

**Now Playing**

**THE BOY WHO WANTED TO COUNT** — Fort Wayne Dance Collective presents an original story-dance production about a boy who loves numbers at Arts United Center, Fort Wayne 7 p.m. Friday, June 15, \$10-\$12, 422-4226, www.fwdc.org/boy

**OUR MAN SHEL** — Traveling Fort Wayne Youththeatre troupe performances of vignettes based upon Shel Silverstein characters at various Fort Wayne locations: Aboite Library, 2 p.m. Friday, June 15; at Aboite Library, 10:30 a.m. Saturday, June 16 at Dupont Library; 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 19 at Tecumseh Library; 6 p.m. Wednesday, June 20 at Lakeside Park; 6 p.m. Wednesday, June 27 at Lafayette Park; 6 p.m. Thursday, June 28 at Waynedale Park; 12 p.m. noon Saturday, July 7 at Barr Street Market; 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Tuesday, July 10 at Main Library; 6 p.m. Wednesday, July 11 at Hamilton Park; 10:30 a.m. Thursday, July 12 at Hessen Cassel Library; 10 a.m. Tuesday, July 17 at Eckhart Park (in Auburn); 3 p.m. Wednesday, July 18 at Waynedale Library and 6 p.m. Wednesday, July 18 at Packard Park; 2:30 p.m. Friday, July 20 at Georgetown Library; 12 p.m. noon Thursday, July 26 at Allen County Fairgrounds Free Activity Stage, free, 422-6900, www.fortwayneyouththeatre.org

**LEGALLY BLONDE** — An energetic, playful musical based on the 2001 movie at Wagon Wheel Theatre, Warsaw, 8 p.m. Wednesday, June 20; 7 p.m. Thursday, June 21; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, June 22-23; 2 p.m. Sunday, June 24; 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 26; 8 p.m. Wednesday, June 27; 2 and 8 p.m. Thursday, June 28; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, June 29-30, \$31, 574-267-8041, wagonwheeltheatre.org

**THE MARRIAGE GO ROUND** — A comedy about what would have happened if Isadora Duncan and George Bernard Shaw had had a child together at Arena Dinner Theatre, Fort Wayne, 7 p.m. dinner, 8 p.m. curtain, Friday-Saturday, June 15-16 and 22-23, \$35, 424-5622

**PETER PAN, THE MUSICAL** — The story of Peter Pan based on the 1954 musical at Wagon Wheel Theatre, Warsaw, 2 and 8 p.m. Thursday, June 14; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, June 15-16, \$31, 574-267-8041, wagonwheeltheatre.org

**PLAIN AND FANCY** — A musical comedy at the Round Barn Theatre at Amish Acres, Nappanee, call for times, thru Oct. 20, \$6.95-\$45.16, 800-800-4942, www.amishacres.com

**STATE FAIR** — A Rodgers and Hammerstein classic musical at the Round Barn Theatre at Amish Acres, Nappanee, call for times thru July 7, \$6.95-\$45.16, 800-800-4942, www.amishacres.com

**Asides**

**INSTRUCTION/CAMPS**

**RIISING STAR SUMMER CAMP** — Fort Wayne Youththeatre summer camp for children entering grades 3-12, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Mondays-Fridays, June 18-29, culminating in a full production at First Presbyterian Theater, \$300, 422-6900, www.fortwayneyouththeatre.org

**HUNTINGTON UNIVERSITY SUMMER THEATRE YOUTH CAMP** — Summer camp for children entering grades kindergarten thru 12, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Mondays-Fridays, June 25-July 14, culminating in productions of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, \$185 (\$210 after June 6), 359-4257, www.huntington.edu/theatre.

**Planning Calendar**

**JUNE**

**ROMEO AND HARRIET** — A musical with a large cast and a happy ending at DeKalb Outdoor Theatre, Auburn, 7:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday, June 22-23, \$5, 925-2838, www.dekalb-outdoortheater.org

**FORT WAYNE BALLET TOO** — David Ingram and friends perform interpretive dance at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art, Fort Wayne, 7 p.m. Thursday, June 28, free, 484-9646, www.fortwayneballet.org

**JULY**

**CAROUSEL** — A musical love story set in 1873 at Wagon Wheel Theatre, Warsaw, 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 4; 7 p.m. Thursday, July 5; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, July 6-7; 2 p.m. Sunday, July 8; 7 p.m. Tuesday, July 10; 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 11; 2 and 8 p.m. Thursday, July 12; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, July 13-14, \$31, 574-267-8041, wagonwheeltheatre.org

**HANK WILLIAMS: LOST HIGHWAY** — A classic country musical biography of the legendary singer at the Round Barn Theatre at Amish Acres, Nappanee, call for times, July 17-Aug. 26, \$6.95-\$45.16, 800-800-4942, www.amishacres.com

**CHICAGO** — A musical set in prohibition-era Chicago which explores the treatment of celebrity criminals at Wagon Wheel Theatre, Warsaw, 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 18; 7 p.m. Thursday, July 19; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, July 20-21; 2 p.m. Sunday, July 22; 7 p.m. Tuesday, July 24; 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 25; 2 and 8 p.m. Thursday, July 26; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, July 27-28, \$31, 574-267-8041, wagonwheeltheatre.org

