



# Alton Little Theater Opens The 79th Season With a Dish of Hilarity!

August 24 2012 1:27 PM

Director, Lee Cox, says that when she read SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY her sides hurt from laughing out loud and she knew she wanted to share the very funny Southern Farce by writing partners Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope and Jamie Wooten with ALT audiences as soon as possible. The production will open the 79th Season, with nine performances September 21st - 30th at the ALT Showplace at 2450 N. Henry Street in Alton. Cox recalls that audience members loved STEEL MAGNOLIAS and believes that SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY will soon become a new audience favorite. Cox also shares that she herself misses the TV show, "Designing Women" and that she even laughed at the ridiculous antics of the nine episodes of the "Good Christian Belles" aired last Spring. Jessie Jones and his writing partners are prolific writers who understand and write unique and colorful characters and SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY is full of them. The Futrelle Sisters - Frankie, Twink, Honey Raye and Rhonda Lynn are in trouble and trying to save their beloved hometown of Fayro Texas. In trying to woo a new Salsa Factory to town, Honey Raye makes promises that are not to be believed, including staging a Civil War reenactment with only fifteen participants. The production calls for everything including the Kitchen sink and an unwilling bride groom, a wicked old aunt, a mid-life crisis, mistaken identity, a rambunctious set of twins, a pet costume parade, a beauty pageant and more - and of course, after many trials and tribulations, the sisters pull together and save their town as a testament to Southern strength and ingenuity - and a recipe for total hilarity!

Cox emphasizes that the show is fast-paced and just pure fun. She states that she has fallen in love with Texas and the Futrelle Family and enjoys starting each rehearsal with a "fun fact" about Texas. She admits that costuming and figuring out the wacky script has been challenging but just so much joy because of the talented cast giving their all to make the production a "real hoot!"

The Futrelle sisters are aptly created by Debbie Maneke. Donna Minard, Jean Heil and Gail Drillinger. The roles of extended family and friends are handled by Mark Hilgert,

Jeff Pruett, Dave Miller, John Kuehn , Mike Heaton, Mary Kate Malone-Nolte, Diana Enloe, Jane Hill, and Elizabeth Foley. Dave Miller and Mike Heaton are making their ALT debuts with the production but have quickly adapted to the rigorous rehearsal schedule and physicality needed for the show. The entire cast has really melded in looking for costume and set decorations outside rehearsals - and Cox is so thankful that local businesses like By Design and Robert Schmidt Costumes have lent a hand in coming up with just the right touches for the comedy. A local graphic designer, Ann Morris, got involved in designing "Fayro Days" T-Shirts and designer bags for the production and reported that she laughed just working on the various pieces. "Everyone who gets even a little tiny peek at the lines and actions of these crazy characters enjoys themselves and audiences will love it!" promises Cox.

Ticket reservations are being taken at 618-462-6562 and are for sale on-line at <http://www.altonlittletheater.org/>. The Theater will host a Preview Party for Program Advertisers on September 20th and then begin a production run of seven evening performances and two matinees the next night. Tickets are \$15 at the door and \$8 for students (through college with ID). Season Tickets are on sale (\$70) during the run of SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY as well as Advance tickets for the 2012 "Vintage Voices: Leading Ladies & City Fathers" (\$12). Interviews and photos with the Cast and Director are arranged by calling 618-462-3205.