

Get a laugh at 'The Ballad of Pinky Brown'

Mini musical can be seen every Saturday as part of 'Get Wild in Pendleton'

By Jennifer Colton
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PENDLETON — Summer is here, and the Wild West street show has returned to downtown Pendleton and every Saturday the heroes will defeat the villain while entertaining the audience with comedy, accordions and action straight out of a 1930s western.

"It's vaudeville meets Blazing Saddles," actor Chris Dennett said. "It's 20 minutes to laugh at something absurd and have a really good time."

This is the second year for the Main Street Wild West Show, part of Travel Pendleton's "Get Wild in Pendleton" summer weekends. The 20-minute "mini musical" was written by Margaret Mayer and Marcia Brown.

"People should expect a very funny show with lots of laughing and lots of silliness," Mayer said.

In "The Ballad of Pinky Brown," characters have blown into Pendleton — in one case, literally — and find themselves at Loretta's saloon for a big poker game. Among the characters is Miss Alice, a cowgirl seeking revenge against Pinky Brown; Marshal Jack Cooper, trying to cash in on the bounty for Pinky Brown; and Cornelius "Pinky" Brown himself, a notorious con man.

"He's handsome as the day is long, crooked as the Snake River and slicker than a toad's belly," said actor Dutch Meerdink. "Feel free to boo because that's part



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Miss Alice (Carey Varela) confronts Pinky Brown (Dutch Meerdink) in front of Doo Dah (Andi Jones) and Miss Loretta (Doreen Matteson) during a performance of "The Ballad of Pinky Brown" in downtown Pendleton.



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Marshal Jack Cooper (Chris Dennett) shows off a reward poster for the notorious Cornelius "Pinky" Brown during a performance of "The Ballad of Pinky Brown" in downtown Pendleton.

of the fun. Pinky deserves the boo."

As Pinky, Meerdink is one of three new cast members in this year's show. Carey Varela also joins the cast as "Miss Alice," and Andi Jones joins as "Doo

Dah," an orphan girl with amnesia and an accordion.

Jones, who is 8 years old, said people should come see the show because it's not something they can see every day.

"There aren't very many girl

accordion players here," she said. "If people are walking by, they should stop because it's really funny — and it's free entertainment."

In addition to the three new actors, three cast members are returning — Mayer as The Accordion Player, Doreen Matteson as Loretta and Dennett as Marshal Cooper.

The audience also gets to join in with the performance.

"In a small venue where you can interact with people, I've enjoyed that," Meerdink said. "This isn't Shakespeare, it's just fun. It's over the top, it's silly."

"The Ballad of Pinky Brown" plays at 6 p.m. almost every Saturday this summer, just before

the live music. The location is always on Main Street, but which block it is on rotates. You can find the specific location for any week and the full schedule of "Get Wild in Pendleton" events at travelpendleton.com.

"The Ballad of Pinky Brown" is scheduled for 6 p.m. every Saturday through Sept. 3 except for July 9, July 30, and Aug. 20.

"People should come see Pinky Brown because they should support the arts and because it's becoming a tradition to come see a show on a Saturday in the summer," Mayer said. "I think people will really be happy they came down and supported the Pendleton Downtown Association and Get Wild in Pendleton."