

VACT debuts 'Mary Poppins' this week

Dane Arts Award helps characters take flight

KATE NEWTON
Unified Newspaper Group

Fly away with a beloved character from both stage and screen with the Verona Area Community Theater as they debut their summer production of "Mary Poppins."

The first performance of the show is slated for 7:30 p.m. Friday, with additional shows at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, June 18, Thursday, June 23, Friday, June 24 and Saturday, June 25; 2 p.m. Sunday, June 19. All shows will be performed at the Verona Area High School Performing Arts Center, 300 Richard St.

Based on the children's book by P.L. Travers and the 1964 Disney adaptation (of which a revival is in the works), the musical features a cast of about 80 area adults and children. According to a news release from VACT, the production "offers a fusion of the book and the film (to) give its audiences the classic story they recognize with some fun new twists."

As the well-known story goes, Mary Poppins (played by Kelsey Odorizzi) appears at the Banks residence, circa 1910, to serve as the family's nanny. Upon her arrival, Mr. and Mrs. Banks (Karl Scheidegger and Angie Campbell) and their children, Jane and Michael (Elise Benz, Morgan Moll, Owen Sehgal and Alex Kiefert), are "taken on a ride of a lifetime

If You Go

What: Verona Area Community Theater presents "Mary Poppins"

When: 7:30 p.m. Friday, June 17, Saturday, June 18, Thursday, June 23, Friday, June 24 and Saturday, June 25; 2 p.m. Sunday, June 19

Where: Verona Area High School Performing Arts Center, 300 Richard St.

Tickets: \$15 general admission, \$10 for seniors/children/high school students; available at vact.org or at the door

as Mary teaches valuable lessons about life and love," the release said.

The production is directed by Julie Murphy and narrated by Garrett Coombs, playing the role of Bert. The musical's most well-known songs – "Jolly Holiday," "Spoonful of Sugar," "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" and more – will be sung, in addition to new material.

"Although the musical is slightly different than the movie, I know audiences will leave our show smiling and happy, believing that anything can happen," Murphy said in the release.

Just as in the film and the Broadway production, Mary Poppins will be taking flight during the VACT show. Founder Dee Baldock said the company was able to apply a \$750 award it received this month from the Dane County Cultural



Photo submitted

Bert (Garrett Coombs) and Mary Poppins (Kelsey Odorizzi) are pictured with two of the actors playing Michael (Alex Kiefert and Owen Sehgal) and one of the actresses playing Jane (Morgan Moll) in Verona Area Community Theater's production of "Mary Poppins," which debuts at 7:30 p.m. Friday in the Verona Area High School Performing Arts Center. Elise Benz, also in the role of Jane, is not pictured.

Affairs Commission towards hiring Hall Associates Flying Effects, based in Illinois, to assist with the special effects for the play.

Among those working behind the scenes on "Mary Poppins" are Jane Voegele (music director); Marsha Heuer, Angela Myers and Alyssa Dvorak (choreographers); Terry Dvorak (producer); Alex Rosenbaum, (stage manager); Paula Blankenheim and Sara Pfantz

(costume designers); and Kendra Johnson (set designer).

Tickets are \$15 for general admission, and \$10 for seniors 65 years and older and children/students through high school. Tickets can be purchased in advance or at the door, depending on availability.

For information or to purchase advance tickets, visit vact.org, email tickets@vact.org or call 845-2383.

VACT to hold groundbreaking ceremony Friday

Construction on new building officially starts July 6

If You Go

What: Verona Area Community Theater's "It's Possible" groundbreaking ceremony

When: 3:30 p.m. Friday, June 17

Where: 103 Lincoln St.

Info: vact.org

After raising more than \$1 million toward a new facility, Verona Area Community Theater is inviting the public to celebrate its groundbreaking during a Friday ceremony.

"Our dream building is finally becoming a reality!" reads a Facebook invitation for the event, which will be held at the building site at 103 Lincoln St., behind the Verona Fire Department.

