



THE CURTAIN RAISER

SEASON 2017 - 2018 ■ SEPTEMBER 2017

COMING EVENTS

La Cage aux Folles

Musical Comedy

September 7 – October 1

The Velveteen Rabbit

Family Classic

October 6-15

Shaw Festival Trip

To Niagara-On-The-Lake

October 11-15

Over the River and

Through the Woods

Heartwarming Comedy

October 19 – November 12

Man Is the Only Animal Who

Blushes... Or Needs To: An

Evening With Mark Twain

featuring Michael Edwards

Humorous One-Man Show

November 16-19

I Love a Piano

Irving Berlin Musical Revue

January 11 – February 4

The Giver

Thought-Provoking Drama

February 15-25



Sometimes playing it straight is a real drag.

Book by Harvey Fierstein

Music and Lyrics by Jerry Herman

Based on the play by Jean Poiret

September 7 – October 1

This hysterically funny musical was the inspiration for the 1996 hit movie *The Birdcage*, starring Robin Williams and Nathan Lane. With plenty of heart and hilarity, *La Cage aux Folles* is a dazzling spectacle of glittering gaiety, French flair, and divine dance numbers. It's truly tres magnifique!

Life is fabulous in the sunny south of France for long-time couple Georges (**Deion Bruce Howard**) and Albin (**Bruce Harrison Clayton**). They run a drag nightclub, La Cage aux Folles, which they also live above in an apartment with their butler/"maid," Jacob (**Josh Ramko**).

Georges is the emcee at the club, while drag queen Albin is "Zaza," the star performer, backed up by the lovely Les Cagelles: Bitelle (**Shelby Mae Randle**), Chantal (**Tom Ferreira**), Francis (**Danielle Posner**), Hanna (**Gregg Bleam**), Lo Singh (**Joshua Plante**), Mercedes (**Faith Morales**), and Phaedra (**Jose C. Rivera**).

Georges also has a son, Jean-Michel (**Xavier R. Wegner**), the result of a fling in his younger years. But when Jean-Michel announces his engagement to Anne Dindon (**Abigail Barbier**), meeting the in-laws gets tricky. Anne's father, Edouard Dindon (**Darrell G. Riley**), is an ultra-conservative politician who wants to shut down the local drag clubs, while his meek wife, Marie (**Joy Newkirk**), seems content to abide by her husband's convictions.

Jean-Michel has already lied to his future in-laws about the identities and occupations of his parents, so Georges reluctantly agrees to play it straight for the Dindons. But Albin has other plans... because doesn't every wedding need a mother of the groom?

Aided by café owner Jacqueline (**Angie Brahim**) and the townspeople (**Soulange D'Artagnan Beaudet**, **Rick Cascaddan**, **Jean-Pierre Leemans**, **Kelsey Plante**, **Dana Shack**), Albin and Georges desperately try to portray a typical family for the Dindons. But the harder they try to create the illusion of "normal," the more they redefine "family."

La Cage aux Folles is directed and choreographed by **Kim Wise**. Music director is **John Edel**. Stage manager is **Ginny Riley**. Set design is by **Joseph Harris**. Costume design is by **Eryn Brooks Brewer**. Lighting design is by **Jeff Davis**. Sound design is by **Justin Lewis**.

There will be 20 performances of *La Cage aux Folles* from September 7 – October 1 at Ocala Civic Theatre. Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$12 for full-time students (student ID required for college students). For more information, call (352) 236-2274 or go to www.ocalacivictheatre.com.

AUDITIONS

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

October 9-10

RESERVE YOUR TICKETS FOR OPENING NIGHT

Join us on Thursday, September 7 at 7:00 p.m. for a reception before the premiere performance. Delicious refreshments are catered by Honey Baked Ham, and beer and wine are available for purchase. Come celebrate the excitement of opening night!



October 19 – November 12

By Joe DiPietro

Both sets of Nick’s old-school Italian-American grandparents in New Jersey are a little too close for comfort. When he’s offered his dream job across the country, the family starts scheming how to keep him close to home for their traditional Sunday dinners. And what better way than to find him a romance (with a nice Catholic girl, of course)? This warm-hearted comedy will tie its apron-strings around your heart.

Over the River and Through the Woods is directed by **Carlos Francisco Asse**. There will be 20 public performances from October 19 – November 12, 2017. Tickets go on sale September 18 at \$25 for adults and \$12 for full-time students (school ID required for college students). For more information, call (352) 236-2274 or go to www.ocalacivictheatre.com.



