



Kenzie Wynne and J.P. McLaurin are in the cast of "Go, Dog. Go!" opening at the South Carolina Children's Theater on Friday. OWEN RILEY JR/STAFF

'Go, Dog. Go!' brings beloved book to life

SCCT show is ideal for youngest audience members

By Paul Hyde
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For Kim Granner, it was love at first bark. After seeing the children's musical "Go, Dog. Go!" only once, Granner knew she had to direct it in Greenville.

"I saw the show at the Children's Theatre of Charlotte, fell in love with it and went back and saw it a second time," Granner says. "I immediately started bugging Debbie Bell," the executive director of South Carolina Children's Theatre.

Granner, who has directed several other Children's Theatre shows, got her wish. The Children's Theatre production of "Go, Dog. Go!" opens Friday at the Peace Center's Gunter Theatre.

Based on a much-loved children's book by author and illustrator P.D. Eastman, "Go, Dog. Go!" is about a group of canines who "don't act very dog-like," Granner says. "They drive cars, they play baseball, they take lunch breaks," Granner says. "They're very funny and very human."

All the fun culminates in a dog party in a tree — an iconic image from Eastman's book.

Every year, the S.C. Children's Theatre schedules at least one show appropriate for the youngest children. Lasting only an hour, the fast-paced "Go, Dog. Go!" will appeal even to 4-year-olds, Granner says.

"It's great for very young ones, although all ages will love this show," Granner says.

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YOU CAN GO

What: "Go, Dog. Go!" based on the book by P.D. Eastman and produced by the South Carolina Children's Theatre

When: 7 p.m. Friday; also 1:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on Saturday; also 1:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on April 29; also 7 p.m. on May 4; also 1:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on May 5; also 1:30 p.m. on May 6

Where: Peace Center's Gunter Theatre

Tickets: \$26 for adults; \$17 for children ages 18 and under. (A special ticket price of \$14 is offered for the April 29 performance at 5:30 p.m.)

Information: 864-467-3000 or www.peacecenter.org

KIDS

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The stage production is closely modeled on Eastman's 1961 book. Eastman was a protege of Dr. Seuss, children's book writer Theodor Seuss Geisel.

"It really brings the book to life," Granner says. "It was really important to me to bring these images that I love so much to life. The set looks like the pages of the book."

Another familiar image of the book is that of dogs driving cars.

"We have a musical number done in cars," Granner says. "To see that is worth of the price of the ticket right there. To see them go around in those cars, Flintstones-style, is something."

Long before she saw the musical (featuring a score by Michael Koerner), Granner fell in love with Eastman's book.

"It was one of my favorite books when I was a little girl, and I later read it to my children when they were little, so I was so excited to direct it," Granner says.

The cast of 12 includes a few adults and teens and

several children. Music direction is by Steve Griner, and choreography is by Kimberlee Ferreira. The props are by Ryan Bradburn.

"It's going to be a lot of fun," Granner says about the show. "You'll leave wanting more."

■ Read Paul Hyde's arts blog under "Entertainment" at greenvilleonline.com.