

'RUMORS' HAS IT! Barn presents a Neil Simon tour de farce

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"Rumors" is a farce by Neil Simon from 1988. At that time, he told the New York Times that he was going through tough times personally and needed to get into a comedy. He decided to write what he called "an elegant farce," with characters in fancy dress, attending the 10th anniversary party of the deputy mayor of New York and his wife.

"Rumors" will be presented by the Barn Theatre in Stuart March 11-28 and the timing couldn't be better. The world is going through tough times and a good farce may be just what the doctor ordered. Jeanette Mazzella, vice president for marketing for the Barn and a longtime member of the play selection committee, noted that the Barn has staged many Neil Simon plays in its 50 years – for good reason.

"Mr. Simon was a brilliant playwright and knew how to make an audience laugh and stay engaged in the plot. The shows also have an element of romance and perhaps some drama, but the focus is always on keeping the audience laughing. 'Rumors' is a side-splitting comedy with a whole lot of farce and some zany New York characters. Our theater is proud to present another Neil Simon gem, and it comes at a time when we all need a bit of 'funny' in our lives," she said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BARN THEATRE

The very busy Bryan Childe will be directing the production, moving from "A Chorus Line" to "Rumors" to "The Little Shop of Horrors" with no time to take a breath. He did take a moment to talk about "Rumors."

"There are four couples going to the 10th anniversary party of the deputy mayor, Charlie Brock, and his wife, Myra," he said. "The staff is gone, the wife is missing and Charlie Brock has shot himself. The guests show up and there's no wife and the husband is locked in the bedroom, shot."

Chaos ensues. One guest calls the police and another begins cooking so that when the police arrive, she can pretend she is the maid. They keep telling guests that Charlie is on his way and Myra has gone to the store. When the police arrive, they blare music as if they're having a big dance party. The cops believe it until the end, when all is revealed.

"For most of the play, the guests are trying to figure out what happened and how to cover it up," Childe said. "Each has something they'd rather not share with the world. There are lots of skeletons. This is a good play for this time as it's all comedy and we need comedy. It's two hours of non-stop comedy."

With COVID-19 protocols in place, including seating at 50 percent of capacity, the Barn has been busy presenting its 50th season shows. After "Rumors," they have an upcoming fundraiser, just in time for Valentine's Day, called "Get Ready," which is a tribute to the Temptations and the Four Tops. "Little Shop of Horrors" will be presented May 13-30. Check the website for all the details. There is entertainment on the Treasure Coast.

The Barn Theatre, 2400 SE Ocean Blvd., Stuart, presents Neil Simon's "Rumors" March 11-28. Call the box office, which has limited hours, at 772-287-4884 or visit www.barn-theatre.com. ■



'Hope' in their steps

Jacki Nardone speaks about the importance of the hospice mission before the annual Lakeside Stroll – A Walk for Hope and Healing in Tradition last Saturday. Members of the community participated in the walk by Treasure Coast Hospice in remembrance of loved ones. Dancers from True Crew Dance Company, left, lead the stroll. Below left, the memorial wall on which participants placed photos of loved ones. ■



PHOTOS: LINDA KLOORFAIN