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Bravo!

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forget her M'lynn. As the Sanders family matriarch, Vera, Jill displays the other end of her remarkable range. She is always 100 percent committed to the bit, once you convince her that it's what the show needs. The end bit, where Burl had to help her stop the june bug from violating her...let's just say that when I first had the idea of where that bug was going, she was not easily convinced. But once I expressed that this show really needed that moment, she was all in. Like her performance in Magnolias, I'm sure few will forget her monologue about the junebug in Smoke. If you didn't see it, well, you missed out! And she sang her heart out as well! I can't tell you how blessed I feel to have Jill as part of our company.

Mark Tubbs is the President of the Rivertime Players, and he pours his heart and soul into everything we do. In this production of Smoke, he played the Sanders family pater familias, Burl. I can't imagine a better Burl in this show. Mark is obviously an accomplished actor, but in this show he was able to put on full display his musical abilities. I knew Mark could play piano, but I had no idea how good he really was. And, for the first time in his life, he had to learn to sing while tickling the ivories, which is no small feat, and he performed marvelously. And he did all that while carrying possibly the largest line load in the show. And he did all that while being assistant Music Director for this show. And he did all that while doing all of our marketing for the show. And he did all that while figuring out how to operate our brand spanking new LED light system at the Hangar (thank you Tennessee Arts Commission). I really can't sing Mark's praises enough, no matter how hard I try. Y'all have no idea how much he gives to this theatre company. Thank you Mark, for everything you do!

Meredith Crosby was part of our ensemble, and served as our assistant director for this show. Meredith has become our Rivertime Players MVP. We would not have been able to pull this show off without her. She gives selflessly to our company in more ways than I probably even know. She is so observant, and often takes on tasks without us even knowing. She sees all the things I miss, and seamlessly fills in the gaps. And when I fall short in my responsibilities, she lifts us all up. If you saw Misery, you know how good she is in the spotlight, but she really shines in the shadows, doing all the thankless things that have to be done. My most recent fail was telling people that we would have a pizza party after the last show on Saturday night, only to find out you couldn't get a pizza after 9 o'clock in Parsons. Next thing I know, someone hands me her phone, as she was using her Sonic App to take orders for everyone that was there. She made sure everyone got fed. It was like 21st century loaves and fishes! A "thank you" doesn't do nearly enough, but, Meredith, thank you.

Our ensemble was terrific as well. Makayla Blackstock, like so many others in this cast, has been doing shows with us since she was but a child. She was our understudy for the women's roles in this show, and was so helpful in rehearsal when the flu was hitting us hard. David Taylor and Doty Hill did their best to steal the show from



Ryleigh Johnson has been acting with the Rivertime Players since 2012, when she performed in Emmalou and the Big Ragout at the age of 12. Houston Starrett has been acting with us since he was but a baby. And I remember seeing him in the front row of the Toby Show in the years prior to his first Kid's Camp with us (which was truly memorable).

the choir loft, and were, as usual, totally hilarious. Jacob King was perfect as the bored teenager in the back row. And how good were Elicia Spain and Tonja Wright as Maude and Myrtle in Amen Corner? Absolutely perfect. They got lots of laughs and didn't even have to learn a line.

And how about that church band? Tyler Turnbow is a maestro on the guitar, but was asked to play bass too only a week before we opened. He took the bass home one night, and the next rehearsal he had it nailed. I also saw, with my own eyes, Tyler reminding actors of bits they were about to forget. He also fixed Jacob's guitar transmitter onstage during a performance. He's a superhero. And, truly, this show without the mandolin would not have sounded nearly as good, and I have to give my gratitude to Mickey King for his musical chops. That mandolin made this show legit.

Delores Raney Woods, our resident stage manager, is invaluable to what we do. Marshall Lamberth helped us out backstage, and on the light board. My beautiful daughter, Posey Bridges, drew the design of our stained glass cross, and helped with lights and videography. olleen and Sarah Lawlor (and Big John too I think), Leslie Starrett, the indefatigable Sue Tubbs, and Knox Spence helped out front of house, doing tickets and concessions. Without their help, this show couldn't have happened.

I have to thank the City of Parsons for letting us build and use the Hangar. I can't tell you how cool it is to have a theatre here. And many thanks to Wayne Lyles and his Public Works crew for lifting our lighting grid so we could install our new lights. Without the street crew this town would grind to a halt.

This show was very expensive to produce. This spring show, which

we started doing in 2017, is not a money maker. We don't get any grants for this show, and we fund it from our cash on hand. Decatur County Bank came through in a big way as the title sponsor for this show. Ace Hardware came onboard as an associate sponsor. Our show program is thicker than it has ever been this year, chock full of ads bought by our wonderful local businesses. Thank you, every one. Please, shop local. Every sponsor dollar we get goes directly into our productions. And we spare no expense in producing every show we do to the best of our ability. One prop we bought for this show cost us more money than we made on opening night. And that's okay. We are committed to giving our patrons top quality arts offerings at affordable prices. At the risk of being immodest, our theatrical offerings are of equal, and I think better quality than what you might see in nearby, more populous cities. And our ticket prices are half, or even a quarter of what you'll pay to see community theatre there. You can't see a movie for what we charge for live theatre. If you haven't yet tried one of our shows, give us a try! If you are dissatisfied, tell us, and we'll refund your ticket.

Thank you to everyone who came out to our production of Smoke on the Mountain. Our next production will be our summer kids camps which start the day after Memorial Day. Like and follow the Rivertime Players on Facebook for upcoming info on that camp. We'll have our annual Toby Show this fall, and we plan on producing A Christmas Story at the end of the year. This show about faith was presented faithfully to you by a multitude of faithful people. And faithful people who are faithfully faithful can do anything. I am so thankful for the faithful people in my life.



Kera Adkins turns 6!

Kera Lynn Adkins turns 6 March 21. She celebrated this past weekend with family and friends with a Stitch birthday party. She would like to thank everyone for her wonderful gifts. She is the daughter of Roger and Kristina Adkins of Decaturville.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

As Election Day has come to a close, I'd like to take the opportunity to thank everyone that supported my campaign.

I can honestly say, I enjoyed my time talking with old friends and meeting new. I will continue to support Decatur County and our people. Casey Coleman, thank you for running a good race! I enjoyed meeting and getting to know you and your family on the campaign trail, and now be able to call you a friend.

Lastly, congratulations Walter Higdon. I wish you the best in your new endeavor.

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