

'Good People' captivates

Reputable Wimberley Players acting troupe delivers riveting performance

LORI STEINDORF
FEATURES EDITOR

Before reviewing this play, I had only heard about the sophistication, incomparable style and professionalism of the Wimberley Players and their sheer bliss-inducing performances.

I owed it to myself to check out their show, and I was pleasantly overwhelmed while viewing their riveting matinee of "Good People" on April 17. The all-star cast's talent is captivating, and they collectively delivered a high-caliber, emotionally charged performance.

Sitting in my comfortable theater chair, I was startled, enthralled and swiftly moved to the edge of my seat as I absorbed the sometimes humorous, sometimes unsettling dialogue and heartfelt facial expressions and organic movements of cast members.

Definitely solid, credible acting from the acting troupe and seamless execution of the script. Noteworthy is also the steady transition of the four scenes and their settings, the set design and musical accompaniment. The soft piano music in the background heightens the ambience of the production.

Under the direction of Laura Haygood, the high-voltage drama, "Good People," is produced by Katherine Beamer, Terri Burney-Bissett and Suzanne White with Adam Witko as executive producer.

I was taken through the stinging, biting emotions of the actors as they revealed deep, dark secrets they thought they had buried in young adulthood, only



PHOTOS BY THE WIMBERLEY PLAYERS

Left to right, Nate Nelson at Stevie, Whitney Marlett as Jean, Nina Bryant as Margie and Carla Daws as Dottie in "Good People."

to learn they had followed them to middle age.

The setting of "Good People," penned by David Lindsay-Abaire, takes place in the gritty, blue-collar, uncouth area of South Boston's Lower End and the upper crust Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts.

Expertly embodying the foul-mouthed, wise-cracking characters, the actors were convincing with their obnoxious, ear-grating accents and mastery of the lines they smoothly recited.

As the plot unraveled, the characters brought to fruition the seemingly never-ending struggle of being trapped in a position in life that is insurmountable, leaving them accepting their bleak circumstances. Still the characters, chiefly Margie, retained a certain optimism that events would one day turn in their favor.



Mike and Kate react to Margie's memories in the neighborhood. Left to right, David Young as Mike and Edwina Soto as Kate.

The production's heroine, or protagonist, is headstrong Margie – short for Margaret, portrayed by Nina Bryant. The first scene of Act I occurs in South Boston in the alley behind the Dollar Store. The store is a major employer in the

poverty-stricken town where employment opportunities are scarce.

Despite tumultuous times that have clung to her throughout her life, Margie serves as the production's central cheerleader in outwardly maintaining a posi-

tive outlook. Wearing her heart on her sleeve throughout the performance, she is initially canned from her position with the Dollar Store and begins to question her future and her past decisions. It's easy to feel Margie's plight through Bryant's acting prowess.

The second scene takes place in Margie's kitchen. A single mother of a special-needs daughter named Joyce, Margie rents an apartment from cantankerous Dottie portrayed by Carla Daws who is forthright with her love of cuss words, perhaps for emphasis in driving her point across.

Dottie, who makes tacky rabbits to eke out an existence, is desperate for Margie's rent money. Chiming into the conversation around the kitchen table is Jean who routinely argues with Dottie yet shares her love of colorful, crass language. As they bicker and exchange razor-sharp banter over coffee, they begin to brainstorm on how Margie can come up with her rent money.

Scene three occurs in Mike's office. From the onset of the play, there is an undeniable chemistry between Mike and Margie. Portraying Mike is David Young who has the role of an accomplished doctor with a fancy title despite his rough upbringing in South Boston's Lower End.

Mike dryly delivers sarcastic comments that are both hurtful and funny. It's evident he wants to escape his past since he has moved up in the world to live in the upscale Chestnut Hill area where he resides with his wife, Kate, who is refined and hospitable yet ulti-

mately suspicious of Margie in scene one of Act II after the intermission. Kate is portrayed by Edwina Soto, and her talent, along with that of the other world-class actors, is positively phenomenal.

