

'Getting Sara Married' opens tonight at OCT

BY STEPHANIE JADRNICEK
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SENECA — Sara Hastings is a single attorney in her mid-30s living in New York City. Successful and quite comfortable, she's much too busy for romance. But Aunt Martha has another plan for her niece; it involves bopping a prospective groom on the head and sneaking him into Sara's apartment.

"Getting Sara Married" opens at 8 p.m. tonight at Oconee Community Theatre, with additional shows at 8 p.m. Saturday, at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, at 8 p.m. April 28-29 and at 2:30 p.m. April 30.

Director Herschel Harper said it's the age-old story of elders in the family thinking they know best for the younger generation.

"Sara's crazy Aunt Martha is going to fix her up with somebody — she's

going to get her a husband," he said. "She gets the handyman, Noogie, to help get a man into Sara's apartment. The handyman knocks the guy out in the elevator, puts him on a hand truck and brings him into the apartment."

What Aunt Martha doesn't know is that Brandon's hand has already been promised in marriage to his fiancée, Heather. And he has a difficult time explaining to Heather how he ended up in Sara's apartment.

Harper said he thinks the audience will enjoy Noogie because he's such a funny character, but he said all of the characters are enjoyable and easy to watch.

"That's what I look for in a production — ways that will make the actor on stage easy to look at and listen to. It's important for the audience not to have to struggle or work — they bought a ticket

they shouldn't have to do anything else."

The most challenging part of putting on this production is a reoccurring problem — there are never enough volunteers to handle the technical aspects, such as lighting, sound, costumes and props. But that doesn't keep Harper from returning to direct show after show.

Off stage, Amanda Menefee, who plays Aunt Martha, is the mother of Gabrielle Tallman, who plays Sara.

"That's community theater for you," Harper said.

"That's one of the reasons he likes directing community theater.

"I like working with people who have a life outside of theater," he said. "It makes it more fun and less like work."

For more information, call (864) 882-1910 or visit oconeetheatre.org.

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Pictured, from left, are Danny Smith playing Noogie, Amber Lanteigne playing Heather, Cordie Kale playing Brandon and Gabrielle Tallman playing Sara Hastings as they rehearse for "Getting Sara Married," opening tonight at Oconee Community Theater.

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