



THE CURTAIN RAISER

SEASON 2017 - 2018 ■ OCTOBER 2017

COMING EVENTS

The Velveteen Rabbit

Family Classic

October 6-15

Over the River and Through the Woods

Heartwarming Comedy

October 19 - November 12

30th Anniversary Roast of Mary Britt at Circle Square Cultural Center

Fundraiser to Benefit

Ocala Civic Theatre

November 14

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

The student production

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

Hilarious Holiday Classic

December 2-3

Marion Ballet Theatre presents

The Nutcracker

Beloved Christmas Tradition

December 8-17

I Love a Piano

Irving Berlin Musical Revue

January 11 - February 4

AUDITIONS

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

Hilarious Holiday Classic

October 9-10



By Joe DiPietro

October 19 - November 12

SPONSORED BY:

K-Country 93.7 FM
HONEYBAKED HAM

Nick Cristiano (**Anthony Palumbo**) has dinner every Sunday with both sets of his old-school, first-generation Italian-American grandparents in Hoboken, New Jersey. Dinner is always held at the home of his maternal grandparents, Frank (**Randall Moring**) and Aida Gianelli (**Danuta Jacob**). His paternal grandparents, Nunzio (**Fred Mullen**) and Emma Cristiano (**Susan Moring**), live two doors down the street. And all four of them are a little too close for Nick's comfort.

When Nick gets a great job offer in Seattle, none of his grandparents are on board with the idea. How is he supposed to keep joining them for Sunday dinner if he's all the way across the country? Then they start scheming: How better to keep him close to home than to find him a romance with a nice local girl like Caitlin O'Hare (**Melody Murphy**)? This charming ode to family, food, and tradition will tie its apron-strings around your heart.

Over the River and Through the Woods is directed by **Carlos Francisco Asse**. Stage manager is **Allison H. Metcalf**. Set design is by **Carlos Francisco Asse**. Costume design is by **Eryn Brooks Brewer**. Lighting and sound design is by **Jeff Davis**.

There will be 20 public performances of *Over the River and Through the Woods* from October 19 - November 12 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.



★ RESERVE YOUR TICKETS FOR OPENING NIGHT

Reserve your tickets for opening night and join us on Thursday, October 19 at 7:00 p.m. for a reception before the premiere performance. Delicious refreshments are catered by HoneyBaked Ham, and beer and wine are available for purchase. Come celebrate the excitement of opening night!



30th Anniversary Roast of Mary Britt At Circle Square Cultural Center - November 14

Join us on Tuesday, November 14 at 6:00 p.m. for a roast of Ocala Civic Theatre Executive Director **Mary Britt**! Held at Circle Square Cultural Center, this event is in honor of Mary's 30 years with Ocala Civic Theatre.

Food and a cash bar will be available from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The program will begin with a musical number and testimonials before the roast. **Chip Morris** and **Gary Rigby** will serve as emcees for this special fundraiser to benefit Ocala Civic Theatre. Don't miss this opportunity to join in some good-humored teasing, along with the well-deserved applause for 30 years of hard work and dedication!

Tickets are \$65. All proceeds go toward the Ocala Civic Theatre building expansion fund. For tickets or information, contact the Ocala Civic Theatre at (352) 236-2274.



November 16-19

Presented by special arrangement with Michael Edwards

SPONSORED BY: Elite Equestrian Magazine

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.

A quartet also will perform lovely, timeless songs like "My Wild Irish Rose" and "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" before the show to help set the mood for the era of riverboats and ragtime. 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.



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. Contact the box office at (352) 236-2274 to have details mailed to you.

Don't miss New York decorated for the holidays!

THE HONEYBAKED HAM CO.
AND CAFÉ

We are proud to announce that **HoneyBaked 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 *Over the River and Through the Woods*, *I Love a Piano*, *The Foreigner*, and *Mamma Mia!* for delicious food and beverages, compliments of HoneyBaked Ham. Sincere thanks to **Ted and Candy Cole** for their generosity!



Golden Troupers

The Golden Troupers are a terrific group of age 55+ performers who travel 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 are held at the Theatre on Mondays at 1 p.m. from September to May. Join the Troupers – it's a golden opportunity!



