

COMMUNITY THEATER

# Asides

November 2019

## Mark Your Calendars

### A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS

December 14, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

December 15, 3 p.m.

Moose Family Center, Gloucester

### PETER PAN JR. AUDITIONS

Sunday, January 5, 1-4 p.m.

Moose Family Center, Gloucester

### PETER PAN JR.

Saturday, March 7, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Sunday, March 8, 3 p.m.

Moose Family Center, Gloucester

### CHP MONTHLY MEETINGS

are usually held on the second Mondays of each month, location to be announced.

#### Upcoming meetings:

December 9 and January 13

7 p.m., Courthouse Restaurant

### SAVE THE DATE— MISSOULA CHILDREN'S THEATRE

#### Mathews: SLEEPING BEAUTY

July 6–11, 2020

Mathews High School

#### Middlesex: THE SNOW QUEEN

July 13–18, 2020

St. Clare Walker Middle School

locations to be announced.

**For more information  
about CHP events, go to  
[courthouseplayers.org](http://courthouseplayers.org)**

*Thank you to Sherry Hamilton,  
Lara Emerson, Christine Britton,  
Heather King, and Karen Hutchins.*

*Oliver! cast information  
from program cast bios.*

*Production editor: Anne Rhodes*

## LIONEL BART'S **Oliver!** Consider Yourself One of Us!

“Consider yourself one of us!” has been the tag line for The Court House Players this fall, thanks to CHP’s latest production, *Oliver!*

However, this is not CHP’s first performance of *Oliver!* It was first presented in 1993 with Dick Lusher as director and Meryl Lusher Clarke as producer. Dick and Meryl were the visionaries behind CHP.

The Tony and Olivier Award-winning show by Lionel Bart is based on Charles Dickens’ classic novel, “*Oliver Twist*,” the story of a malnourished orphan who finds acceptance in Victorian England amongst a group of petty thieves and pickpockets led by the elderly Fagin and who, in the end, discovers his true family.

A cast of 60 adults and children brought the show to life November 14-17 at Mathews High School.

Catherine King, as the young hero, Oliver, was excited to have her first lead role in a CHP show. She has participated in Missoula Children’s Theatre camps each summer and has appeared in CHP’s youth musicals and fall productions.

Jayden Emerson, The Artful Dodger, also appeared in his first CHP lead role. This was his eleventh play, his eighth with CHP. His most notable role was that of Tiny Tim in Busch Gardens’ production of *Scrooge No More*.

James King once again played against type, or, as he put it, “Having recently appeared as murderous gangster Curtis in *Sister Act*, and high-class conman Lawrence in *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, he now takes up the mantle of theater’s most infamous corrupter of children, Fagin.”

Travis Brazil joined CHP for the first time as the villainous Bill Sikes. He trained with The Royal Shakespeare Company and began his touring theater career with a Dickens play, starring as Smike in *Nicholas Nickleby*. He went on to a long career in theater, film and TV, performing in venues from London to Los Angeles as an actor, a fight choreographer, voice-over artist and dialect coach before retiring in 2012 to focus on his restaurant business.

The ladies, Nancy and Bet, were played by Ashton Emerson and Caroline Oxley. Ashton has been onstage for eleven CHP shows, most recently as Mimsey Hubley in *Plaza Suite*. *Oliver!* was also her first time as choreographer. Caroline has enjoyed performing in musical theater productions from a young age, but this was her first time on the CHP stage.



The Workhouse Beadle, Mr. Bumble, and Widow Corney, were portrayed by Shawn Jaeger and Kristie Askew. Shawn is a CHP veteran who made his CHP debut as one of the brothers in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and recently appeared in *Plaza Suite* as Jesse Kiplinger. Kristie made her stage debut in *Oliver!* She is the Pastor at Shackelford Chapel UMC and a founding member and board chairman for several years of GUEST, serving the area homeless.

Mr. and Mrs. Sowerberry, the undertaker and his wife who buy Oliver from Mr. Bumble, were played by George Opie and Suanne Dittmeier. This is Suanne's 31st year with CHP and her second time playing Mrs. Sowerberry. She said she "doesn't understand how she always gets cast as either mean (Miss Hannigan in *Annie*, Wicked Witch of the West in *Oz*), funny (Florence in *The Odd Couple, female version*) or both (Mrs. Peterson in *Bye Bye Birdie*)." George Opie has appeared in several CHP shows. His most recent roles were Dr. Bradman in *Blithe Spirit* and Lord Dunmore in last summer's *Crickets on a Hill*.

