

Community Players elect new officers, set dates for upcoming shows

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SPRINGFIELD — The Springfield Community Players have named new officers to its Board of Governors, and are making plans for a variety of shows throughout this summer.

New officers elected in May include President John MacDonald, Vice President Todd Hutchinson, Vice President Stephanie Rowe, and Corresponding Secretary Aprille Hillock. Treasurer Donald Gray and REcording Secretary Anna Kendall have both retained those positions this year.

The Springfield Community Players, established in 1920 with the formation of the Dramatic Society, are celebrating 97 years this year.

Several members of the group were at the SCP playhouse recently at 165 South Street, where the group has been meeting since 1979, preparing for the season's upcoming shows and a new concert series.

The building was constructed in the early

1940s, when the town had a large influx of workers for local plants during World War II. With so many students coming into the area, the town built the structure originally as a schoolhouse.

When the Players took ownership of the building in 1979, it had been vandalized and was unused.

"It was a real mess in here," said Gray, who has been a member since the '70s.

The group initially used it as a storage space, until "someone got the idea that we could do a show in here," Gray said. "We've been doing it ever since."

The group includes 53 paid members and 138 members overall. They design and build many of their own sets in a workshop at the 80-seat theater.

With colorful decor, a welcoming meeting area, a "green room" for actors off-stage, and a well-constructed stage area and stadium seating installed since the group moved in, the South Street playhouse has long been an active destination for live theater and musical performances.

The SCP claims the title of the longest continuously operating theater group in the state of Vermont.

The Players recently opened "The Savannah Sipping Society," which ran June 2-3 and June 9-10.

When brainstorming ideas for shows, the group's members are open to ideas. They each present show ideas in February, and the membership can help choose which shows will be produced. In the past, the members would vote on a play and then come up with a director. These days, the director, which may be any member of the group, presents their idea for a play or show.

Upcoming shows for the 2017 season will include the comedy "Greater Tuna," directed by Rowe, scheduled for Aug. 4-5 and Aug. 11-12, with all shows starting at 7:30 p.m. and general admission \$15; and "Nunsensations," a musical directed by Cindy Hughes, planned for Nov. 3-5 and Nov. 10-11, with shows starting at 7:30 p.m. and a Sunday matinee at 2 p.m. Tickets will be \$12 students and



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Members of the Springfield Community Players, including from left President John MacDonald, Treasurer Don Gray, and Vice President Stephanie Rowe, offer a toast in a nod to the recent production of "The Savannah Sipping Society" during a break at the group's playhouse on South Street.

seniors, \$15 general admission.

SCP will also present a Fall Concert Series, overseen by MacDonald, planned for Oct. 7, with Carling and Will on banjo and fiddle; Oct. 14, with Carl Brogan pre-

sending classic rock from the 50s and 60s; Oct. 21, with Kenneth Rokicki's Latin jazz and blues; and Oct. 28, with the modern folk group Strangled Darlings. All concerts start at 2 p.m. Tickets will be \$10 at the door.

The Players have had concert series in the past, but not lately, according to MacDonald.

For more information or to reserve seats, call (802) 885-4098 or visit www.springfieldcommunityplayers.org.