We apologize to all those who made plans to attend the ACT 4 Fashion Show on October 8, which, due to unforeseen circumstances as result of Hurricane Irma, we were forced to cancel. The good news is that we have been able to reschedule the FASHION SHOW. It will now be held on Saturday, March 17, 2018. Of course, we'll have more information as the event nears, but we can assure everyone of a great afternoon of St. Patrick's Day fun!

And even more fabulous fund-raisers are planned for 2018. ACT 4 will host a CASINO NIGHT on Saturday, January 6, which promises to be a party not to be missed. Then on Friday, February 2, through Sunday, February 4, ACT 4 will sponsor its second annual DINNER THEATRE, presenting two hilarious melodramas at each performance. Mark your calendar for both events and look for complete details in the December issue of the *Curtain Raiser*.

Besides attending and participating in ACT 4 fund-raisers, how can you support us? It's simple! Purchase raffle tickets for our beautiful GIFT BASKETS and support the artistic talents of local artisans in the GIFT BOX.

As always, all proceeds from ACT 4 fund-raisers benefit Ocala Civic Theatre, including scholarships for Education Department after-school programs and college students continuing their arts education.

Stay tuned for details about our next membership meeting – we always welcome new members! For more information, please contact ACT 4 President Joan Gustafson at (352) 622-5315.

Halloween Costume Rentals

Looking for a great Halloween costume? Rent one from the Costume Shop! We have lots of classic costume choices in stock. Costume rentals are by appointment only (no walk-ins), for 30-minute time slots on the following dates:

- October 16-19 from 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- October 23-26 from 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- October 28 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- October 30 from 3:00-7:00 p.m.

To make an appointment, call the Costume Shop at (352) 236-2851, ext. 110.

American Sign Language (ASL) interpreted performances!

Ocala Civic Theatre is pleased to offer American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters for the following Signature and Ovation Series performances and dates:

- Thursday, November 9 at 8:00 p.m.:
Over The River and Through the Woods
- Thursday, February 1 at 8:00 p.m.:
I Love a Piano
- Saturday, February 24 at 11:00 a.m.:
The Giver
- Thursday, April 5 at 8:00 p.m.:
The Foreigner
- Thursday, June 7 at 8:00 p.m.:
Mamma Mia!

ASL interpreters also will be present at the following Education Department youth productions:

- Saturday, October 14 at 11:00 a.m.:
The Velveteen Rabbit
- Saturday, December 2 at 2:00 p.m.:
The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

To make reservations:

- E-mail: mbritt@ocalacivictheatre.com or boxofficemanager@ocalacivictheatre.com
- Phone: (352) 236-2274; press "0" and ask for Craig James or Mary Britt.
- In person: Visit the box office Monday through Friday between 10:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. and ask for Craig James or Mary Britt.

The Theatre also offers large-print programs and two types of assisted listening devices. We look forward to seeing you!

TICKETS ON SALE NOW! 2017 - 2018 SEASON

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



Volunteer Spotlight

Hurricane Irma

You wouldn't think of ever thanking a hurricane, would you? Well, we aren't exactly *grateful* to **Hurricane Irma** – except that she didn't do anything worse to us and didn't linger any longer than she did – but we ARE grateful for the way our staff and volunteers reacted before and after the storm.

Due to Hurricane Irma, we had to cancel four performances of *La Cage aux Folles* from September 9-14. That means our staff and box office volunteers put in extra hours calling 1,200 patrons to reschedule them for later performances. We also called all of our ushers, house managers, Gift Box workers, and box office volunteers scheduled for showtime box office who were affected by the cancellations – not to mention the cast, crew, and orchestra of *La Cage aux Folles*! But all of our staff and volunteers handled the challenge cheerfully and efficiently, and our patrons were very understanding.

After the storm, our parking lot and theatre grounds were strewn with debris, as well as two fallen trees, making it almost impossible to drive through our property. On Tuesday, September 12, several staff members and volunteers took time away from their own homes to come in and help with a cleanup day to get the Theatre property back in beautiful condition.

The night of Wednesday, September 13, our power came back on! Our *La Cage aux Folles* cast and crew came in the next evening, Thursday, September 14, for a brush-up rehearsal after having been off for so long. They wanted to make sure they were in good shape to deliver a top-quality performance for our next audience. And on Friday, September 15, they did!

