

Pirates and captives make friends and laughter

By **TIM KELLER**
The Chronicle-News

Raton Youth Theater boarded the Shuler Theater stage last weekend for three energetic performances of the comedy-adventure "Captain Bree: Scourge of the Sea," by Martin A. Follose.

When a fast-approaching pirate ship is spotted off his starboard side, most of Captain Jennings' crew abandons ship in fear, leaving him with an Irish crewman who can't swim and a family of aristocratic passengers unaccustomed to inconvenience.

Spenser Willden's Jennings is powerless to prevent Nathaly Torres' Captain Bree and her band of lady pirates from flinging themselves aboard his ship; Joaquin Ramirez's Irish brogue as Fergus is no match for the "Aargh!" of the pirates - although the ladies consistently pronounced the pirate exclamation as "R!"

With all the pirates being gals, and most of those aboard Jennings' ship guys, it won't be surprising if they all make nice before the curtain falls on the hour long one-act play, but not before scurvy pirates make men walk the plank, throw women overboard, and engage in raucous sword-fights with their rebellious captives.

As Madame Prescott, matriarch of the captive family, diminutive 8-year-old third grader Zoe Gomez nearly stole the show. Already a veteran of RYT stage productions, she's rapidly developing into a real actor, though she doesn't appear to have reached 3 feet in height. Casting her as the matriarch of a family of precocious teens twice her height was an illogical bit of casting by director Gail Dixon-Willden that worked beautifully and added to the show's comedy. Although three actors had more lines, Gomez was the star.

Kristina Jansen and Zachariah Salazar played Madame Prescott's niece and nephew, Julia and Samuel Prescott. Julia is attracted



Photos by Tim Keller

Captain Bree, the pirate queen, and Madame Prescott, the captive, are having a spat. Tiny 8-year-old Zoe Gomez is Prescott, Nathaly Torres Bree.

to the romance and intrigue of a pirate's life; she interns herself to the pirates. Samuel is at risk if the pirates know he's a boy, so he disguises himself as a woman, which doesn't prevent him from being thrown overboard.

Clair Willden's pirate Shawna rescues him, though, and discovers the truth. She was boy crazy

already: now she finds an object for her affections. Her scenes of puppy love with a boy in a dress provided the audience with sweet laughter.

Of course, by the time the British Navy arrives, led by Stone Phillips' Admiral Moore, the captives are all getting along so well with their pirate captors that no one really



Sea captains are not known for laughter, but Spenser Willden can't resist a snicker when confronted with Zoe Gomez's Madame Prescott.

wants to be rescued. They unite to confound the British, and now the disguises go the other direction: Samuel again dresses as himself, but all the pirate gals don dresses to become just regular girls.

Captains Jennings and Bree cast the British off on their own ship, which Fergus has handily sabotaged with a handsaw, so they won't be catching up anytime soon. Everyone's happy - except the British and, oh yeah, Madam Prescott.

She's a scold with plans for her nephew and niece that neither is comfortable with, but when the newly united crew of lovebirds solves this final conflict by throwing Madam Prescott overboard, the script seemed to have gone awry. Maybe it was just that Gomez was so winning in the role: the audience would have granted a comeuppance for her, but not a watery death at the hands

of her own family.

The fast-moving romp traded enjoyably in gender humor: Madame Prescott exclaims, "I have a nephew in a dress and a niece wearing pants: what is this world coming to!" When Samuel insists to his cousin Julia, "I wear the pants in this family," Julia looks at Samuel's drag disguise and says, "Really?"

To pirate Shawna, Julia remarks, "Men are like rats: you see them, then they're gone." Boy crazy Shawna replies, "Yeah, but we're the cats."

