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KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Members of the "Porchlight" cast at MMC include (from left) Terry Lafferty as "Mama," Megan Turner as "Little Car," Raegan Layher as "Alice," and Haley Lind as "Greeney." Other cast members not pictured are Piper Wegener as "Summer," Lisa Keogh as "Dorothy" and Peter Shepherd as "Hinton." The play runs at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 28 and March 1-2 at Marian Auditorium on the MMC campus.

## MMC Shines A Theatrical Light With 'Porchlight'

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF  
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As a Mount Marty College professor, Terry Lafferty is used to speaking in front of an audience. But she admits it's been quite a different experience making her stage debut — at age 52 — in the MMC production of "Porchlight."

"This isn't just my first year at MMC, it's also my first time on stage — if you don't count seventh grade, when I performed in 'Stations of the Cross' but didn't have any lines," she said with a laugh.

The MMC production runs Feb. 28 and March 1-2 in Marian Auditorium on the Yankton campus. Performances begin at 7:30 p.m., and tickets are now on sale.

Lafferty received encouragement to try out for a Mount Marty production when she arrived on campus last fall.

"We have lunch quite frequently as faculty, and (theater professor) Steve English said I should audition for the spring play," she said. "I was brand new to everything. I didn't even know how to audition, but I went ahead and read for the part."

Lafferty soon caught the acting bug. She was particularly attracted to Mama, the matriarch of the family in "Porchlight."

"When I read the part of Mama, in my head, I could just see me playing this part," she said. "I even thought of Mama in the show 'Mama's Family,' but I haven't based my character on that role (played by Vicki Lawrence)."

Lafferty finds herself acting alongside students from her classes.

"The students see me in the classroom or elsewhere on campus, and they address me as 'Dr. Lafferty.' But here on stage, I'm 'Mama' and the leader of the family," she said. "It's interesting to see the interaction (between the students and me). I'm able to do things I don't normally do in the classroom."

Lafferty fits the role well but also brings a new dimension to an otherwise all-student cast, said director Andy Henrickson.

"I'm thankful Terry showed up. She gives us a different perspective," he said. "She has the maturity, and it gives the cast a nice variety. She has embraced it from the get-go."

Those qualities are needed for a strong female lead, Henrickson said.

"As for Mama, this is her place. She is the foundation and the rock of the family," the director said. "As far as the cast members, Terry is a new performer, but the students respect her as a professor."

### FAMILY CONFLICT

In "Porchlight," written by Jeff Richards, the past collides with the present when four generations of the Sparks family meet at the site of the 20-year-old family secret.

The play, set in 1992, takes its name from its setting on the front porch of a run-down shack overlooking a dried-out river bed in Georgia, Henrickson said.

"This family isn't well off. The characters in the play are from a lower socio-economic status," he said. "This is a dysfunctional family, with a tragic secret that took place 20 years previously."

The play contains elements of both a comedy and drama, beginning with a light atmosphere that turns into a serious situation, Henrickson said. The action takes place within a 24-hour time period, from 4 a.m. one day to 4 a.m. the next day.

"Mama has arranged for her daughter, granddaughter and great-granddaughter to come to the shack," the director said. "The cast knows something awful has happened at this place. That's why Mama is calling people together — but why she's calling them together at this time isn't resolved at the end of the play."

Everyone knows the family secret except the 11-year-old great-granddaughter, who also has never met Mama, Henrickson said. Throughout the play, the family members reveal the tensions among themselves.

Another story line develops for the great-granddaughter, who finally meets her father, Henrickson said.

"The 'baby daddy' isn't a part of the girl's life at all, but he shows up that day to see her," the director said. "It's interesting to see how he lives up to what happened years ago."

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KELLY HERTZ/P&D

"Hinton" (Peter Shepherd) has a meeting with "Little Car" Sparks (Megan Turner) during a scene from "Porchlight." The play is set in 1992 on the porch of a shack in Georgia. Tickets are now on sale.

# 'Aladdin'

## Classic Tale Is Brought To Life By YCTC

BY ANDREW ATWAL  
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Although Tara Gill has an extensive background directing plays in Yankton, "Aladdin And His Wonderful, Magical Lamp" will be her first time heading a show for the Yankton Children's Theatre Company (YCTC).

"The people from the Yankton Children's Theatre Company asked me to direct a play for them so I thought I'd give it a shot," Gill said. "I directed 'Annie' for Lewis and Clark (Theatre Company) and enjoyed working with the children in that production, so I thought I'd give an all-kids play a shot."

She added that she is thoroughly enjoying her first production with YCTC, and looks forward to directing more plays with them in the future.

