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SUMMER AT THE STATE SHOWCASING LOCAL TALENT

Uniontown, PA – Fayette County talent will take center stage next month, as Summer at the State returns to Uniontown’s historic State Theatre.

Now in its fifth season, Summer at the State was founded by director/choreographer John Wagner III with a goal of creating a professional, musical theatre experience for local participants and audiences.

Stage manager Kristen Tunney said rehearsals are currently under way for both “Peter Pan” and “The Music Man.”

“We rehearse each show for about six weeks, and they’re fully-produced musicals with local talent and a live orchestra,” Tunney said. “All funds we raise after what we put into production goes back to the theatre.”

Peter Pan will be staged July 13 - 15, with The Music Man to follow July 27 - 29. Tickets are \$15 per show for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under.

Based on J.M. Barrie’s 1904 play of the same name and his novelization of it, titled “Peter and Wendy,” Peter Pan made its Broadway debut in 1954. The musical tells the story of the Darling children’s journey to Neverland with Peter Pan, a flying boy who battles pirates and doesn’t want to grow up.

Based on a story by Meredith Willson and Franklin Lacey, The Music Man debuted on Broadway in 1957 and won five Tony awards, including Best Musical. The show tells the story of conman Harold Hill and Marian, a piano teacher, as they navigate a music lesson scheme and each other in the midwest.

Tunney said both shows comprise about 75 local performers and crew members, with some cast members appearing in both shows. Professional lighting and sound teams enhance the musicals’ Broadway production quality.

“Our standard of production is really high and something that we’re really proud of, because this is ultimately about showcasing local talent,” Tunney said. “We believe that what we do is important



because in our five years, we've had over 150 performers of all ages be part of our process and really commit to providing that theatre experience to everyone.

"Everyone should have access to musical theatre and the performing arts."

Tunney said audiences will enjoy Peter Pan because it's a "magical experience" and all involved are excited to "transport them to Neverland." Music Man is also a "really fun time in the theatre," she added.

"We're largely supported by grant funds and local donations so community support in that respect is very important to us, too," Tunney said. "This is just a great season for everyone of all ages to enjoy."

Fayette County Commissioner Dave Lohr said Summer at the State fosters community togetherness, encourages relaxation and recognizes local artistry.

"It's all a positive," Lohr said. "The nice thing about the arts is diversity, because everyone has a different take and liking."

"Supporting local theatre and arts supports Fayette County as a whole by sharing experiences, culture and new ideas, which is beneficial to all," Commissioner Angela Zimmerlink said.

Commissioner Vince Vicites said the arts are "an important part of the equation" for improving Fayette County.

"We are so fortunate to have such a beautiful historic theatre in our county," Vicites said. "The more we utilize the State Theatre to cultivate and further maximize our efforts to use this wonderful facility, the better the quality of life for the arts will be in Fayette County."

For more information on Summer at the State and other State Theatre programming, visit www.statetheatre.info.

To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.fayettecountypa.info.

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