



SPOTLIGHT

401 North 6th Street

July 11, 2015

www.fslt.org

Dates: Opening Night Gala of FSLT's production of *The Wizard of Oz* will be July 23. Regular performances will be July 24-25, 29-August 1, and August 6-8. The Sunday Matinees will be July 26 and August 2.

Times: All evening performances begin at **7:30 p.m.** Patrons may be seated after 6:45 p.m. The matinees begin at **2:00 p.m.** Patrons may be seated after 1:15 p.m.

Box Office Hours: The box office is open from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 5 to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and on Saturdays from 5 to 7 p.m. during the run of the show.

Reservations: Reservations can be made by calling 479-783-2966. Calls will be returned in the order they are received. Reservations will be held until 15 minutes before the show. Gala Tickets are \$30. Tickets for all other performances are \$15.

Season Ticket Holders: Regular season ticket patrons are encouraged to call July 11-15 for preferred seating. They can also reserve a General Admission seat for every Season Ticket they have. General Admission reservations will not be filled until July 16.

Reminder: When you call to make a reservation, Press 2.

The Wizard of Oz

"Everything you were looking for was right there with you all long." – *"The Wizard of Oz"*

Fort Smith Little Theatre patrons will realize the entertainment they have been looking for has been right there all along in the talent of Director George Mann, and the cast of the upcoming production of *The Wizard of Oz*.

This is the first time *The Wizard of Oz* has been produced at FSLT, though definitely not the first time Mann has directed a magnificent summer musical showcasing newcomers and veterans on the FSLT stage.

In the well-known story by Frank Baum, a young Dorothy (Jessica Smith) and her dog, Toto (Bubba, pet of Terri Hood), find themselves blown over the rainbow by a Kansas tornado which takes them abruptly from her aunt and uncle's farm. They land smack in the middle of Oz, where her house lands on and kills the Wicked Witch of the East. Dorothy is hailed a hero, befriended by Glinda the Good Witch (Shannon Stoddard), and finds herself at odds with the Wicked Witch of the West (Sabrina Milligan).

Wanting only to be home again, Dorothy is directed by the Munchkins to the Emerald City where the great and powerful Wizard of Oz (Rick Foti) will surely be able to help her. Along the way, Dorothy befriends a scarecrow (Justin Garton), a tin man (Nathan Stockemer), and a cowardly lion (Brandon Bolin).

See *The Wizard of Oz* on page 3





Sparks
Health System

Show Sponsor Applauded

We are pleased to recognize Sparks Health System as the sponsor for our upcoming production of *The Wizard of Oz*. In 1947, the Young Ladies Guild of Sparks Memorial Hospital sponsored an amateur theatre production as a fundraiser to buy hospital equipment. That play, *Mr. and Mrs. North*, literally “sparked” an interest in the performing arts, and the Fort Smith Little Theatre was formed. Sixty-eight years later, we applaud Sparks Health System’s civic spirit and their continued support of our community theatre. They are not only a leader in healthcare but in community support for our area.



Director’s Letter

The Wizard of Oz is my 29th show at the Fort Smith Little Theatre; it is my 6th show to actually direct, and the preparation process for this particular show has given me a lot upon which to reflect.

All of the musicals that I have directed have been for me “bucket list shows;” that is personal, beloved, and shows for which I had great love, whether they were stage or iconic screen versions that had captured my heart and mind. When our original submission for this season’s musical was denied by the copyright holder, I was totally flummoxed as to a Plan B—but it was right there all the time!

When folks throw around terms like L. Frank Baum’s *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, they are referring to the subsequent movie with Judy Garland that changed the course of moviemaking for the last 75 years. Knowing that it had been rendered into a stage version, and having been involved with this version with schools and theater groups in the area over the last decade or so, the idea to produce *The Wizard* at FSLT finally presented itself to me (and it took its sweet time, believe me!). Thus began our own private trip down the yellow brick road—a trip that includes a cast and crew that have made the most delightful traveling companions that I could have ever imagined.

Every director feels a certain responsibility to relay the ways in which their team has worked together for the good of the show; indeed, I feel extraordinarily grateful to have always had such great response and excellent people to cover all the bases—in front of and behind the curtain. I wish to be allowed this time, however, to express the astonishment that I feel at the end of every evening’s rehearsal. I am amazed at the talent, the willingness, the expertise, and the simple joy of everyone being so happy in each other’s company. I have also been overwhelmed that so much new area talent has presented itself for the first time to our theatre! I believe that all these elements will combine to give FSLT quite a memorable trip over the rainbow.

- George Mann



The Wizard of Oz opens July 23

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They manage to get an audience with the Wizard, who sends them on a quest that must be completed before they will be granted their personal wishes--to go home, have a brain, a heart, and courage. The foursome, accompanied by Toto, is challenged to do away with the Wicked Witch of the West. The ensuing adventure finds Dorothy captured, her friends attempting to rescue her, and the group finally finding the answers to what they most desire.