The costumes, by Ursula Garcia and Misty Gomez, were fun and convincing. The costumers even found pirate-themed bandannas for Captain Bree's gals to wear as headscarves. The comic effect of tiny Gomez playing the elderly matriarch Madame Prescott was accentuated by her costume and make-up, with graying hair, a frilly yellow dress, and clacking heels under



Clair Willden's pirate Shawna is tickled by the attentions of Zachariah Salazar's captive Samuel Prescott, despite his wearing a dress.

her white shoes.

Raton Youth Theater had 28 young actors on stage last weekend. Between them and the growing number of actors and technicians in Raton High School's Mask and Wig Club, the future of theatre in Raton looks increasingly exciting.

Special programs set at Capulin Volcano

Special to The Chronicle-News

In celebration of spring, Capulin Volcano National Monument will offer several programs throughout the month of March. Park rangers would like to invite the park's friends and neighbors to visit the park for special programs not generally offered this time of year.

On March 12, 19, and 26, join a park ranger at 1 p.m. for "In Pursuit of the American Dream," a special ranger-led tour of Capulin Volcano National Monument. Visitors can enjoy panoramic views of the surrounding area as they hike the one-mile trail

around the rim of the Capulin Volcano's crater. Participants will learn about the struggles and triumphs of those who came before as each pursued his or her dream. Space is limited as each tour can only accommodate 10 people so be sure to call ahead to make a reservation - (575) 278-2201.

Additionally on Saturdays and Sundays throughout the month at 11 a.m., join a ranger for "Riding the Range." Participants will learn about cowboys, outlaws, and the cattle industry in northeastern New Mexico. Have some hands-on fun as a park ranger teaches par-

ticipants how to throw a lasso. All programs are weather dependent and all participants are asked to wear appropriate footwear and clothing.

Capulin Volcano National Monument, a unit of the National Park System, preserves "...a striking example of a recent extinct volcano." The park is located on Highway 325, three miles north of the town of Capulin, NM, 30 miles east of Raton, and 56 miles west of Clayton. For more about Capulin Volcano and the National Park Service, check out the website www.nps.gov/cavo or find it on Facebook.

Summer Camp: BIG FUN, little cost

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- Transportation to some camps available
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For details, see girlscoutsofcolorado.org or call 1-877-404-5708.

Engagement Announcement
UPCOMING WEDDING OF
Brant Dallas Schreiner & Misty Rae Chavez
Scheduled for April 23, 2011

Misty is a 2004 graduate of Pueblo West High School and attended Toni and Guy Cosmetology Hairdressing Academy in Colorado Springs. She currently is an independent contractor at In Style Salon and Spa in Pueblo.

Brant graduated from Trinidad High school in 2002. He graduated from CSU-Pueblo with a degree in Civil Engineering Technology and works for the Colorado Department of Transportation in Denver, CO-Traffic Division.

The wedding will be held at the Royal Gorge, Cañon City, CO.
The reception will be held at the Union Depot Station, Pueblo, CO.

Best man Kasey Latuda
Maid of honor Crystal Chavez

They will have 9 bridesmaids and groomsmen

Parent(s) of Misty Chavez are John and Debbie Chavez of Pueblo West
Parent(s) of Brant Schreiner are Dennis and Karen Malone, Trinidad
Brant's Garndparents are Tom and Sheryl Augustine, formerly of Trinidad, CO

RATON POLICE BLOTTER

<p>Arrests: 03-09-11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Max Ortega: aggravated stalking, battery against a household member and order of protection ■ Muhammad Ali Nayeli: Bench Warrant for failure to pay fines <p>03-10-11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Carl Ortiz: driving while license suspended-revoked <p>Citations: 03-09-11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Marlene M. Gutierrez: disorderly conduct ■ Gregory Wilfgang: expired registration tags and 	<p>no proof of insurance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ruben Garcia: speeding <p>03-10-11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Carl Ortiz: driving while license suspended-revoked <p>Incidents: 03-0-9-11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Jessica S. Gonzales: victim of disorderly conduct ■ Leon R. Martinez: victim of larceny <p>03-10-11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Natalie Horner: victim of aggravated battery
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