

'Miracles' on stage at River City Playhouse

Uplifting Ilwaco musical opens on Friday

BY PATRICK WEBB

Play director Rita Smith wants to offer a gift to the community.

Because the pandemic kept people home for so long, she wants to offer an opportunity for a night out.

"It is a great musical for everything that everyone has been through. It's uplifting!" Smith said. The show is "A Bag Full of Miracles" at the River City Playhouse in Ilwaco, Washington, and features a cast from Peninsula Players.

"We are happy to be back," said Smith. "We feel like we have been doing this musical for three years," she added. The production was set to open in March 2020 when the pandemic caused the cancellation of many live events. "We had to cancel three days before we opened," said Smith. "It was a sad day. It was going to be final dress rehearsal. Instead, it was 'pack it away,'" she added.

The change did offer one positive decision, however. The theater had been looking to switch from having to rely on long-time accompanist Barbara Bate, instead staging a production with recorded music. Theater board members had purchased what Smith calls a "production in a packet."

Unlike traditional restrictive theater contracts, it came with a one time fee, unlimited scripts, suggested rehearsal schedule, costume specifics, instrumental music and recorded vocal demonstrations of the songs. "We were very fortunate that way," said Smith. "We didn't have too many out-of-pocket expenses because it was already paid for," she added.

During the past two years, the Peninsula Players have raised money for better heating inside parts of the theater. As rehearsals resumed, some roles had to be recast because actors had left the community. "We got new people on board and

See Page 14



Photos by Lydia Ely/The Astorian

ABOVE: From left, actors Nancy McAllister, Kevin Perry, Suzanne Knutzen and Gretchen Goodson stand around a cake. **BELOW:** Aarin Hygaard, 14, right, Deborah Perry, center, and Pepper Weldon, 9, sit on the edge of the stage for a portrait during a rehearsal.



'A Bag Full of Miracles'

A three act musical comedy by the Peninsula Players.

Saturday and Sunday, as well as April 1 and 2, 8 and 9 at 7 p.m. Matinees on Sunday, April 3 and 10 at 2 p.m. at River City Playhouse.

Admission is \$15. To purchase tickets, visit Okie's Thriftway in Ocean Park, Stormin' Norman in Long Beach and the Olde Towne Café in Ilwaco. Tickets can also be reserved through Rita Smith at 360-244-3517 or at raskimball@gmail.com. A gala reception will follow opening night on Friday.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Live

TRAY DAHL AND THE JUGTIME RAGBAND

An energetic amalgamation of all the popular styles of the 1920's/30's - jazz, a little blues, a bit of swing, a pinch old time gospel, and even classic show tunes - all immersed in an early 20th century New Orleans sound.



Sunday, March 27, 2022

3:00 PM 4:00 PM (Doors open at 2:30pm)

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