The talented cast also includes: Donnie Anderson as Uncle Henry, Shanna Prater Davis as Aunt Em and Ensemble, Bradley Kidder as the Emerald City Door Guard, and Jacob Hiatt playing the Mayor of Munchkin City and Nikko, captain of the flying monkeys. Eric Wells and Summer Ferguson take the stage as Jitterbug Dancers, while Brendon Chick, Hayden Parker, and Reece McDaniel portray the Lollipop Kids. The Lullaby League is comprised of Mary Belle Castagno, Peri Tygart, and Kylee Merritt, and Jasmine Washington, Gia DeWitt, and Emma Cobb play the Munchkins.

Ensemble members who take on multiple rolls in the musical, include Jordan Garton, Vicki Anderson, Kim Kidder, Brittney Lee, Adrein Parmenter, Blake Bulger, Eric Wells, Steve Dwiggins, Jeremy Marston,

Ron Stice, Thomas Iverson, Matt Hutchinson, and Donnie Anderson.

The crew consists of Nathan Stockemer and Brandon Bolin, Assistants to the Director; Nancy Blochberger and Vicki Broadway, Producers; Rebekah Martin, Lighting Design; Jennie Mathews, Lights and Sound; Sherry Hester and Nancy Blochberger assisted by Kaye Birkhead, Barbara Saviers, Rebekah Martin, Jacob Hiatt, and Ron Stice, Wardrobe; Neal Goodwin assisted by Shanna Davis, Vicki Broadway, Bruce Birkhead, Randy Pace, and Vicki and Donnie Anderson, Props; D.J. McRoberts, Set Design and Construction assisted by Donnie Anderson; Steve Dwiggins and Matt Hutchinson, Stage Hands; Marcus Coker, Grayce DeWitt, Shannon Stoddard and Adrein Parmenter, Choreography; Summer Ferguson, Victoria Walden, and Jessica Fisher, Hair and Make-up; and Rhonda Rieder, Graphic Design.

The show opens July 23 and runs through August 8. To accommodate expected demand for tickets, there will be three show dates added to the standard performance schedule. That means you can follow the yellow brick road at your choice of ten evening performances and two Sunday matinees. Call 479-782-3966 (press 2) to reserve your seat. Don't miss this merry musical!



3 ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCES

In anticipation of a large demand for tickets, 3 additional performances -- Thursday, Friday, Saturday August 6, 7, 8 -- have been added to the full run of show dates for *The Wizard of Oz*. Season Tickets and General Admission reservations will be accepted. Call our Box Office to reserve your seat for these extra dates just as you would for any other performance. And be sure to thank the Oz cast and crew for performing this extended schedule.

It's Important To Press 2

When calling FSLT, **be sure to press 2** if you wish to leave a message for our Box Office volunteers. This applies to all calls to request, change, or cancel a reservation.

No-Shows are a No-No

All reservations are held until 15 minutes before curtain-time, when they may be made available for walk-ins; but, advance notice of a cancellation makes it far more likely that a seat can be filled. If you have a reservation, please call and leave a message if you will be unable to attend. "No shows" are costly. Please do your part to keep our seats full.

Guidelines for Munchkins

The Wizard of Oz is certainly family friendly. However, it is a live performance in a very small setting, not a movie theatre. Please keep that in mind when deciding whether your little munchkins are old enough to remain in their seats and enjoy the show.

Fort Smith Little Theatre
SPOTLIGHT

P.O. Box 3752, Fort Smith, AR 72913

www.fslt.org

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From the Top...

Art and Business are two words we don't often see side by side, but they definitely go hand in hand at FSLT. Our business is producing art. Although we have no employees, we run a business that forces a Board of Directors to simultaneously juggle the creative and the practical. When we hash out the season of shows, we must consider the quality and content of the script as a starting point for discussion. We must also consider — will it have enough appeal to fill seats? How does it balance with other shows in the season? What is the cost for production?

That type of scrutiny must be applied to other issues as well. Royalty fees have escalated along with lumber and utilities, while grants for the performing arts have declined. Setting ticket prices, filling seats, selecting a successful season of shows, managing operational expenses while soliciting sponsors and donations — these are just some of the business issues with which board members must grapple. Given a choice, most board members would rather be on the stage creating art and enjoying the applause that goes with it, instead of sitting in meetings dealing with business. But to ensure continued success, board volunteers understand that the two must go hand in hand. In other words, they “get it.” They serve in a role that rarely gets a thank you — but I'd like to fix that right now by saying “many thanks” to all the volunteers who have ever served on our board. Your efforts to handle the Business of theatre have helped produce the gift of Art in Fort Smith for 68 years. Bravo!

- Carole Rogers, *President*

Next Up - *Curtain Up On Murder*

Auditions for the FSLT production, *Curtain Up On Murder* by Bettine Manktelow, directed by Rikkee Black, will be held at 7 pm at the theatre August 10 and 11. The cast calls for 5 females approximately 18-55 years of age and 3 males 28-70. Production dates are September 17-27.

Season Ticket holders are urged to call before July 16 for reservations.