**Western Romance Takes Stage in Firth**

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By Leslie Mielke



*The Morning News — Leslie Mielke Will a family row ensue in the Montgomery family? Ashli Munger (left) plays the mother, John Cornea, the father, and Michelle Tucker, the daughter in the play,”Ramona and Joel.” The play begins at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday and Monday in the Firth High School auditorium. Admission is by contribution.*

FIRTH – *Ramona and Joel*, a Wild West spoof on Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* rides onto the stage at Firth High School (FHS) Saturday and Monday. It’s the Montgomery family versus the Cabot family in this production written by August Mergelman. Cast and crew number 23.

In *Ramona and Joel*, FHS sophomore Michelle Tucker plays Ramona, the female lead. Senior Caden Portela plays Herman and senior Daniel Withers plays Joel.

Tucker said what she likes best about the play is the hick accents. I get to be a complete idiot on stage and have an excuse to do it,” she said. This is the second year Portela has performed in a play at FHS.

“My character, Herman, is goofy, just like me,” Portela said.”Drama is the best class ever.”

Withers, who plays the male lead, said he has learned ”to be yourself and to be expressive. Drama is a great class because it’s filled with friends,” Withers said. ”It helps you get out of your comfort zone and helps you get to know people and yourself.”

“It’s all in verse,” said director Michelle Miles.”It’s funny.”

Miles said she and her drama class put on one play a year. This is her sixth play at FHS. “As a director, I’ve learned that it’s supposed to be fun,” she said. “It’s called a play. If I get stressed, then so do the students,” Miles said.”I try to keep it light; make it fun.”

*Ramona and Joel* plays at 7:30 p.m. each night in the Firth High School auditorium. Admission is by contribution.