The Sowerberries' flirty daughter Charlotte was played by Madelyn Tyler. It was her third CHP show, previously appearing in *The Wizard of Oz* and *Alice in Wonderland Jr.* Charlotte's boyfriend, Noah Claypole, was played by Maxwell Moulenbelt in his first CHP performance. He has been involved in theater for three years, starting with CHP's Missoula Children's Theatre summer camps where he was a Ruffian and then The Pied Piper.

Mr. Brownlow and Mrs. Bedwin, who become Oliver's true family in the end, were portrayed by KC Woller and Anne Rhodes. KC's first stage role was in a high school production of *Oliver!* After that, he appeared in more high school and community theater productions, and one of those was *Oliver!* KC's first CHP role was lending his voice to the chorus of CHP's 2006 production of *Beauty and the Beast*. Anne Rhodes also previously performed in *Oliver!* as a member of the ensemble in

CHP's 1993 production. Anne has now been in all three of this year's shows, also appearing as Edith in *Blithe Spirit* and Karen Nash in *Plaza Suite*.

Dr. Grimwig, who visits the Brownlow household to check on Oliver, was played by Trey Shinault. Trey has been part of CHP since he first played in *The Music Man* in 1988. His most recent appearances were in *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* and *Sister Act*.

The Workhouse Boys were Ellie Adams, Violet Adams, Cole Christensen, Dean Christensen, Hailly Craig, Sebastian Fountain, John Gordon, Maddie Green, Serena Green, Tessamae Lewis, Isabel Lopez, Lilyana Sears, Ellie Sowers, Henry Sowers, and Samantha Tate.

Fagin's Boys were Sandra Baer, Abigail Bailey, Henry Barnett, Clara Dodier-Fernandez, D'Mori Garcia, Rey Hogge, Lauren King, Isabel Lopez, Cora Rowe, Aiden Sowers, and Hannah Symonds.

Rounding out the cast were ensemble members Charlie Allen, Cindy Bocrie, Ellie Craig, Seth Craig, Austin Cummings, Kyrston Emerson, Peyton Emerson, Devonte Garcia, Becky Hogge, Donald Jaeger, Victoria King, Bethany Heape, Caitlyn Painter, Michelle Lynn Rash, Jennifer Sears, Stephanie Sowers, Sarah Stewart, and Melissa Thomas.

The show was directed by Lara Emerson, her first time for CHP, with the assistance of music director Heather King and aide to the director Peyton Emerson. Lara also designed the set and, along with Ashton Emerson, choreographed the dance numbers, assisted by Peyton Emerson, Kyrsten Emerson, and several of the show's dancers. Amanda Adams was producer, assisted by Kristina Erickson. Behind the scenes were stage manager Mary Jane Mattson, assisted by Linda Wahlman and a large crew of stagehands; technical manager George Rhodes and sound operator Don Parker, with their crew of lighting and sound assistants; and costumer Cindy Bocrie with a host of sewers.

# The Court House Players 2020 SEASON

## ARSENIC AND OLD LACE

a comedy  
by Joseph Kesselring  
Piankatank Ruritan Club,  
Mathews

Dinner Theater: April 30–May 2  
Show only: May 3  
Auditions: February 11

## CRIMES OF THE HEART

a comedy/drama  
by Beth Henley

Church of St. Therese, Gloucester  
Dinner Theater: July 30–August 1  
Show only: August 2  
Auditions: May 3 and 5

## Roald Dahl's MATILDA THE MUSICAL

Mathews High School  
November 12–15  
Auditions: August 16 and 19

**For season ticket information,**  
contact Mary Jane Mattson  
at 804-695-4972 or  
mjmunkey@aol.com.  
Applications will also be available  
at courthouseplayers.org.

See page 4 for information  
about our children's production  
of **PETER PAN JR.**

Dates subject to change. Check  
courthouseplayers.org for updates.



