



THE CURTAIN RAISER

SEASON 2017 - 2018 ■ DECEMBER 2017

COMING EVENTS

The student production
The Best Christmas Pageant Ever
Hilarious Holiday Classic
Presented with the original
musical theatre showcase
Holiday Hoopla!
December 2-3

Marion Ballet Theatre presents
The Nutcracker
Beloved Christmas Tradition
December 8-17

The Sugar Plum Fairy Tea Party
December 9 & 16

I Love a Piano
Irving Berlin Musical Revue
January 11 - February 4

The Giver
Thought-Provoking Drama
February 15-25

AUDITIONS

The Giver
Thought-Provoking Drama
Directed by Chris Jorie
January 2-3

The Foreigner
Hysterical Comedy
Directed by Chip Morris
January 29-30



By Barbara Robinson
December 2-3

Presented by the Ocala Civic
Theatre Education Department



When poor Mrs. Bradley is thrown into directing the church Christmas pageant, she is faced with casting the six Herdman children, a notorious family of juvenile delinquents. Known as "the worst kids in the whole history of the world," they lie, steal, hit, bite, cuss, smoke cigars, and dabble in arson. As Christmas Eve approaches, the Bradley family and the entire congregation live in fear of what's going to happen when the horrible Herdmans collide head-on with the pageant. Can only a miracle save Christmas? This delightful comedy is adapted from the best-selling young adult book by Barbara Robinson and has become a beloved holiday tradition.

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever is directed by **Kirstin Kennedy** and performed by a cast of students ages 6-13: **Lauren Beck, Sarah G. Beville, Daniel Boodoo, Breckin Collett, Serena Coulton, Kaelin DesJardins, Kayla Gajraj, Sydney Glover, Paige Greenbaum, Peyton Greenbaum, Daisy Jones, Amber Marino, Gabriella McCarthy, Hallie Miller, Brayden Pruitt, Kinley Rice, Graham Rogers, Miles Rogers, Julia Schwartz, Wyatt Shaffer, Abigail Silver, Lena Raine Smith-Dyche, Jeremiah Taddeo, Ruth Taddeo, Lydia Tank, Tara Ann Thompson, Maya Torres, Morgan Katelynn Vanderlaan, and Delaney Wright.** Stage manager is **Sydney Deines.**

The fun and festive musical theatre showcase *Holiday Hoopla* will be presented at the beginning of each performance of *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* at no extra charge. Directed by **Dani Moreno-Fuentes** and **Melanie Tarter**, this original 30-minute showcase is created and performed by a cast of students ages 8-12: **Kiki Blanco, Lola Blanco, Tempe Boykin, Mia Colon, Gabrielle Levatino, Haylah Lorick, Toni Martinez, Kendra McGough, Samantha McLean, Elizabeth McLean, Kaitlyn Nast, Averie Pulis, Lydia Tank, and Isabella Villabona-Gonzalez.**

There are three performances:

- **Saturday, December 2 at 2:00 p.m.** (American Sign Language interpreted performance)
- **Saturday, December 2 at 7:00 p.m.**
- **Sunday, December 3 at 2:00 p.m.**

Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$6 for full-time students (school ID required for college students). For reservations, call (352) 236-2274 or visit www.ocalacivictheatre.com.

GIVE THE GIFT OF LIVE THEATRE FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

The magic of live theatre is a great gift idea for anyone! This holiday season, a gift certificate to Ocala Civic Theatre is the perfect present for family, friends, co-workers, clients, or neighbors. With a wide variety of shows, we have something to suit everyone's taste. And it's always the right size and color! Gift certificates can be given in any amount and may be used toward tickets for any Ocala Civic Theatre show. Or give the gift of theatre education for a young person in your life – gift certificates can be applied toward tuition for all of our Education Department classes. Best of all, when you buy \$100 in gift certificates, you get another \$25 free!

For more information or to purchase gift certificates, call (352) 236-2274 or visit the box office. Brighten the holidays for someone special with the magic of live theatre!





January 11 – February 4

Music and Lyrics by Irving Berlin
 Conceived by Ray Roderick and Michael Berkeley
 Musical Arrangements by Michael Berkeley
 World Premiere Production Produced by Tri-Arts,
 Sharon, CT

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Ocala Style Magazine

Through the timeless music of legendary composer Irving Berlin, we follow the journey of a piano over 50 years, from the turn of the century to the 1950s, in an all-American musical celebration. This rousing revue tells the stories of the lives and loves of six characters through such golden classics as "There's No Business Like Show Business," "Puttin' on the Ritz," "White Christmas," "Easter Parade," "God Bless America," and other favorites. It's a gloriously nostalgic good time!