Gill said that when many people think of "Aladdin," they often think of the Disney version of the production. However, this play is more of an adaptation of the original version of the book.

"Aladdin is a boy who gets into a lot of mischief," Gill said. "He's always looking for an adventure, and because of that, it leads him to get into trouble." Eventually Aladdin comes across Jamaal, who is an evil magician in search of a genie lamp. Through all of Aladdin's adventures, he meets Princess Jasmine, who is supposed to get married soon. By the end of the play, he ends up with Jasmine.

"It's just a cute musical, with a lot of new music," Gill said. "The play doesn't have the same songs as the Disney version, and the characters have different names. Although the story is similar, this is a different perspective on it."

She added that the characters in the play are fun, and each have their own, individual personalities.

The production will be held on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday the weekends of Feb. 28 and March 7. Sunday shows are at 2 p.m., all others are at 7:30 p.m. at the Dakota Theatre.

"The kids we have in this play have worked so hard and it's truly an all-kids production," Gill said. "We have a lot of talented kids in this town and the play incorporates dancing and acting. We need a good audience to keep them motivated and keep them in the theater. Coming out to the show is a good way to support YCTC and everyone involved with the play."

### CAST LIST:

Jamaal — Jordan Kuipers  
Halima — Olivia Hudson  
Scheherazade — Blake Wieseler  
Alakazam (monkey) — Gage Becker  
Aladdin — Sky Nockels  
Chop Chop — Logan Haak  
Princess Jasmine — Megan Haselhorst  
Sheba — Jordan Walter  
Zara — Rachel Wood  
Ali Bubba — Sam Carda  
Dragon — Daniel Bruegman  
Queen Sultane — Haylee Heinemeyer  
Sultan — Jacob Smith  
Neela — Catherine Perekstis  
Mother of Aladdin — Gabby Slowey



ABOVE: Queen Sultane (Haylee Heinemeyer) and the Sultan (Jacob Smith, center) confer with Aladdin (Sky Nockels, left) while Ali Bubba (Sam Carda) looks on in the Yankton Children's Theatre Company production of "Aladdin And His Wonderful, Magical Lamp," which will be presented at the Dakota Theatre in downtown Yankton Feb. 28-March 3 and March 7-10. LEFT: Shown from the production are Halima (Olivia Hudson) and Jammal (Jordan Kuipers). To see or purchase images from this event, visit spotted.yankton.net.

Merchant Woman (Jarma) — Tajia Schamp  
Merchant Woman (Sahria) — Tori Class  
Genie of the Ring — Kaycee Smith  
Genie of the Jewel — Kaitlin Paulson  
Genie of the Lamp — Anna Carda  
Genies-in-Training — Aria Beaudette, Raina Schaeffer, Joseph Pearson

### ROYAL PROCESSION:

Asha — Emily Wieseler  
Asad — Jaden Pearson  
Hadi — Makayla Palacek  
Nadim — Cory Lucht  
Nadira — Emma Eichacker  
Prema — Anjeliene Schaeffer

### TOWNS PEOPLE:

Safia — Jasmine Gill  
Thana — Tess Zoss  
Ashan — Alyssa Ogstad  
Saleem — Carson Heinemeyer  
Hema — Cora Johnson  
Abbud — Joseph Wieseler

You can follow Andrew Atwal on Twitter at [twitter.com/andrewatwal](https://twitter.com/andrewatwal)

## Howe Exhibit Showing At USD

VERMILLION — "Four Legged: The Animal as Style and Subject" is on display at the University of South Dakota's Oscar Howe Gallery through May 17.

"Four Legged: The Animal as Style and Subject" features Oscar Howe's use of the animal as a subject throughout his painting career. A tradition in his culture and his heritage, the Sioux admiration for animals such as buffalo, elk and deer is apparent in Howe's paintings as the artist depicted animals as integral symbols in a variety of Sioux dances and ceremonies. The paintings in "Four Legged" also represent

Howe's artistic journey from the flat, pictographic style of "The Studio" in his early works to his mature, modernist work of his later career.

University Art Galleries will host a free public reception for the exhibition from 4-6 p.m. on Friday, March 15, coinciding with an "Animal Arts Crawl" and family weekend, March 15-16. Gallery Hours for "Four Legged" are Monday through Friday from 1 to 5 p.m. and on weekends by special appointment. The Oscar Howe Gallery is located inside Old Main on the USD campus.

*Yankton's 2012  
Citizens of the Year*

Join us for a Public Reception  
in honor of  
Dr. Brooks & Vi Ranney  
Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>  
1:30 - 4 p.m.  
Yankton Elks Lodge  
504 W 27th Street

A Special Program will begin at 2 p.m.

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