

Showtime in Calhoun: Calhoun Entertainment Company presenting Oliver

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
March 24 2017 6:00 AM





KAMPSVILLE - For 28 years, the Calhoun Entertainment Company has been bringing musical theater to the hills, valleys and plains of Calhoun County.

Founded by Jerry Sievers in 1989, the Calhoun Entertainment Company has held at least one show a year since its inception. This year, its all-volunteer cast will be performing the musical "Oliver," based on the novel "Oliver Twist" by Charles Dickens. Sievers said the show will have three performances next weekend, and will be held at the old Kampsville grade school - a place it has called home since the county purchased its original showplace, the old Hardin grade school.

Show times will be Friday, March 31 at 7 p.m., Saturday, April 1 at 7 p.m. and Sunday, April 2 at 2 p.m. Tickets for the show are \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids under the age of 12. The Calhoun Entertainment Company is a non-for-profit organization and Sievers said revenue from ticket sales goes to cover the musical's expenses.

"Musicals have a lot of expenses," Sievers said. "We have to pay for venue, costumes, royalties, you wouldn't believe how much expenses go into making a musical."

Fortunately, Sievers believes the Calhoun Entertainment Company will sell-out its performances, which he estimates can house as many as 300 people. Sievers said this will be possible, because of how many children are going to take part in the performance this year, including Mary Pluester who plays Oliver.

"We have a new rising star, Mary Pluester, who plays Oliver," Sievers said. "She's from Batchtown. She's doing really well for her first role."

As of now, Sievers said the Calhoun Entertainment Company has as many as 20 people in it, some as veteran performers, and others as new arrivals. Sievers said a lot has changed and transitioned since he started the company. Its original purpose was to raise money for lights at the high school's baseball field - an intention Sievers said he was not sure was ever realized.

"I used to teach in Calhoun, and I did a traveling show choir, which would perform wherever we were asked," he said. "I moved away for about five years, and when I came back into the county (Sievers is originally from Batchtown), the local doctor, Bernard Baalman contacted me. He knew me because he was my doctor, and his daughters were in the show choir. He wanted to know if we could put on a show, basically as a fundraiser to get lights at the baseball field. I'm not sure if we raised any money for them or not, but everybody had a good time doing it."

Eventually, the baseball field received lighting, and the Calhoun Entertainment Company continued doing shows.

Tickets for this year's performance can be purchased at several locations across Calhoun County, including Calhoun branches of the Bank of Kampsville and the Bank of

Calhoun, Northside Grocery, Hardin Package Liquor and Kampsville Landing. Tickets can also be purchased and more information can be found by calling Sievers at (618)



576-9237.