November 16-19

Presented by special arrangement with Michael Edwards

Celebrated stage, film, and television actor Michael Edwards presents his thoroughly entertaining one-man show as one of America’s favorite writers, the legendary Mark Twain. With homespun humor and wisecracking warmth, Edwards delivers Twain’s speeches, short stories, and gently satirical commentary in an authentic portrayal of the beloved author. Join us for the wit and wisdom of Mark Twain!

There will be five public performances from November 16-19, 2017. Tickets go on sale October 16 at \$25 for adults, \$23 for subscribers, and \$12 for full-time students (school ID required for college students). For more information, call (352) 236-2274 or go to www.ocalacivictheatre.com.



Golden Troupers

The Golden Troupers are back from their summer break and are ready to entertain! This terrific group of age 55+ performers travels Marion County entertaining local audiences with comedy skits and songs. They perform at no charge for non-profit organizations, but donations are gratefully accepted. To join or to book the Troupers for your club or community, call (352) 236-2274 or Marlene Harr at (352) 687-3868.

Rehearsals resume on September 11 at 1 p.m. The Golden Troupers rehearse at the Theatre on Mondays at 1 p.m. from September to May. Join the Troupers – it’s a golden opportunity!



Wine, Cheese, and Dessert Party

September 26, at 6:00 p.m.

Join us in Our Lady of the Springs Catholic Church Parish Hall located at 4047 NE 21st Street in Ocala. The guest speaker for this event will be **David Schlenker**, Entertainment Editor of the Star-Banner. For those not familiar with his column, which appears weekly in the newspaper’s State & Local section, Dave says he will “...most likely be remembered as the journalist who broke the two-butted chicken story that rattled cages from that quiet farm in Ocala to Jay Leno’s desk in Los Angeles.” Dave, who grew up in Ocala, appeared on the Ocala Civic Theatre stage in such memorable roles as “Iowa Kid No. 11 in *The Music Man* and Boy in White Tights in *Camelot*.” The evening will also feature wine graciously provided by the Sokol family’s Katya Vineyards and Tasting Room on the Square. **ACT 4 members and non-members** alike are invited to join us as our guest at this meeting, but, if you plan to attend, please call Joan Gustafson at (352) 622-5315 to make a reservation.

With the opening of *La Cage Aux Folles* on September 7, be sure to look for new jewelry designs by Gift Box Chairman Lois Ann Kohlweiss and her fellow artists Evelyn Forbes, Lynn Hagen, Patti Cole, Gwen Hertz, Juan Carlos Cahue, and Marion Sturgeon. Whether you are looking for just the right piece to match that great new outfit or the perfect gift for someone special, check the fabulous items at the Gift Box first. Cash, checks, and major credit cards are always accepted!

If you would like more information about the organization or to have your name added to our mailing list, please call ACT 4 President Joan Gustafson at (352) 622-5315.

New York, Here We Come!
December 14-17

Save the dates for Ocala Civic Theatre’s popular annual holiday trip to New York City! The tour group, accompanied by executive director Mary Britt, will depart from Ocala Civic Theatre on Thursday, December 14 and return on Sunday, December 17. The trip includes round-trip airfare and transportation to the airports, your choice of two Broadway shows, one dinner, and three nights at the beautiful four-star Renaissance Hotel overlooking Times Square. Stay tuned for more details next month.

Don’t miss New York decorated for the holidays!

THE HONEYBAKED HAM CO.
AND CAFÉ

We are proud to announce that **Honey Baked Ham** will be providing the refreshments for our Signature Series opening-night receptions this season! Join us an hour before the curtain rises on the first performance of *La Cage aux Folles*, *Over the River and Through the Woods*, *I Love a Piano*, *The Foreigner*, and *Mamma Mia!* for delicious food and beverages, compliments of **Honey Baked Ham**. Sincere thanks to **Ted and Candy Cole** for their generosity!

ACT4

OCALA CIVIC THEATRE, INC.

Fashion Show

featuring RESORT FASHIONS

By Tiffany

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2017

\$25.00 Per Person
(Tax and Gratuity Included)

Proceeds Benefit Ocala Civic Theatre
Scholarships

12:30 p.m. - Doors Open
Select Cocktails and Wine Available
for Purchase

1:00 p.m. - Pre-Show Shopping

2:00 p.m. - Luncheon
Assorted Fresh-Baked Muffins
Chef's Soup of the Afternoon
Crispy Fried Chicken Tenders
atop Garden-Fresh Tossed Salad
Home-Made Key Lime Pie
Coffee and Iced Tea

2:45 p.m. - Fashion Show and Shopping

Ocala Elks Lodge
702 N.E. 25th Avenue, Ocala
Reservations - Ocala Civic Theatre
(352) 236-2274

ACT-4 is a not-for-profit Florida Corporation
designated by the Internal Revenue Service as a
501(c)(3) organization. Donations are deductible
within the limits allowed by law.