I Love a Piano is directed by **Lourelene Snedeker**. Music director is **Ryan Pagels**. Choreographer is **Kim Wise**. Stage manager is **Faith Pruitt**.

There will be 20 public performances from January 11 – February 4, 2018. Tickets go on sale December 11 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.

Auditions for



January 2-3

A play by Eric Coble
 Based on the book by Lois Lowry

Jonas lives in an isolated, seemingly perfect community, where there is no war, fear, or pain. There also are no choices, as everyone is assigned a lifetime role and all is "Sameness." When Jonas turns 12, he is chosen to become The Giver – the one person who holds the collective memories of humanity's past – and discovers a shocking reality. Adapted from the best-selling young-adult novel, this is a haunting, thought-provoking drama about growing up, becoming wise, and finding your destiny.

Auditions will be held on Tuesday, January 2 and Wednesday, January 3 at 7:00 p.m. It is only necessary to attend one night of auditions. Full details are available in the December 2017 *Cue Sheet*.

The Giver is directed by **Chris Jorie**. There will be 11 public performances from February 15-25, 2018. For more information, call (352) 236-2274 or go to www.ocalacivictheatre.com.

Auditions for



January 29-30

By Larry Shue

In this hilarious Southern-fried comedy, two British gentlemen, Froggy and Charlie, arrive for a peaceful weekend at a fishing lodge in rural Georgia. Poor Charlie, depressed and painfully shy, is terrified of talking to strangers – so Froggy tells everyone that Charlie is a foreigner from an exotic country and doesn't know a word of English. But when Charlie overhears some scandalous news, as well as some sinister plans, does he confess or keep up the charade in a wildly funny farce?

Auditions will be held on Monday, January 29 and Tuesday, January 30 at 7:00 p.m. It is only necessary to attend one night of auditions. Full details are available in the December 2017 *Cue Sheet*.

The Foreigner is directed by **Chip Morris**. There will be 20 public performances from March 15 – April 8, 2018. For more information, call (352) 236-2274 or go to www.ocalacivictheatre.com.

2017-2018 SEASON

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:

- Gift Certificates
- *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever and Holiday Hoopla*
- *The Nutcracker*
- *The Sugar Plum Fairy Tea Party*

Tickets go on sale:

- **December 4:** ACT 4 Casino
- **December 11:** ACT 4 Dinner Theatre
- **December 11:** *I Love a Piano*
- **January 15:** *The Giver*

ACT
OCALA CIVIC THEATRE, INC. 0000



The Board of Directors of ACT 4 wish you peace and joy this Holiday Season!

Thank you for your support during this past year.

As we look forward to 2018, we invite you to join us for our first two fund-raising events - one in January and the other in February. Please see the flyer enclosed in this newsletter for details.

RESTAURANT DISCOUNTS

Several local restaurants offer discounts or coupons to our patrons throughout the theatre season. You must show your ticket stub to receive these discounts.

- **Blue Highway Pizza:**
10% off your check on day of show. Not valid with any other offer. 2130 E. Silver Springs Blvd., (352) 629-5555.
- **Braised Onion:**
10% off your check on day of show, or during the week of the performance at dinner hour. Excludes alcohol. 754 NE 25th Ave., (352) 620-9255.
- **The Ivy House Restaurant:**
10% off your check. Not valid with any other offers or discounts. 917 E. Silver Springs Blvd., (352) 622-5550.
- **La Cuisine French Restaurant:**
10% off dinner any night. 48 SW 1st Ave., (352) 433-2570.
- **The Mojo Grill & Catering Co.:**
10% off your check. Valid only at the East location (across from the Theatre): 4620E. Silver Springs Blvd., (352) 291-6656.



Rene Schafer

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

A relatively new yet now-familiar smiling face in the scene shop, **Rene Schafer** is one of our regular volunteers among the fantastic crew who builds and paints our amazing sets. She has only been with us since the summer of 2016, but since then she has volunteered more than 600 hours – even though she leaves each winter to head south for several months!

Rene moved to Ocala from Chicago, where she was a regular volunteer with The Saints, a large group of volunteers who usher for many of the Chicago theatres. When she moved here, friends told her about Ocala Civic Theatre. She e-mailed OCT to see if we had any volunteer openings, and was happy to discover that we

needed volunteers in many different areas. Once she filled out and turned in the volunteer form, she got a call from Volunteer Coordinator Craig James to see if she was interested in helping with set construction and painting. She said yes – and she's been so glad she did.

