

OUR NEVADA
ARTS
& ENTERTAINMENT

DINING

**BURGERS CAN'T BE BEAT AT
KNUCKLEHEADS BAR, GRILL**

RGJ food editor Johnathan Wright dives into the Amarillo on a solo trip. **PAGE 5**



EXTRA



**AFTER 20 YEARS, POPS ON
RIVER STILL GOING STRONG**

Pops raises more than \$70,000 with July concert that attracted 1,800 in Reno, plus other events. **PAGES 11-14**

TECHNOBUBBLE

PORTABLE PLAYTIME GEAR

This week, tech reviewer Jason Hidalgo ponders 'Disgaea 4,' Rapoo's wireless keyboard and mouse, and Acoustibuds' earphone adapter. **PAGES 6-7**

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RICH MAN

Jewish culture and family values
centerpiece of "Fiddler on the Roof"

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Jewish traditions, revelations in 'Fiddler on the Roof'

Katrina Raenell 10:08 a.m. PDT August 10, 2014



(Photo: Photo by Kris Swanson)

In the small Russian village Anatevka, a Yente matchmaker works her magic, a rabbi shares the wisdom of God and a trio of Jewish sisters come of age, create havoc and break traditions in their family.



Actors rehearse for the production of "Fiddler on the Roof," which runs Friday through Aug. 17 and Aug. 22-24 at Bartley Ranch. (Photo: Photo by Kris Swanson)



Joel Barber performs as Tevye during a rehearsal for the production, "Fiddler on the Roof." (Photo: Photo by Kris Swanson)

These aspects of Jewish tradition and culture are explored in Sierra School of Performing Arts 50th anniversary celebration of the Broadway musical, "Fiddler on the Roof."

The musical takes place in the village in 1905 during the beginning of a revolution as the tsar starts evicting Jews. The story centers around Jewish father Tevye and the challenges he undergoes as three of his five daughters' choices begin to unravel his religious traditions and beliefs.

The production includes more than 50 people and features Reno attorney Joel Barber as Tevye and Cindy Sabatini — who performed as a youth in the production 40 years ago — as the mother, Golde. Carla Wilson performs as Yente and Michael Peters performs as Lazar Wolf.

"Teyve is in traditions mode, and his daughters start saying, 'I don't want to marry who you asked me to marry; I want to marry outside the Jewish faith,'" said Judy Davis Rounds, president of Sierra Nevada Performing Arts. "Part of the story is Teyve having to come to this realization that he can no longer be rooted in tradition, it is going to change around him, and he will have to give a little bit."

"Fiddler on the Roof" opened on Broadway in 1964, was the longest-running Broadway musical for almost 10 years and has won nine Tony Awards, including best musical, score, book, direction and choreography. It was made into a film in 1971.

Director Janet Lazarus said the musical was the first show she ever acted in, performing as the young Shprintze, Teyve's fourth daughter, in New York community theater.

"It was only a few years after 'Fiddler' opened on Broadway, and it was such a sensation. We were probably one of the first community theater productions of it," Lazarus said. "I went on to become an actress and theater director — it started me on this whole path in my life, and it has held a special place in my heart."

She said the production was an amazing success on many levels and includes incredible music by Jerry Bock and lyrics by Sheldon Harnick, "If I Were a Rich Man," "Tradition," "Matchmaker, Matchmaker" and "Sunrise, Sunset."

She said it is a humorous, poignant and historic Jewish production.

"I am Jewish. New York is a very Jewish place, and it was a big deal there. I have always wanted to do the show, but hadn't because I wanted to develop my skills to a point where I felt I could do it justice. It took me a long time to feel like I was worthy of this wonderful gem of a show," Lazarus said. "The material is phenomenal and beautifully written. Not one word that doesn't belong in the script. It is tight, efficient and the characters are wonderful. The music and characters are iconic."

Performance training school for children

When the acting and singing bug bit Lazarus' son more than a decade ago, she got him started in local children's theater. She said there weren't many options in Reno during that time, and she grew frustrated with the companies' lack of furthering the talents of young actors.

She said other parents felt the same and came to her because of her background as an actress and director, and said, "What if we all put together a company that offered theater and training? Could you teach the acting classes?"

Sierra School of Performing Arts was created as a training school for young actors in 2005.

"We started featuring mostly kids, but cast adults where needed. That was our mission: to feature children, be a training ground and to have adult actors," she said. "We were selective. We cast talented children or those we thought had a lot of potential. We didn't just take anyone, and that was a little controversial at the time because other companies would cast all children that were interested. We wanted to give children training next to seasoned adult professionals."

SSPA offers performing opportunities to children of all ages, and teaches them musical theater skills including singing, choreography and acting, Lazarus said. The school also offers musical theater and spring break camps, a nonmusical production, and workshops, such as auditioning and performing Shakespeare.

"When we first started, we concentrated on kids in the production, and today we still are, but this production features more teenagers and adults," Lazarus said. "This is the story of humanity: breaking rules, finding a way to be flexible, but holding onto what is important, constantly rethinking what's important and our relationship to God. Whether you're religious or not, you have to think about these things."

Lazarus said she is proud of the work SSPA presents, and the school often learns from its audience evaluation forms that people think their productions will be similar to a high school theater but discover it's different and a higher caliber.

"This is one of the greatest shows in Broadway history. It's historic and iconic," Lazarus said. "If you haven't seen it and you're a theater-goer, you have a hole in your arsenal. One of the reasons you should see it — it mixes humor and emotion like no other show I've seen."

50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION: 'FIDDLER ON THE ROOF'

WHEN: 7:30 p.m. Friday through Aug. 17; Aug. 22-24.

WHERE: Robert Z. Hawkins Amphitheater, 6000 Bartley Ranch Road

COST: \$20 in advance; \$25 at door; \$15 students and seniors.

SATURDAY VIP NOSH NIGHTS

Nosh nights include reserved seating, traditional Jewish appetizers, including potato latke, gefilte fish and knish from Atlantis Casino Resort Spa, wine and beverages from Fine Wine Catering and a meet-and-greet after the performance. Limited to the first 50 people.

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. Saturday and Aug. 23.

WHERE: Outside the Hawkins Amphitheater, 6000 Bartley Ranch Road

COST: \$50

DETAILS: 775-852-7740; www.sierraschoolof

performingarts.org

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