**DREAMGIRLS** — Fort Wayne Civic Theatre presents a musical about three young singers breaking into the changing music scene of the 1960s at Arts United Center, Fort Wayne, 8 p.m. Saturday, July 28; 2 p.m. Sunday, July 29; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Aug. 3-4; 2 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 5; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Aug. 10-11; and 2 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 12, \$18-\$26, 424-5220, www.fwcivic.org

**AUGUST**

**BLITHE SPIRIT** — A ghost story starring Ann Whitney in the title role at Wagon Wheel Theatre, Warsaw, 8 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 1; 7 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 2; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Aug. 3-4; 2 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 5; 7 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 7; 8 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 8; 2 and 8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 9; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Aug. 10-11, \$31, 574-267-8041, wagonwheeltheatre.org

**A High-Flying Opener**

One of the most memorable and magical moments of a production of *Peter Pan* is the moment Peter flies in through the Darling family's nursery window. When Peter flies directly above your head, you become a part of the magic.



**Curtain Call**  
**JEN POIRY-PROUGH**

**PETER PAN, THE MUSICAL**  
Thurs.-Sat., June 14-16 • 8 p.m.  
Wagon Wheel Theatre  
2517 E. Center St., Warsaw  
Tix.: \$31, 574-267-8041

If you sit in the right sections at the Wagon Wheel Theatre, you too get to experience that particular thrill during their season-opening production of *Peter Pan*, now running through June 16.

Although I didn't sit in one of the sections directly below the fly track, the moment still produced goose bumps.

In case you need a synopsis of the show, the mysterious flying boy Peter Pan uses his charm to woo/manipulate Wendy Darling away from her London home. He takes her to Neverland, where he and the Lost Boys live, to be their "mother." She brings her brothers along, and they fight Indians (led by Princess Tiger Lily) and Pirates (led by Captain Hook). Eventually the Darlings grow homesick and decide to return to London but are kidnapped by the pirates. Peter Pan rescues them, and they return to London where Mr. and Mrs. Darling adopt them — all except Peter, who refuses to grow up.

Ever since the very first stage production of *Peter Pan* in 1904, the title role is traditionally played by a woman. This musical production (written in 1954 and starring the likes of Mary Martin, Sandy Duncan and Cathy Rigby) strays wonderfully from tradition. Director/choreographer Scott Michaels cast Lee Slobotkin, an exuberant young redhead with a beautiful tenor voice and athletic dancing (and flying) ability. Vocals and

Continued on page 31

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**legally blonde**  
june 20-30, 2012  
Underwritten by COMET

physicality aside, Slobotkin truly is youth, joy, and freedom. He also adds a nice touch of innocent sex appeal. He's Neverland's hottest (and most oblivious) bachelor, and Wendy, Tinkerbell and Tiger Lily are all vying for his attentions. His lack of a British accent may be noticeable, but it makes him stand out from the rest of the characters as being not-of-their-world.

Leigh Ellen Jones plays Wendy Darling's girliness, but you can see the woman she is about to become. Her tenderness to her "boys" is very sweet, and the sly way she tries to get a little physical affection from a boy who cannot be touched by anyone is very funny.

As for the other Darlings, what could be more adorable than a little boy in footie pajamas and clutching a fluffy teddy bear? Some of the greatest joy from the production was watching Derek Stiffler as youngest brother Michael just being a little boy onstage with a bunch of action going on all around him. His own real-life brother Chase Stiffler plays middle brother John. Both boys are obviously having the time of their lives, flying and fighting pirates. I was just slightly worried that little Derek would hit the ceiling, he flew so high.

Nana the dog is played in *Lion King* puppet style by Matthew Janisse (who doubles as a pirate). His facial expressions reflect what the big fluffy dog is feeling in a way that a full dog costume could not.

About a half an hour after the story leaves the nursery, one youngster in the opening night audience queried aloud, "Where'd the doggie go?"

As for Neverland, the Pirates (particularly Dan Smith as Captain Hook's go-to fall guy Smee) are hilariously bumbling, Tiger Lily (Hillary Smith) and her gang of dancers (wearing percussive fringed costumes designed by Stephen R. Hollenbeck) add sex appeal, and the Lost Boys (played by three females and two males) all have funny, distinct personalities. Hook's deep, rich singing voice is gorgeous and Andy Robinson plays him as more comical than menacing. Lauren Roesner's Mrs. Darling and Annie Yokom's Old Wendy (ever-so-much older than 20) are simply lovely.

Set designer David Lepor nicely crams just enough scenery onto the small space to tell the story and set pieces serve as beds, rocks and walls to the pirate ship by flipping panels.

Jump on the wind's back, follow the golden arrows, and fly your family to Warsaw for this magical musical production.

[jen@greenroomonline.org](mailto:jen@greenroomonline.org)

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6-6/21

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4-6/14

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6-6/14

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x12\_7/28

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8-7/5

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1-6/14

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4-6/28

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