VACT founder Dee Baldock told the Press that Mayor Jon Hochkammer would be in attendance and that the organization invited members of the Common Council and all VACT members to attend, as well.

"It'll be the first time some people have been on the site," she said.

The ceremony will include a performance by children involved in VACT productions, singing the theme of the building's fundraising campaign titled "It's Possible" (a riff on the song, "Impossible; It's Possible" from Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Cinderella").

After minor revisions

to the 14,625-square-foot building were approved by the City of Verona Planning Commission earlier this month, the project's builder, 1848 Construction, will officially break ground on July 6, according to the VACT website. The new facility will include expanded rehearsal space, as well as a 150-seat theater, dance studio, expanded costing and set-building workshops and storage areas. Meeting and event spaces within the building will be open for public use, as well.

Construction is expected to last about nine months. The organization is still accepting donations toward the project, which can be made online at vact.org/donate-now.

For information, visit vact.org.

– Kate Newton

Verona Area School District

Badger Bus offers private contracts for those outside busing distance

Students within normal route distances can request

SCOTT GIRARD
Unified Newspaper Group

Badger Bus will begin offering rides to some Verona Area School District students within the boundaries for mandated busing next school year.

Last year, when VASD changed its busing services from First Student to

Badger Bus, some parents complained that previously offered private contracts were no longer available.

First Student had allowed the contracts for families within two miles for middle and high school and one-and-a-quarter miles for elementary schools, which are the distances the district uses to determine whose costs it will cover for busing.

But Badger Bus in the transition had not made a plan, and parents found out just before the school year that the contracts would not be available.

In a June 6 email to parents, though, the district announced it was working with the company to offer private contracts.

"All special requests need to be resubmitted for each school year," the email reads. "There may be a fee associated with some requests if they, for example, involve an alternate location from your student's primary residence or attendance area."

The email also states the bus company will contact families by Aug. 22 to inform them if their request can be fulfilled.

"If Badger Bus Lines approves the request, there is no guarantee as to the time period that transportation can be provided due to bus capacity available for your special request," the email adds.

To fill out a request, visit verona.k12.wi.us, click "District Information" and choose "Student Transportation."

Contact Scott Girard at ungreporter@wcinet.com and follow him on Twitter @ [sgirard9](https://twitter.com/sgirard9).

Work starts at area parks

The City of Verona will be tackling a few park projects in the next month, said park and urban forestry director Dave Walker.

Last week staff removed the 18-year-old playground structure at Westridge Park and are prepping the site for new equipment, which a contractor is set to install by July 1. The city's budget for that project is \$35,000.

The department will also be at Cross Country Park this week to begin removing sand and replacing it with wood

chips, Walker said.

After that is completed, the city's next project is to update the playground structure at Kay Park. The department will remove the 20-year-old equipment but keep the swing, climber and seat spinner that were added a few years ago. The new \$9,400 structure will have some similar features as the existing play set, including two slides and a shaded area.

– Samantha Christian

Ron Rieder's Retirement Open House

Come celebrate Ron's 34 yrs of service as Public Works Director for the City of Verona at

Wisconsin Brewing Company
1079 American Way, Verona

Open House
Sat., July 2nd
1:00-5:00 p.m.

See something wrong?

The Verona Press does not sweep errors under the rug. If you see something you know or even think is in error, please contact editor Jim Ferolie at 845-9559 or at verona-press@wcinet.com so we can get it right.

SUMMER CAMP PROGRAM

For Children 7 - 12 Years Old

DAILY FIELD TRIPS

Weekly Fee is only
\$195 for one child or
\$340 for two siblings



Open by 6:30 am for Student Drop-Offs
(608) 270-9977 • www.LegacyAcademy.info





Verona Area Community Theater
June 17, 18, 23, 24, 25 – 7:30 PM
June 19 – 2:00 PM

Verona Area Performing Arts Center
300 Richards Street, Verona High School
\$15.00 Adults/\$10.00 Students and Seniors

Ticket Information
WWW.VACT.ORG