

# 'Senior Follies' will have audiences laughing and smiling

By **ALEXANDRA HERRERA**  
STAFF WRITER

ENGLEWOOD — Lemon Bay Playhouse volunteers took a trip to Pleasant Valley Retirement Home for the last show of the theater's 30th season.

Volunteers and guests were treated to "Senior Follies," a play told in two acts and six scenes about nine seniors and their adventures in their retirement home.

"Senior Follies" is directed by Ric Godwin, Lemon Bay Playhouse Artistic Director. Godwin and the cast hope the audience gets plenty of laughs during the last show.

"Hopefully they will enjoy the one-liners," Goodwin said.

Goodwin is proud of the large cast and how well they worked together to put on the show. He praises the work of the casts, crews, directors and volunteers during this season.

Goodwin explained the biggest challenge they faced was the large cast and the small stage in the playhouse. "Large casts are always difficult due to our stage and finding a traffic pattern that

## IF YOU GO

"Senior Follies" begins at 7:30 p.m. today and runs through June 25 at Lemon Bay Playhouse, 96 W. Dearborn St., Englewood. Curtain is 7:30 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Reserved seat tickets are \$18 and student tickets with proper ID are \$12. Buy tickets Monday through Friday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. by calling the box office at 941-475-675, visiting the box office at the theater an hour before curtain, or by visiting [www.lemonbayplayhouse.com](http://www.lemonbayplayhouse.com).

**Note:** Lemon Bay Playhouse staff warns that a strobe light is used in Act II Scene III and those who are attending who have a medical condition or may have sensitivity to the strobe should alert the play-house staff.

works," he said.

Despite the large cast and small stage, the show still brings plenty of laughs and the cast's interactions come off as genuine.

For those who frequent Lemon Bay Playhouse, this show is full of familiar faces. Bob La Salle is Howard, who lusts over the widowed senior ladies after discovering Viagra. Victoria Caruso is Sybil/Sadie, Pleasant Valley's



PHOTO PROVIDED

Jenni Elliott, Jim Manns, Bob La Salle, Paul Bravo and Cheryl Hastings, along with Victoria Caruso, Lora Resignato, Barbara Lorio, Donna Hadley and Dottie Warner take a moment to smile during a rehearsal of "Senior Follies."

newest resident and con artist. Donna Hadley is Iris, the home's only single resident.

Joining La Salle, Caruso and Hadley are Paul Bravo as Douglas, who is married to Bernice, played by Lemon Bay newcomer Barbara Lorio. Also aboard are Cheryl Hastings, who plays Mildred, and Lora Resignato, who plays Sara Jane.

Rounding out the cast are Jenni Elliott, who plays Mrs. Rivers, the senior home director, and Jim Manns, who plays Lowell/Jack, Sadie's husband and partner in crime.

The show opens with

a lot of activity thanks to Resignato's Sara Jane who takes the audience through a quick sequence of Kung Fu and gets a surprise greeting from La Salle's Howard.

The audience should play close attention to Lorio, who makes some priceless facial expressions while working out a puzzle. Like Lorio, Resignato's motions are over the top in both her face and body movement.

While Bravo and Lorio play well off each other and really come across as an old married couple, many of the interactions will remind the audience of their own spouses.

Hadley is another who

bears close attention, as many of her lines in the first two scenes rely on her mishap with medication. Clever audience members will see how La Salle's and Hadley's characters are similar, but different.

The show does have a bit of a lull late in the first scene of the first act, but things quickly pick up as Caruso and Mann take the stage. While the characters are posing as a posh brother and sister who have retired to the home, audiences will quickly learn of their con to steal money from the trusting and unsuspecting residents.

Both Mann and Caruso bring a slimy quality to the roles and the audience will grow to dislike the pair quickly.

"Senior Follies" relies on the actors' delivery of the lines and the

actors' expressions in the background, and the cast at Lemon Bay delivers. Along with the facial expressions by the cast, Hastings' one-liners and her interactions with Resignato really bring the laughs.

The audience should also pay close attention to Elliott and her lines during the announcements, as they foreshadow certain plot points. Another running gag through the show is the unseen Ida, who is away at Disney World with family. Though she's not physically present, the audience will get to know her before she makes a small appearance near the end, thanks to Dottie Warner.

"Senior Follies" moves quickly through the second act and the group goes from being clueless to solving the con by the end of the show. While the show moves quickly through the second act, the ending is the real charm of the show.

Those looking to visit the residents of Pleasant Valley Retirement Home, should head over to Lemon Bay Playhouse for the last show of the 30th season, "Senior Follies," beginning tonight.

Email: [aherrera@sun-herald.com](mailto:aherrera@sun-herald.com)

*Doctors*

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