc.

Christian filmmaker Rich Christiano began filming his fifth movie, "The Secrets of Jonathan Sperry," in August. The Village of Brockport is the main backdrop with a few scenes located in Holley and Rochester.

In a stage play, the curtain rises and the action proceeds in chronological order. Movie scenes, on the other hand, are filmed in bits and pieces. The postproduction process edits and splices the segments together to create the smooth, sequential movie the viewer sees.



The digital slate identifies the shot number, director, cameraman, studio, and title. Jansen Panettier is behind the slate.



Gavin MacLeod, as Jonathan Sperry, talking to Nick's stand in; Nick and Sperry's three friends will be filmed later. The white bounce board softens the light on MacLeod's face. The bright lights generate a tremendous amount of heat making the set quite warm.



Gina Ghiglieri, makeup department head, gives Jansen Panettier a period appropriate hair style. Child actors attend classes with a tutor on location so they can keep up with their schoolwork. They leave class to go to wardrobe and makeup as necessary.



Jansen Panettier rehearses his lines as Dustin. Child actors have to leave their schoolwork and quickly get into their character. Afterward, they return to their class work.



Gavin MacLeod arrives on the set with his sides or the portion of the script that will be filmed in this segment. One page of script equals about one minute of run time.



Gavin MacLeod and Rich Christiano enjoy a light moment. At the end of the day, the crew will have worked 12 hours, the adult actors will have worked 10 hours, and the child actors 9 hours. The result for moviegoers will be a four minute scene.



Melinda Webster (left) is a nursing assistant who treats minor injuries; anything more serious requires an ambulance. Zack Golemb is in charge of still photography. His images will be used for posters and DVD covers.

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The photographs printed here were taken on Monday, September 10 on location in Brockport. In this scene, Jonathan Sperry and his three young friends, Dustin, Albert, and Mark, are enjoying a pizza. Nick, the neighborhood bully, enters the pizza parlor and confronts the group. Sperry smoothly diffuses the tension and Nick slinks away. Sperry then counsels his friends to pray for Nick.



The crew prepares the lighting for the scene. The black drape blocks the sun. The 12,000-watt light shining through the filter creates the illusion of sunlight through the window of the pizza parlor. This provides consistent lighting for all shots. Otherwise, the lighting would change as the angle of the sun varies throughout the day.



Chad Gundersen, (left) producer and production manager, with Mark DuPré, associate pastor of Christ Community Church in Brockport. DuPré is one of several locals serving as extras or bit players in the film.



First assistant director Stewart Young (left) is a stand in for Gavin MacLeod in this scene that will record Jansen Panettier's (right) dialog as Dustin. Cinematographer Philip Hurn (center) checks the lighting with an incident meter. The white dome approximates the shape of the human face.



Setting the scene includes attention to details, including period pizza prices.