

BIG KIDS  
GET TO

# Play

**PENINSULA PLAYERS TO OPEN  
'YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN'**

Kevin Perry, as Schroeder, sings during a rehearsal for "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown."



By PATRICK WEBB • FOR COAST WEEKEND

*You're a good man, Charlie Brown . . .  
With a heart such as yours, you can open  
any doors.  
You can go out and do anything!"*

Theater director Rita Smith has that quality all career elementary school teachers have.

The U.S. Coast Guard labels it "command presence." Some educators prefer "loving discipline."

Whatever it's called, Smith directs her charges with a degree of smiling firmness that is impossible to resist.

At a rehearsal as the Peninsula Players' latest musical nears the opening curtain, Smith appears able to play every part; as the actors cross the stage in bunny hops or stylized dance moves, she is right there with them, twisting playfully, tip-toeing mischievously, smiling and calling out encouragement.

"You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" is being staged at the River City Playhouse in Ilwaco, Washington. And while Smith emphasizes teamwork, there is no doubt its creativity begins with her vision.

The show opens Friday, March 24. Nine performances are spread across three weekends through April 9. Organizers hope the fun will entice others to don greasepaint or help offstage.

The title character is played with relish by Robert Scherrer. Since he moved from Seaside, he has acted in five musicals plus several other shows with Smith.

"I have such admiration for her and her patience — especially with people who have never acted. She works with them, and you can just watch that person blossom," he said. "She directs and shows us exactly what she wants. She will work one-on-one with a person or come up on stage and show us the way. She leads by example, that's for sure."

"You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" features the Peanuts comic strip characters of Charles M. Schultz, whose shared adventures were first published in newspapers in the 1950s. Charlie

PHOTOS BY DANNY MILLER



**Above:** Actors sing during a rehearsal for "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" at the River City Playhouse.  
**Right:** Director Rita Smith, right, and musical director Barbara Bate smile for a portrait during a rehearsal for "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" at the River City Playhouse in Ilwaco.



Continued on Pg. 9