"Set construction is amazing," Rene says. "I have learned so much from {Production Manager/Technical Director} Jeff Davis and {Assistant Technical Director} Will Spratt, who are extremely patient, generous, trusting, and talented. They let me do things I never dreamed I could do; they let me do things I was afraid of doing, like using electric power tools. The process of building a set is more complex than I ever realized. Being a small part of that work is so satisfying. I love seeing it all come together. I am amazed at the end product of our work and so proud of each little thing we have done."

The people are also a big part of what makes volunteering at OCT so rewarding for Rene. "I love the people I have met from so many backgrounds," she says. "What a great group of creative people. I have made some new friends, and that makes me happy."

Besides building and painting sets, Rene also ushers and helps with mailings. Anything new she'd like to try in future? Rene is one of those great volunteers who is willing to try anything. "If I can be of help in any area, I would be happy to help," she says. "I love the theatre."

And we love volunteers like you! Thank you, Rene, for your helpful spirit, positive attitude, and great work in creating the magic of live theatre.

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, 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 Education Department youth production of *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* on Saturday, December 2 at 2:00 p.m.

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!

Notes From The Education Department



The Winter/Spring 2018 class brochure is out now! Lots of new adventures in acting, singing, dancing, and creative dramatics are coming up. After-school classes begin January 15.

We also have two exciting new School's Out classes for ages 6-13. On Tuesday, January 2, join us in a galaxy far, far away for **Star Wars**, then keep it mythological with **The Heroes of Olympus** on Monday, January 15.

If you aren't on the mailing list to receive our class brochures and would like to be, call the box office at (352) 236-2274 and ask to be added to the Theatre for Young Audiences mailing list. Or, you can pick up a brochure in the Theatre lobby or download it online at www.OcalaCivicTheatre.com.

Marion Ballet Theatre presents

THE SUGAR PLUM FAIRY TEA PARTY



Saturday, December 9 at 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, December 16 at 10:00 a.m.

The Sugar Plum Fairy Tea Party is a perfect way to create magical holiday memories with your children! This special event is held on the set of *The Nutcracker*. Children will hear the story of the ballet, meet and take photos with the cast (bring your camera!), and enjoy a ballet class. Sweets and treats will be served. Children are encouraged to come dressed in their *Nutcracker* finery or favorite prince or princess costume.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$9 for ages 12 and younger. Each child must be accompanied by at least one adult (18 or older, no more than two), who also must purchase a ticket and remain with the child for the full event. Only 100 tickets are available for each tea party. To purchase tickets, call (352) 236-2274 or visit www.OcalaCivicTheatre.com.

Marion Ballet Theatre presents

The Nutcracker

December 8-17

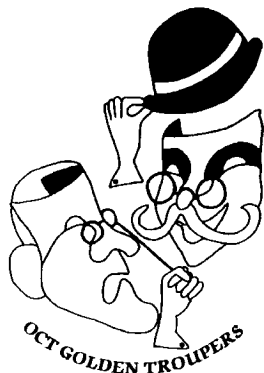


Marion Ballet Theatre invites you to celebrate the 37th annual *Nutcracker*! This magical production is a beloved Christmas tradition for the entire family. Performances are:

- Friday, Dec. 8 at 8 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 9 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.
- Sunday, Dec. 10 at 2 p.m.
- Wednesday, Dec. 13 at 8 p.m.
- Thursday, Dec. 14 at 8 p.m.
- Friday, Dec. 15 at 8 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 16 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.
- Sunday, Dec. 17 at 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$25 for ages 13 and older, and \$12 for ages 12 and younger. To purchase tickets, call (352) 236-2274 or visit www.OcalaCivicTheatre.com.

As a way for Marion Ballet Theatre to say thank you to all those who got our community through Hurricane Irma, there is a special discount for first responders (police, firefighters, electric-company employees, hospital employees, etc.) on tickets to the **Wednesday, December 13** performance. First responders can purchase up to four discounted tickets at \$10 each and must show their employment ID. These tickets are not exchangeable for other performances of *The Nutcracker*.



Book a performance today with the 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!



