



One More “Hot Shot” Night



Young
Rivertime
Players
to present
encore
performance
this Friday
night at 7

By Shane Bridges

Due to overwhelming approval and high demand, *Hot Shot Pete Steams Through Time*, which played to capacity houses on April 5 and 6, will pull into the depot one last time, this Friday night at 7 p.m. Ticket prices are \$6 for adults, and \$2 for children 12 and under. If you were late to the station, but have heard how so many others enjoyed the trip, here's one more chance for a ticket to ride!

We hope to have one more big crowd to send this show off, but, ultimately, we decided to extend the run for the kids (all 23 of them) who worked so hard for 6 weeks to bring this show to life. They deserve another chance to shine!

This year's cast is a nice mix of some stage veterans with whom we've worked before, and some young'ns who were new to us, and new to the stage. Angelina Hicks is the youngest member of our cast, and such a joy. I recognized her sweet face as a regular Toby Show attendee. She loved being in the show, and showered me with presents throughout the process. I have quite the haul of hand colored pictures, fruit roll-ups, and even a new Christmas tree ornament!

Tiffany and Weston Flowers were new additions to our cast this year. I knew Tiffany from my work with the local Middle School producing short films about Parsons history (which will be presented later in the year). Tiffany did great as a member of the 1913 Parsons Welcoming Committee. Tiffany's brother, Weston, was new to me, but he made quite an impression in a short time! Thank you, Flowerses!

Blaine Lindsey and Drake Sills made their Rivertime Players debut with us this year! Both had stage experience elsewhere, which was put to good use, as they were hilarious as the young spider throwing courtiers!

Haylee Smith and Brianna Mills made their Rivertime stage debuts in this year's show, but both have been familiar faces at rehearsals for some time now, as they are the younger siblings of some of our established stars. They both did great! Brianna was razor sharp when she was focused, and I encouraged everyone in the cast to use Haylee as a model when fighting for bloomers in slow motion (come to the show, and that'll make more sense)!

Ivan and Jesse Hobbs were new to us this year as well, and it was a joy to watch them grow into their roles. Jesse grew more and more confident as the process went along, and I am so proud of the performance he put forth. Ivan made me laugh as much as anybody in the cast in his portrayal of G.W. Partin. Ivan had a big line load, and he pulled it together marvelously in front of the crowd!

James (aka Jimbo, aka James Jr.) Moore is the final newcomer to our crew this year, and what an addition he is. He has, arguably, the most challenging role(s) in the show, and he pulled it off with limitless grace and aplomb. This show would not have been the success that it was without James' talent. He is going to make a great addition to his college of choice's theatre department.

I was overjoyed to have Amber and Jake Lyles back with us this year. I challenged both of these young actors with roles which I knew would stretch them, and they did great! I gave Jake a big line load. By reputation, Jake always knows everyone else's lines, so I thought I would put all that gray matter to better use! I also put a lot on Amber's plate this year, making her flirt with (ugh) “Brett Johnson.” She followed her directions, much to her own chagrin.

Andrew and Molly Lawlor were in their second show with us this year. Molly was the slowest talking member of the welcoming committee, to hilarious effect! She really ran with the direction I gave her! Andrew has grown so much since the show last year, and it is so rewarding to witness! He was so much more attentive and focused in rehearsal, and proved to be a real trooper during the show. He fell at high speed during one of his entrances, taking all the skin off his knee during the process, and as his Dad was attending to him, he said, “I gotta go Dad, or I'm gonna miss my cue!”

Stetson Copous, Madison Davis, and Jerry Evans are three more of our stage veterans who have added so much to this show. Stetson was sassy as can be (like I knew she was), Madison was adorable as ever (once we got her to pull her bonnet back so we could see her face), and Jerry was a riot! I could always count on a couple of texts from Jerry after rehearsals, as he tried to get a clarification on a direction, or as he assured me that he'd have it down come next rehearsal. These three all performed flawlessly!

Madison Goff and Cole Powers were shining lights in our show this year! Little Cole, on so many occasions in rehearsals, had me in tears from laughing so hard. He is a joy to direct, as all you have to do is give him a nudge in the direction you want him to go, and he takes off at full speed. He has grown so much in the three shows I've done with him, it is unbelievable! And Madison, who was last with us in *Aladdin*, was brilliant as Maggie Partin. It is so challenging for a young lady like Madison to play a middle aged woman complaining about her husband and kids, but she tackled it like a pro! Plus, her energy and enthusiasm are infectious, which makes it fun for everyone!

Ryleigh Beecham is fabulous as Moray, the engineer for *Hot Shot Pete*! Having worked with Ryleigh last year, I knew she would be the perfect choice for slightly off-kilter, upward inflecting conductor of the trip through time. Ryleigh is fabulous to direct, as nothing you ask her to do is too outrageous for her. I look forward to working with Ryleigh in future productions!

And, finally, the big three, Hunter Jordan, Hannah Mills, and Jenni Turner. I, honestly cannot put into words my affection for these three young actors. After working with the same actors for a few shows, you get kind of a shorthand communication with them, and, even better, they know what you're going to say before you say it, and they do that. These three are the epitome of that. All three are consummate professionals now! My favorite memories of this show will be the night they suddenly started LISTENING to one another onstage (instead of just worrying about themselves and their own lines) and the way each of them covered for one another and anyone else when something went awry. That instills so much trust in a director, and I'm thankful to have these three young people in my life.

There are too many “thank you”s to squeeze into this story, but, on behalf of Mark, Elicia and Dolores, I'd like to thank any and every one of you who contributed to this production, be it buying space in our program or getting the kids to rehearsal, or anything in between. We couldn't have done it without you!

Finally, we hope to see you at the Municipal Building on Friday night! Not to toot our own horn (winky), but we think the show's right good!

