



Photo: Roger Hisek
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ABOVE: Annie (Hannah Reimbert) is surrounded by Oliver Warbucks (Matt Treinhaile) and Grace (Julie Kleinschmidt) in a scene from the Lewis and Clark Theatre Company's production of "Annie." The classic musical is one of the most widely produced musicals in the country, and it begins a two-week run at the Dakota Theatre in downtown Yankton next week. LEFT: Annie (Reimbert) and her fellow orphans (Jordan Walter, left, and Abbey Kast) go about the trudging of scrubbing the floor of the orphanage while singing the classic song "Hard Knock Life" in a scene from "Annie." (Kelly Hertz/P&D)

School Of 'Hard Knocks'

LCTC Brings Beloved Family Musical To Dakota Theatre Stage

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Ten years ago, Tara Gill was an actress in the Lewis and Clark Theatre Company's production of "Annie." This year, she has switched roles and is directing the summer musical.

"Annie" tells the story of an orphan girl who spends Christmas with one of the richest men in town, teaching him there is more to life than just material things. The original stage production is based on the Harold Gray comic strip, "Little Orphan Annie," and was once a radio show, as well as a movie.

The LCTC production will be presented July 26-30 and Aug. 3-6 at the Dakota Theatre in downtown Yankton, with Hannah Rembert playing the role of Annie, Matt Treinhaile as Warbucks and Michelle Miller as Mrs. Hannigan.

Gill said directing the play, as opposed to acting in the show, has been something to get used to.

"When you're in the show, you focus on your one particular task — being in the show, memorizing your lines and all of the directions you have. When you're directing the show, you deal with all aspects of the show. You have to coordinate the dancing, the music and then a big challenge is coordinating the backstage help," she said.

Musical director Jaclyn Mathison will be directing a full orchestra for the show, which is something that hasn't happened in a long time, she said.

"There are a lot more instrumentalists playing for us," Mathison said. "Not very many places around here have an entirely volunteer orchestra, so it's always difficult to try and find people to commit such a large amount of time to a volunteer organization. This year we have a really big group, and they're all really good players."

The cast of 40 members is also vocally strong this year, Mathison said, which allows her to incorporate some new elements into the show.

"The music in this show is especially challenging, because it gets into a really high range for the kids. For them, it's been



The orphan cast of the Lewis and Clark Theatre Company's production of "Annie," shown rehearsing the song "Hard Knock Love" in preparation for next week's debut. To see or purchase images from this event, visit spotted.yankton.net. KELLY HERTZ/P&D

pretty difficult to learn the pieces, but they're doing so well," she said. "We've also been able to incorporate some harmonies and some more difficult aspects that haven't been possible in past shows, just because we haven't had a big enough group to do it."

Mathison said having actors with past experience has also helped during rehearsals.

"A lot of the people involved with the show have past experience from other shows, musical ensembles and voice lessons," she said. "When I give people instruction, they know what to do with it. We also have some people that are more inexperienced — this might be their first musical or their first time singing in public — so we had to get over some nerve issues, but that's definitely been improving too."

Choreographer Hannah Lambert said this is also her first time giving direction for a musical, although she has acted in many shows before.

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Miss Hannigan (Michelle Millen) yells at the orphans in her care while roughly handling one of the orphan girls (Lauren Bruening) during a scene from the Lewis and Clark Theatre Company's local production of "Annie." To see or purchase more images from this event, visit spotted.yankton.net. (Kelly Hertz/P&D)

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