

Broadway Stars in Timber Lake's 'A CHORUS LINE'

Written by Tina Stretton
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Mount Carroll, IL-- Timber Lake Playhouse (TLP) opens its 52nd Season in rural Mount Carroll with the record-breaking classic musical, A Chorus Line on Thursday, June 6. Executive Director James Beaudry has brought in three Broadway performers from New York for this production and several of the best singer-actor-dancers from the past several summers to stage and star in the show for the first time ever at TLP.

Will Taylor, who played Bobby in the recent Broadway revival of A Chorus Line directs and recreates Michael Bennett's brilliant staging for the musical that tells the stories of performers with big dreams as they fight for a spot 'on the line.' The musical was an instant sold-out hit in 1975 becoming the longest running Broadway musical in history. Liza Minnelli famously couldn't get a ticket, so she sat in an aisle.

A Chorus Line still sells out almost 40 years later, because it celebrates the unlimited possibilities in all of us--teaching that even the lowliest members of any group have the right to stand up for their integrity and dreams. Marvin Hamlisch's score includes "What I Did For Love," "I Can Do That" and the classic "One (Singular Sensation)."

Pilar Millhollen, seen as Bebe in the first national tour of A Chorus Line and on Broadway in Chicago, stars as Cassie. In the role of Connie Wong, Geena Quintos comes directly to TLP from the most recent national tour. Quintos, who performed on Broadway in Miss Saigon, also serves as Assistant Director.

TLP favorites Tyler Sawyer Smith (Chicago, Sweet Charity, Sunset Boulevard), Erica Stephan

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(Footloose, Working, Guys & Dolls), Henry McGinniss (Footloose, Sweet Charity, Children of Eden), Tim Wessel (Guys & Dolls, You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown), Joe Capstick (Guys & Dolls, Cabaret), Adam Fane (Grease, The Wedding Singer) and Hanah Nardone (Guys & Dolls, Footloose) all return to Mount Carroll to fill out the cast. New York based actor Kaolin Bass leads the cast as Zach.

"TLP has never attempted to produce A Chorus Line because the level of talent and stamina required for this show is unmatched in any other musical," Beaudry said. "To do the show right, these performers must be athletes. As one dancer quipped, "It's like playing Monday Night Football 8 times a week."

"But after his successes with TLP's Oklahoma! and Guys & Dolls, I knew Will Taylor had the expertise to do the show right. It's always an honor to bring Will to TLP, and working with Pilar, Kaolin and Geena has also been a joy and a privilege. Watching rehearsals makes my jaw drop, because these people are so good."

Rounding out the company are 14 other performers new to TLP who were selected from over 1000 auditions all over the country. Abby Frank-Taylor, of Madison, plays Lois and has the distinction of being the first third-generation TLP company member. She is the granddaughter of Sheldon Frank, who served as Board President for two decades and was a founding board member in 1961. Abby's mother Leslie also spent several seasons with the company.

A Chorus Line runs June 6-16 for 12 performances only. TLP is located at 8215 Black Oak Rd. in rural Mount Carroll, IL. Tickets are \$15-23 and are available at the box office, by calling 815-244-2035 or visiting www.timberlakeplayhouse.org. This Pulitzer Prize winning musical is not recommended for children, as it is based on actual interviews with real people and contains some adult language, humor and content. Later this summer, TLP will present Seussical and The Music Man which are perfect for all ages.