Volunteer Spotlight

Sue LaChausse

Sue LaChausse has volunteered as an usher at Ocala Civic Theatre for the past decade – so there's a very good chance that she has handed you a program, taken your ticket, or helped you find your seat when you came to see a show.

Sue's dear friend, the late Joanne Jensen, was also an usher, and convinced her to start volunteering at OCT in 2007. A regular volunteer, Sue ushers for nearly every show each season, plus youth productions and special events like the K-Country concerts. She also has assisted with raffles, concessions, and everything from washing glasses to helping to strike the *Fiddler On the Roof* set. And now, like Joanne, she encourages other people to get involved here. "Ocala Civic Theatre is a great organization," she says.

But ushering is definitely her favorite OCT volunteer activity: "You get to meet some wonderful people, and they're here to have a good time." The most rewarding thing about volunteering here, she says, is "all the people from different walks of life and cultures."

Sue and her husband, Bruce, have been married for 53 years and have four children (three sons and a daughter). They have lived in 25 different states, as well as England, and have traveled across Europe and the world. "We have been blessed," she says.

Raised in northern New York, Sue is one of 11 children. Her family ran a bakery when she was a child, which explains her love of baking. She also likes to cook and often shares meals with other residents of Rolling Greens, the retirement community where she lives and volunteers. "I was raised to give to other people," she says. "It's such a rewarding feeling to give."

Volunteering is an important part of Sue's life. Besides the time she gives to OCT, she volunteers at the Reilly Center, the Immaculate Heart of Mary thrift store, and the annual College of Central Florida dinner theatre. She also hosts the "One Blood" blood drive twice a year (there's one this month!) and is a proud 27-gallon donor herself, as well as donating platelets. Sue also is an avid golfer. "Keep busy: That's what keeps you young!" she adds.

Sue, we are so appreciative that you have chosen to stay busy by giving your time as a volunteer to Ocala Civic Theatre, among your many other community involvements. Thank you for your spirit of giving, your enthusiastic energy, and for always being ready to lend a hand wherever needed!

TICKETS ON SALE NOW! 2017-2018 SEASON

La Cage aux Folles

September 7 – October 1, 2017

Over the River and Through the Woods

October 19 – November 12, 2017

Man Is the Only Animal Who Blushes...

Or Needs To: An Evening With Mark Twain

featuring Michael Edwards

November 16-19, 2017

I Love a Piano

January 11 – February 4, 2018

The Giver

February 15-25, 2018

The Foreigner

March 15 – April 8, 2018

The Legendary Bobby Darin: A Tribute

April 12-15, 2018

Mamma Mia!

May 17 – June 17, 2018

Box Office Hours:

Monday – Friday 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

On Saturdays with a performance:

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The lobby and box office open one hour
before each performance.

Get information and buy tickets online any
time at www.ocalacivictheatre.com
(A service charge applies to online
purchases.)

Box Office: (352) 236-2274
Administrative Offices: (352) 236-2851

On sale now:

- 2017-2018 Season Tickets
- *La Cage aux Folles*

Tickets go on sale:

September 11: *The Velveteen Rabbit*
September 18: *Over the River and Through the Woods*
September 25: Public performance of *Fit*
October 16: *Man Is the Only Animal Who Blushes... Or Needs To: An Evening With Mark Twain featuring Michael Edwards*

Notes From The Education Department



The Fall 2017 term got started a little earlier than usual this year, with auditions for *The Velveteen Rabbit* on August 14-15. We have a wonderful cast of students, and they've been rehearsing since August 21. This beloved children's classic about the power of becoming Real will be presented in the intimate space of the rehearsal hall for six performances from October 6-15.

The cast of *Fit*, this year's in-school touring show, has been in rehearsals since September 1. Both funny and moving, it's a terrific play about what it means to be "normal." *Fit* will tour local elementary schools from September 19 through October 31. There also will be a public performance at Ocala Civic Theatre on Saturday, October 21 at 11:00 a.m.

The first session of fall classes begins on Monday, September 11. Fall 2017 class brochures are available in the Theatre lobby or online at www.OcalaCivicTheatre.com. Make sure you grab one, or call us to be put on the Theatre For Young Audiences mailing list. The second session of fall classes begins October 16, so sign up ASAP.

Auditions for *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* are October 9-10. This hilarious holiday classic requires a large cast (27 roles!) for ages 6-16. There are so many great parts to play. Don't miss your chance to step into the spotlight and shine!