## Checking Out of Suite 719

Our summer dinner theater comedy, *Plaza Suite*, had enthusiastic audiences over its four-day run in early August. It memorably showcased the talents of CHP newcomer JJ Brazil, seated fourth from left, who has had a long, vibrant career on the stage and in film and television. The talented cast consisted of, seated from left, Tom Robinson and Anne Rhodes as Sam and Karen Nash, Shawn Jaeger as Jesse Kiplinger, Rodgers as Muriel Tate, Lara Emerson and RJ Erickson as Norma and Roy Hubley; standing, Becky Hogge as Jean McCormack, Tristan Emerson as Waiter/Bordon Eisler, Lexzi Wright as Bellhop, and Ashton Emerson as Mimsey Hubley. *Photo by Sherry Hamilton*

## Remembering Glenn “Ray” Webster and John Adams

The Court House Players recently lost two longtime supporters.

Glenn Webster, remembered by many of his CHP friends as Ray Johnson, passed away Thursday, August 22.

He appeared in several plays, served as president for a year, and helped behind the scenes designing and creating costumes and doing make-up.



Glenn “Ray” Webster.

As an actor, he had notable roles in CHP productions of *Bus Stop*, *The Art of Dining*, *The Odd Couple*, and *Murder at Rutherford House*, among others.



John and Regina Adams.

John Adams passed away Saturday, September 21.

John met longtime CHP member Regina Foor while performing with local singing ensemble Tri-County Express. He married Regina and became an active CHP supporter, helping Regina behind the scenes with props for many shows and appearing on stage in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *1776*, and *Hello Dolly!*

Glenn and John will be missed.

# PETER PAN JR. AUDITIONS

Sunday, January 5, 1-4 p.m.

Ware Episcopal Church Parish House  
Gloucester Moose Lodge Family Center,  
6565 Moose Drive, Gloucester

*Auditions are for youth ages 6-18 only.*

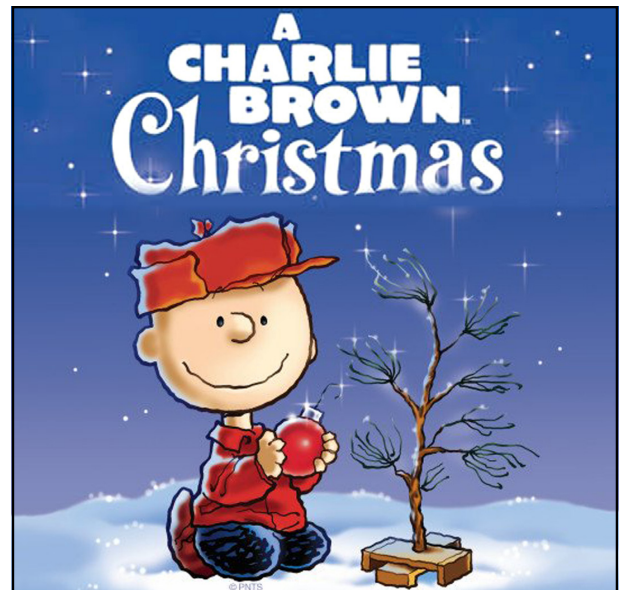
Please bring an audition song prepared on a CD.

If using a phone, please make sure the song is downloaded to the phone because internet is not accessible in the building. Six- and seven-year-olds will be asked to sing "Happy Birthday" a capella and do NOT need a prepared audition song.

Rehearsals will be Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:30-8:00 p.m. and Sundays from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at Newington Baptist Church.

Performance dates are Saturday, March 7 at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. and Sunday, March 8 at 3 p.m. at The Gloucester Moose Lodge Family Center.

*For further information, please call Missy Polonsky at 757-509-1905.*



Over 50 CHP youth will be performing in  
***A Charlie Brown Christmas***

at the Moose Family Center,  
6565 Moose Drive, Gloucester  
December 14 at 3 and 7 p.m. and December 15 at 3 p.m.  
Tickets: \$10 adults, \$5 students  
Proceeds from this production will be used to support  
The Moose Family Center's  
Community Christmas Dinner.



P.O. Box 643  
Gloucester, VA 23061  
(804) 725-8504

## LOOK INSIDE FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

**A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS**  
December 14 -15

**PETER PAN JR. AUDITIONS**  
January 5

**PETER PAN JR.**  
March 7-8