Mary H. Britt, Executive Director

Hello! Have you finished your holiday shopping? I haven't even started! Well, I have a great gift idea to suggest: gift certificates from Ocala Civic Theatre, of course! Gift certificates are great for family, friends, and business acquaintances. They are always the right size and color. Going to the theatre is great fun, and a gift certificate allows the recipient to choose the type of show they want. What a great way to introduce someone – student or adult – to the magic of theatre. You can even use the certificate to pay for one of the classes offered by our Education Department. You can purchase the gift certificates in person or over the phone. We will be happy to mail the gift card to you or the person you designate. We have several people who live out of state who annually buy their parents tickets to attend our theatre. Holiday shopping done!

Well, the Roast was a hoot! Thanks to the amazing steering committee, the emcee team of Chip Morris and Gary Rigby, the roasters, and a great crowd, it was a happy and successful fundraiser. As I mentioned last month, there was a special announcement made at the Roast: We are renovating the auditorium this summer! We will be replacing the seats in the auditorium with new, wider seats and will be painting the auditorium. That night, we launched the fund drive to cover the renovation expenses. You will be receiving a letter in the mail with all the details. We will have samples of the new seats in the lobby of the theatre soon. To support the project, seats will be sold for \$500 each with a donor plaque attached. In addition to cash donations, you might wish to consider a donation of stock. When you make a direct transfer to a charity, you avoid the capital gains tax and can take the full value of the charitable deduction. If you have questions, check with your financial advisor or give me a call.

This is the first time I am reprinting something from my column, but these thoughts from last December still ring true... I hope you

Notes from the Executive Director

enjoyed the Thanksgiving holiday! For me, the weeks surrounding Thanksgiving and Christmas are the "Norman Rockwell" time of year. One of his most famous paintings is of the family gathered for what looks like a Thanksgiving dinner. Its title is "I'll Be Home for Christmas" and was one of the *Four Freedoms series: Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Fear*, and this one, *Freedom from Want*. It was published in March 1943 when World War II was still raging, perhaps as a reminder of why we were fighting. *Freedom from Want* depicts the idyllic picture of what we hope everyone's holiday celebration will look like – friends and family gathered in a warm house, plenty to eat, joy all around. But we know that some won't have those benefits this holiday. Some will be alone and some won't have enough to eat, and soldiers are still fighting a long way from home. All around our community, I see individuals and groups of friends stepping up to do something special to help their neighbors. People who get joy from being the givers. Whether they volunteer or make a donation, they share their good fortune with others. Even small gestures are appreciated, sometimes much more than you know. So call that family member or friend you haven't seen in a while or send a card. Spend a few minutes catching up. Don't get me wrong: Shopping, holiday parties, and presents are definitely part of the holiday fun, but think about making one of your presents a "gift" of your friendship. Take the family or friends to the theatre. Enjoy *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* or *The Nutcracker* or a concert. A live performance allows you to share the joy. Celebrate!

Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Fear, and Freedom from Want. It's what we fought for in the past and is still something to aspire to in America. (If you don't know who Norman Rockwell is or don't remember the *Four Freedoms series*, it's worth Googling.) It's not about what side you are on or who you voted for in the last election. This is our wish for the whole community, not just during the holidays, but throughout the year.

See you at the Theatre! Joy to the World!

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THE CURTAIN RAISER

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
DECEMBER					1	2 ASL* <i>Best Christmas</i> 2pm* & 7pm
3 <i>Best Christmas</i> 2pm	4 ACT 4 <i>Casino Night</i> Tickets On Sale	5	6	7	8 <i>Nutcracker</i> 8pm	9 Tea Party 10am <i>Nutcracker</i> 2pm & 8pm
10 <i>Nutcracker</i> 2pm	11 <i>I Love a Piano</i> & Act 4 Dinner Theatre Tickets On Sale	12	13 <i>Nutcracker</i> 8pm	14 <i>Nutcracker</i> 8pm	15 <i>Nutcracker</i> 8pm	16 Tea Party 10am <i>Nutcracker</i> 2pm & 8pm
17 <i>Nutcracker</i> 2pm	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 31	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS! Theatre Closed	26 Box Office Closed	27	28	29	30

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 HAPPY NEW YEAR! Theatre Closed	2 Auditions for <i>The Giver</i> 7pm	3 Auditions for <i>The Giver</i> 7pm	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	12 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	13 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm
14 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 2pm	15 Tickets On Sale for <i>The Giver</i>	16	17 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	18 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	19 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	20 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 2pm & 8pm
21 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 2pm	22	23	24 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	25 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	26 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	27 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 2pm & 8pm
28 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 2pm	29 Auditions for <i>The Foreigner</i> 7pm	30 Auditions for <i>The Foreigner</i> 7pm	31	JANUARY		

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.

Sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Florida Council on Arts & Culture.



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