The student production of



THE VELVETEEN RABBIT

By James Still
From the classic story by Margery Williams

October 6-15

In this adaptation of the beloved children's classic, a young woman looks back on her childhood in an emotional journey through time. By reliving the relationship between her four-year-old self and her favorite toy, she rediscovers the true meaning of friendship. This poignant play explores themes of loss, loyalty, and love as the old rocking horse teaches the velveteen rabbit what it means to become real.

The Velveteen Rabbit is directed by **Melanie Tarter**. Stage manager is **Dakota Brown**. The show is presented by a cast of students ages 6-13 and will be presented in the Theatre's rehearsal hall, with limited seating for each show. There will be six performances. **Some performance dates and times have changed since the August newsletter.**

- Friday, October 6 at 7 p.m.
- Saturday, October 7 at 11 a.m. & 7 p.m.
- Sunday, October 8 at 2 p.m.
- Friday, October 13 at 7 p.m.
- Saturday, October 14 at 11 a.m.
- Sunday, October 15 at 2 p.m.

Tickets go on sale September 11 at \$10 for adults and \$5 for full-time students (school ID required for college students).

Auditions for the student production of



By Barbara Robinson

October 9-10

In this hilarious Christmas classic, a couple struggling to put on a church Christmas pageant is faced with casting the Herdman kids... probably the most awful kids in history. You won't believe the mayhem – and the fun – when the Herdmans collide head-on with the Christmas story! This delightful comedy is adapted from the best-selling young adult book. With plenty of great roles, a few favorite carols, and a lot of laughs, *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* has become a beloved tradition.

Auditions are Monday, October 9 and Tuesday, October 10 at 5:00 p.m. It is only necessary to attend one night of auditions. There are 27 roles available (12 male, 15 female) for students ages 6-16. Students are asked to prepare a one-minute comedic monologue for their audition. *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* is directed by **Kirstin Kennedy**.

Tuition is \$225 for this performance class. Rehearsals are Monday through Thursday, October 16 through November 30, 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. There are three performances: Saturday, December 2 at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., and Sunday, December 3 at 2:00 p.m.



By Kim Esop-Wylie

October 21

In this gently humorous dramatic comedy, Lucas is required to wear a protective helmet due to his unexpected seizures. Wanting to know how it feels to be "normal," Lucas asks his mom if he can stop wearing the helmet, just for his 12th birthday. She allows him to do so for one hour... and by the end of his birthday, he has discovered something surprising about everyone in his life.

Each year for the past decade, Ocala Civic Theatre has presented an in-school touring show to expose Marion County students to the performing arts. This year's show, *Fit*, is directed by **Kirstin Kennedy** and will tour local elementary schools from September 19 – October 31.

There will be a public performance of *Fit* on Saturday, October 21 at 11:00 a.m. at Ocala Civic Theatre. Tickets go on sale September 25 at \$10 for adults and \$5 for full-time students (school ID required for college students) or Marion Players. Group rates are also available. For more information, call (352) 236-2274 or go to www.ocalacivictheatre.com.



Mary H. Britt, Executive Director

Hello! Well, our 68th Season is well underway with the opening of *La Cage aux Folles!* This season we take you around the world with stops in St. Tropez (*La Cage aux Folles*), New Jersey (*Over The River and Through the Woods*), the Greek Isles (*Mamma Mia!*), and rural Georgia (*The Foreigner*). We will take you back in time to enjoy 60 songs from Irving Berlin (*I Love A Piano*), spend an evening with Mark Twain (*Man Is the Only Animal That Blushes, Or Needs To*), and the *Legendary Bobby Darin*. We offer not only a look at the past, but also take you to the fictional future (*The Giver*). It's a breath-taking variety of sights and sounds and a season you don't want to miss.

Season tickets are on sale now with four packages from which to choose: the 5-show Signature Series package (at \$100, **that's buy 4/get one free!**); the 3-show Ovation Series; or buy all 8 shows and save even more at just \$158 (less than \$20 per show!). New this year is a Weeknight Wild Card Flex Pass. With this new pass, you can choose any three shows from a list of seven and attend a Wednesday or Thursday evening performance. Get all three shows for just \$66. (Weeknight Wild Card does not include *Mamma Mia!*)

You can order your season ticket over the telephone at (352) 236-2274, or visit the box office in person and our great staff will be happy to assist you. If you are new to Ocala Civic Theatre, a personal visit will allow you to see the auditorium and check out the Appleton Cultural Center. I hope you join us for a magical season of live theatre!

