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Driving Miss Crazy

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Like scores of traveling tent actors who came before them, the entire cast hawked popcorn, peanuts, hot dogs, and drinks between acts. Above, Hunter Jordan, aka orphan Sturgill, sold boxes of fancy Rivertime Player's Taffy, and many lucky patrons found slips inside their boxes that could be turned in for prizes, including genuine imitation ruby and diamond rings.

Maggie, the local debutante who is on him like a shadow, also play integral characters, ones who always show up at the worst time and cause trouble for the orphans. Of course, all is well in the end.

In true repertoire fashion, *Driving Miss Crazy* was book-ended with vaudevillian-style skits, sketches and sing-alongs.

In addition to the witty script and fine performances, *Driving Miss Crazy* offered some fine musical scores, including David Taylor's *Little Piggy Lullaby*.

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The Rivertime Players serve as caretakers of the last remaining repertoire tent show, a historic cultural asset that can trace its roots to its founding 114 years ago, and they are dedicated to preserving and continuing the repertoire tent theatre experience. They are a group of volunteers who strive to provide a community-based performing arts organization for the purpose of presenting dramatic and musical theatre; present quality family entertainment; create opportunities

for children and adults to develop talents in all aspects of theatre arts; and to foster, promote, and increase the public knowledge and appreciation of the performing arts.

The community is fortunate to enjoy such a rare and precious amenity as the Rivertime Players and their tent repertoire theater. At one time in the early 1920s there were more than over seven hundred active traveling tent companies in the nation, but by the mid-1950s only a few troupes still traveled. Today we are blessed to be able to experience the thrill of one of the last authentic, hysterical and historical "Toby" shows.

There are two final performances scheduled for next weekend: October 5 and 6.

Doors open at 6, pre-show fun begins at 7 and *Driving Miss Crazy* begins each night at 7 p.m. under the big top next to the Parsons Municipal Center. Tickets are \$7 at the door; children 12 and under \$2.

For more information about the Rivertime Players, or to make tax-free donations, go to rivertimeplayers.org.

Driving Miss Daisy a hilarious ride

Cast transports audience back in time

By Pam McGaha

Anticipation ran high for this year's Rivertime Players production of the original comedy, *Driving Miss Crazy*, and Friday night's premier performance did not disappoint. Written and directed by Shane Bridges, who also played Toby Taylor, Miss Crazy's new chauffeur, the laughs came tumbling off the stage like popcorn, and the audience was kept in stitches from

the opening scene to the final curtain call.

Set in 1962, *Driving Miss Crazy* revolves around Toby and his band of children who had escaped from a cruel orphanage. When Toby takes the job of Miss Crazy's chauffeur after she fires her current driver Hoke, played by Bryan McDonald, he brings his charges to live in Miss Crazy's bomb shelter with hilarious consequences.

Miss Crazy, played by Elicia Spain, and her son, Boolie, played by Mark Tubbs, are blissfully unaware of the children's existence, and when Dottie Hill and David Taylor as Turner and Hootch arrive on the scene searching for the missing charges, plot thickens.

The orphans, Jerry Evans as Jim Bob, Victor Evans as John Boy, Amber Lyles as Ester, Jake Lyles as Ben, Hannah Mills as Suzette and Hunter Jordan as

Sturgill shone throughout the production. For some of them, this was their first night under the big top, but they performed like pros. Considering that it was her first Toby show, Mills gave an especially impressive performance as the group's mother figure.

Brett Jordan, as Miss Crazy's visiting nephew, Jethro, and Jenni Turner, as

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