

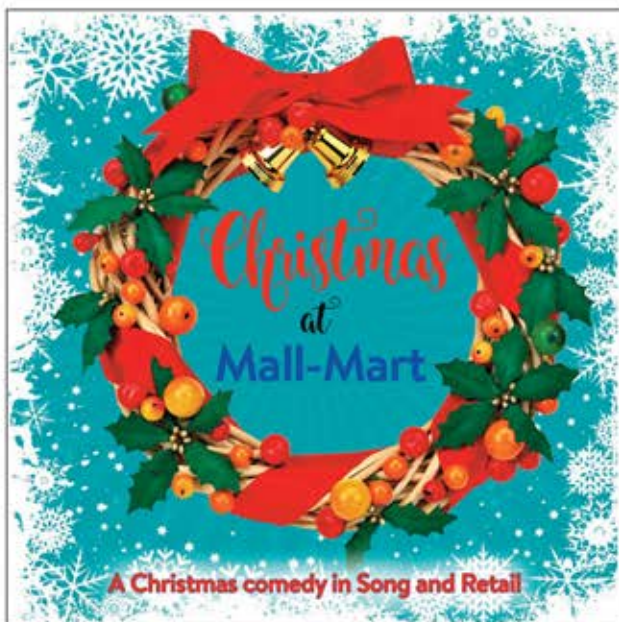
Rivertime Players present *Christmas at Mall-Mart*

The Rivertime Players are presenting their first Christmas show, *Christmas at Mall-Mart*, this Saturday and Sunday at The Hangar Performing Arts Center. This all new, original show features a cast of 21 in a series of scenes and songs about Christmas at a southern big box retailer.

"We had no idea who might show up to audition for this show," says director Shane Bridges, "if anyone at all. That makes it hard to pick a show." Upon seeing how many talented actors wanted to be a part of it, he started brainstorming writing something himself. That's when the "Mall-Mart" idea hit him. "There's lots of stuff that goes on in there."

The cast includes a host of Toby Show veterans, including Mark Tubbs, Elicia Spain, Jerry Evans, Ivan Hobbs, Bryce Kelley and Anna Kane Townsend. "Fortunately," says Bridges, "I was also able to cast my favorite actress in the world, Posey Bridges." There are also several members of the Young Rivertime Players in the show. They include Sarah Lawlor, Jaycee Ro-mines, Landon Franks, Jenna Crowell, Andrew Lawlor and Hannah Miller. "We are blessed to have a great group of young actors in the show," Bridges boasts.

"We also have several actors who are new to us in the show. They include Meredith Crosby, who has been a joy, and Hueston Smith, who overflows with passion. There are also an inordinate number of Har-risses." Samantha, Bryan Luke, and Dawson Harriss



Showtimes are 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 15 and 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 16.

all came out to audition. "I remembered seeing them at the Toby Show this year," says Bridges. "They are great kids, eager, energetic, enthusiastic... and by a strange twist of circumstance, their Dad, John, has joined the cast at the last minute! John was willing to jump in and fill a need we had, and he's doing a great job for us! He's a natural."

Penny Lindsey, who heads up the Decatur County Middle School drama program each year, is also in the Mall-Mart cast. "Penny does a fantastic job with her shows at the school, I can't brag on her enough, and I was so honored that she would be a part of this show," exclaims Bridges, "especially since she is directing

Annie, a huge show, which opens the same week we do! This is a great opportunity for her students to see her in the spotlight. She's a pro!"

One of the most pleasant surprises for the Rivertime Players at auditions was

Adam Stanford. "Adam is a blessing to us every time he shows up. And his musical background has really shaped this show! It's basically a musical, and we wouldn't be able to do that without Adam." Stanford sings and plays an assortment of musical instruments in the show, including guitar, keyboard, and ukelele. He also conducts an orchestra of boomwhackers, plastic tubes that create a musical note when struck, which

promises to entertain.

The show features a number of holiday song parodies written by Bridges and Mark Tubbs. These include "O Mastercard," "Greeter Got Run Over by a Buggy," "I Want a Purple Hoverboard for Christmas," and "Pajamas at Mall-Mart" (to the tune of "Away in a Manger"). There is also rap number featuring the elves, reindeer and a department store Santa. "The kids really love that one," says Bridges. You can also expect a medley of traditional carols, arranged by Stanford, and sung by the cast.

The songs are interspersed between various scenes one might expect to see in a "Mall-Mart" during the holidays, including the Salvation Army bell ringer, parents losing their children, couples bickering over presents, and road rage with shopping carts. Bridges says, "I think people will really be able to identify with the scenarios in this show."

Showtimes are 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 15, and 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 16. Tickets (\$10 for adults, \$7 for seniors and \$5 for students) are available at the door. The theatre opens a half hour before showtime. The Hangar Performing Arts Center is at 253 West 9th Street in Parsons, at the old airport.

"Come on out and see our first Christmas show," concludes Bridges. "It's good clean family fun, and there's something for everybody. Merry Christmas from the Rivertime Players!"