Have you attended any of the productions offered by our Education Department? We have two wonderful family classics scheduled

Notes from the Executive Director

for this fall - *The Velveteen Rabbit* and *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. Both are based on popular children's books and have a wide appeal for both children and adults. The acting is very good, and both are fun, uplifting scripts. This year, you will also have an opportunity to see the show we are taking to the schools. This is our twelfth year touring local elementary schools with a production. The topic of the play is one that works well with the school's curriculum or covers an issue facing students, such as bullying. This year's production, *Fit*, by playwright Kim Esop Wylie, is the story of a young boy who is required to wear a helmet to protect his head when he has seizures. He is bullied at school because he is different. Another student is teased because she recently relocated from another state and talks "differently." The play has a positive and uplifting resolution. *Fit* will be touring local elementary schools from September 19 through October 31. If you happen to know any school that would like to book the show - public school or private school - contact me or Janice Kirk at jkirk@ocalacivictheatre.com. It is aimed at students in grades 3 through 5. Usually, we visit about 27 schools and perform to about 7,000 students and their teachers. If you would like to see the show, we are offering one public performance on Saturday, October 21 at 11:00 a.m. at the theatre. Group rates are available for the show. Perhaps you know a home school group or Scout troop that might like to attend. It's a great opportunity to see this part of our arts education program.

Speaking of group rates ... we have a terrific program for groups of 15 or more - special pricing and advance reservations are available for groups, and we even have a tent available for large groups. A theatre outing is great fun for clubs, businesses, or a "Girls Night Out."

I'm running out of space this month, but wanted to squeeze in the dates for our New York trips. We'll be back in the Big Apple December 14 through 17 and again in 2018 from June 6 to 10.

See you at the Theatre!

2017-2018 Board of Directors

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SEASON 2017 - 2018 ■ SEPTEMBER 2017

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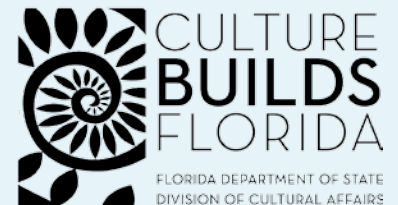
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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER					1	2
3	4 LABOR DAY Theatre Closed	5	6	7 <i>La Cage</i> 8pm	8 <i>La Cage</i> 8pm	9 <i>La Cage</i> 8pm
10 <i>La Cage</i> 2pm	11 Tickets on sale for <i>The Velveteen Rabbit</i>	12	13 <i>La Cage</i> 8pm	14 <i>La Cage</i> 8pm	15 <i>La Cage</i> 8pm	16 <i>La Cage</i> 2pm & 8pm
17 <i>La Cage</i> 2pm	18 Tickets on sale for <i>Over the River and Through the Woods</i>	19	20 <i>La Cage</i> 8pm	21 <i>La Cage</i> 8pm	22 <i>La Cage</i> 8pm	23 <i>La Cage</i> 2pm & 8pm
24 <i>La Cage</i> 2pm	25 Tickets on sale for <i>Fit</i>	26	27	28 <i>La Cage</i> 8pm	29  <i>La Cage</i> 8pm	30 <i>La Cage</i> 2pm

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 <i>La Cage</i> 2pm	2	3	4	5	6 <i>Velveteen Rabbit</i> 7pm	7 <i>Velveteen Rabbit</i> 11am & 7pm
8 <i>Velveteen Rabbit</i> 2pm	9 Auditions for <i>The Best Christmas Pageant</i> 5pm	10 Auditions for <i>The Best Christmas Pageant</i> 5pm	11	12	13	14 <i>Velveteen Rabbit</i> 11am
15 <i>Velveteen Rabbit</i> 2pm	16 Tickets on sale for <i>Mark Twain</i>	17	18	19 <i>Over The River</i> 8pm	20 <i>Over The River</i> 8pm	21 <i>Fit</i> 11am <i>Over The River</i> 8pm
22 <i>Over The River</i> 2pm	23	24	25 <i>Over The River</i> 8pm	26 <i>Over The River</i> 8pm	27 <i>Over The River</i> 8pm	28 <i>Over The River</i> 2pm & 8pm
29 <i>Over The River</i> 2pm	30	31	OCTOBER			

The *Curtain Raiser* is the official newsletter of The Marion Players, Inc., dba Ocala Civic Theatre. The Theatre is located at 4337 East Silver Springs Boulevard, Ocala, Florida, 34470. The *Curtain Raiser* is published monthly and is available free of charge to anyone who is interested in our activities. For information about the organization or to be added to the mailing list, call (352) 236-2274.

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If you have any questions, please contact Mary Britt at (352) 236-2851, ext. 104, or mbritt@ocalacivictheatre.com.