La Cage aux Folles got right back on track and entertained our audiences – many of them hot and tired after hurricane cleanup, life without electricity and gasoline, and other inconveniences. Many of our staff and volunteers were experiencing the same conditions in their own homes as well, but everyone was so glad to be able to provide some air-conditioned, light-hearted entertainment for our community to enjoy. It was a great diversion for all of us!

So Irma, thank you for bringing out the best in our staff and volunteers! We already knew they were terrific, and so we weren't really surprised... just very thankful. Our gratitude is at Category Five.

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
- *The Velveteen Rabbit*
- *Over the River and Through the Woods*
- Public performance of *Fit*
- Roast of Mary Britt

Tickets go on sale:

- October 16: *Man Is the Only Animal Who Blushes... Or Needs To: An Evening With Mark Twain* featuring Michael Edwards
- November 6: *The Nutcracker* and Tea Party



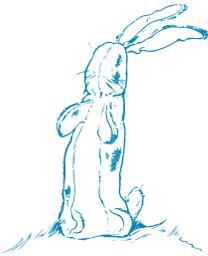
Notes From The Education Department

So much is happening this month! Our first Fall 2017 student production is *The Velveteen Rabbit* from October 6-15. Auditions for *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* are October 9-10. And *Fit*, this year's in-school touring show, tours local elementary schools now through November 3, with a public performance at Ocala Civic Theatre on Saturday, October 21 at 11:00 a.m. See below for detailed information on all these shows and auditions.

The second session of fall classes begins Monday, October 16. For more details, pick up a Fall 2017 class brochure from the Theatre lobby or download it online at www.OcalaCivicTheatre.com.

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: **Sarah Beville, Gunner Boyd, Katelyn Gabel, Ireland Grantham, Daisy Jones, Kaleb Kornegay, Hallie Miller, Harlem Nation, Graham Rogers, Miles Rogers, and Morgan Vanderlaan**.

The Velveteen Rabbit will be presented in the Theatre's rehearsal hall, with limited seating for each show. There will be six performances:

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

Tickets are \$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 holiday classic, the horrible Herdman kids collide head-on with a church Christmas pageant! This delightful comedy is adapted from the best-selling young adult book.

Auditions are Monday, October 9 and Tuesday, October 10 at 5:00 p.m. There are 27 roles available for students ages 6-16. Students are asked to prepare a one-minute comedic monologue for their audition. See the Fall 2017 brochure for audition details. *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* is directed by **Kirstin Kennedy**.

Tuition is \$225. Rehearsals are Monday through Thursday, October 16 – 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.

HOLIDAY HOOPLA

In the musical theatre performance class **Holiday Hoopla**, students ages 8-12 will create and rehearse their own thirty-minute Holiday Showcase (no auditions required) to be performed along with *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. Class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:30-6:00 p.m., October 17 – November 30 (no class on Thanksgiving, November 23). Tuition is \$160.

Public performance of the in-school touring production of



For the past 12 years, Ocala Civic Theatre has presented an annual in-school touring show to expose Marion County students to the performing arts. This year's show, *Fit*, tours local elementary schools September 19 – November 3, with a public performance on Saturday, October 21 at 11:00 a.m. at Ocala Civic Theatre.

In this gently humorous dramatic comedy, young Lucas is required to wear a protective helmet due to his seizures. Wanting to know how it feels to be "normal," he 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 he discovers something surprising about everyone in his life.

Fit is directed by **Kirstin Kennedy** and presented by a cast of five actors: **Dani Moreno-Fuentes, Shelby Mae Randle, Jose Rivera, Garrett Rowland, and Jeni Walker**. Stage manager is **Melanie Tarter**.

Through the generous support of grants and local businesses, the tour is offered free to area schools each year. This year's sponsors are Marion Cultural Alliance, the Richard B. Salisbury Foundation, the Florida Department of State Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

Tickets to the public performance are \$10 for adults and \$5 for full-time students (school ID required for college students) or Marion Players. For more information, call (352) 236-2274 or go to www.ocalacivictheatre.com.



Mary H. Britt, Executive Director

Hello! September has certainly been a month to remember! I hope that you have recovered fully from the storm damage. We canceled the September 9-10 performances of *La Cage aux Folles* and prepared the theatre for Hurricane Irma, closing it down on Saturday, September 9 at noon so that our staff and volunteers could be safe and home when she blew through town. The Theatre lost power – that’s electricity, e-mail, phones, computers, and ticketing system – on Sunday. When Monday turned into Tuesday and we still had no power, we canceled the Wednesday and Thursday performances. Our staff and volunteers came in on Tuesday to clean up the storm debris, and we borrowed a generator to power up the computers so that we could download the names and addresses of our patrons who had reservations that week and begin contacting them. We are very grateful to our box office staff and volunteers for contacting over 1,000 patrons to tell them that the shows were canceled and to try to reschedule them.

I am happy to report that the Theatre facility was not damaged. We had several downed trees, and there was quite a lot of debris that won’t be picked up for a while, but that is all minor compared to what others suffered. Many of our cast and crew members came in to perform while their homes were still without power and yet they were so cheerful and did a great job on stage. Thank you! We were able to resume the remaining performances on Friday, September 15. Thank you for your patience through the process, and a big hug for our volunteers and staff that carried us through the aftermath!

Several individuals and groups are organizing relief efforts for those not as fortunate as they are. Ocala Civic Theatre had already been planning a food drive in conjunction with our next show *Over the River and Through the Woods*, and we will be moving forward with that. The characters

Notes from the Executive Director

in *Over the River* include two Italian couples in their 70s and 80s who share a meal every Sunday with their grandson. Being Italian, sharing food is one of the ways they show their love. During October and November, we will be collecting food at the theatre for **Marion Senior Services’ Meals On Wheels** program.

The agency of Marion Senior Services came into being in August 1973 with an idea and a \$100 check from Blessed Trinity Catholic Church. The idea was to provide a hot noontime meal for some of Ocala’s most needy elderly. Since that humble beginning of serving 13 neighbors a hot meal, the agency now serves over 400 seniors in their nutritional needs through home deliveries and congregating dining. On a daily basis, Marion Senior Services delivers over 350 meals along 23 routes throughout Marion County, reaching all four corners, with the majority of drivers being volunteers. The need for these meals continues to grow with **160 seniors on the waiting list**. Roughly 250 volunteers work to prepare and deliver the meals each day. The agency also provides Meals on Wheels for pets. After drivers noticed a growing number of clients giving their food away to their furry friends, they started working with shelters and other pet groups to add free pet food to their meal deliveries. These programs, relying on donations and volunteers, have continued to grow as seniors are eating better, staying healthier, and worrying less about feeding their pets.

If you would like to help with the food drive for the **Marion Senior Services’ Meals On Wheels** pantry, please bring your donations to the theatre during regular box office hours. There will be a collection box in the lobby. A partial list of items needed is: canned tuna, salmon, chicken, or beef; canned fruits or vegetables (low sodium, if possible); peanut butter; Ensure nutrition shakes or protein bars; brown rice, instant oatmeal, cream of wheat, dry cereals, crackers; and toiletries, such as toilet paper, shampoo and conditioner, soap, and toothpaste. Also for the furry friends, any type of canned or bagged dog or cat food. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

See you at the Theatre!

2017-2018 Board of Directors

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THE CURTAIN RAISER

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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>ASL 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			

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
NOVEMBER			1 <i>Over The River</i> 8pm	2 <i>Over The River</i> 8pm	3 <i>Over The River</i> 8pm	4 <i>Over The River</i> 2pm & 8pm
5 <i>Over The River</i> 2pm	6 Tickets on sale for <i>Nutcracker & Tea Party</i>	7	8	9  <i>ASL Over The River</i> 8pm	10 <i>Over The River</i> 8pm	11 <i>Over The River</i> 2pm
12 <i>Over The River</i> 2pm	13	14 <i>Mary Britt Roast</i> 6pm @ Circle Square	15	16 <i>Mark Twain</i> 8pm	17 <i>Mark Twain</i> 8pm	18 <i>Mark Twain</i> 2pm & 8pm
19 <i>Mark Twain</i> 2pm	20	21	22	23 <i>Happy Thanksgiving</i> Theatre Closed	24 Theatre Closed	25
26	27	28	29	30		

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.