If you're wondering why Margie has ventured to Mike's office, she is seeking employment. One begins to sense there is more to this story than meets the eye. Margie, still lingering over her love-hate relationship with Mike, has kept secrets for so long that her emotions erupt at Mike's house as their interaction is explosive and palpable to the audience.

The play concludes in the Act II's scene two that takes place in the church's basement where Margie, Dottie and Jean typically commune for bingo. They are joined by Stevie from the Dollar Store, portrayed by Nate Nelson, who unassumingly saves the day, and gives Margie enough stardust to go on until life throws her another curve ball.

The energetic, versatile and exemplary "Good People" cast is resoundingly worthy of the praise thrown their way, and at the end of the show, they humbly clasped hands to bow before an enthusiastic audience left disheveled and reeling from their dynamic performance.

"Good People" runs through May 8 on Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2:30 p.m. Reserved seating is \$19 and \$12 for students with IDs.

Tickets are available online at www.wimberleyplayers.org or by calling 512-847-0575. The Wimberley Playhouse is located on 450 Old Kyle Road in Wimberley.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Overdrive eBook Help
WHEN: April 21, 10:30 a.m.
WHERE: San Marcos Public Library
WHO: Get help accessing the library's eBook collection on your mobile device.
INFO: Call 512-393-8200

Teen Advisory Board
WHEN: April 21, 6 p.m.
WHERE: San Marcos Public Library
WHO: Library leadership group for ages 12-17
INFO: Call 512-393-8200

Fly your Texas Flag on San Jacinto Day
WHEN: Thursday, April 21
WHERE: At your home and business to celebrate 'General Edward Burleson Day in San Marcos' and to Honor the Texian Victory in 1836.
WHO: General Edward Burleson Day sponsored by the Heritage Association of San Marcos and San Jacinto Honor Day sponsored by the Moon-McGehee Chapter, The Daughters of The Republic of Texas.
INFO: 512-667-7778

The Future Aerospace-Engineers & Mathematicians Academy
WHEN: April 21, 6 to 7:30 p.m.
WHERE: Miller Middle School on April 21.

WHO: FAMA is hosting a free night of fun, pizza and family activities focusing on science, technology, engineering and math. INFO: www.txstate.edu/FAMA/summercamps.html or centro@sanmarcoscentro.org.

Ballet Folklorico
WHEN: Every Thursday through May 12, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
WHERE: Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos, 211 Lee St.
WHO: "Folklorico" class teaches free traditional folk dances from regions in Mexico. Boys and girls are welcome to attend.
INFO: For more information, call 512-878-0640 or email Centro@SanMarcosCentro.org

Heart of Texas Chorus Rehearsals
WHEN: Thursdays, from 7 to 9:30 p.m.
WHERE: San Marcos High School Choir Room
WHO: Rehearsals for men who love to sing.
Mixed-Media Techniques in Drawing
WHEN: Fridays, April 22, 29 and May 6 and 13, from 1 to 3 p.m.
WHERE: Dunbar Activity Center
WHO: Class members will learn to use various mixed-media processes to create frameable

designs. Metalsmith and illustrator Roxana Tuff leads the course. She has taught in the art studio at Texas State University for 14 years. Cost is \$40. To register, call the San Marcos Activity Center at 512-393-8280 or visit <https://apm.activecommunities.com/sanmarcostx>.

Introduction to Bridge
WHEN: Fridays, April 22, 29 and May 6, 9 to 11 a.m.
WHERE: San Marcos Activity Center
WHO: Presented by Cathy Supple and Barbara Morgan. Cost is \$40. To register or for more information, call the San Marcos Activity Center at 512-393-8280 or visit <https://apm.activecommunities.com/sanmarcostx>.

Memories of the Square Premiere
WHEN: Friday, April 22, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
WHERE: Price Center, 222 W. San Antonio St.
WHO: San Marcos Heritage Association premieres its newest oral history video "Memories of the Square." Take a virtual journey through time with 13 long time residents as they recall businesses that have come and gone on the square over time. This free movie night is

complete with popcorn, movie candy and cokes. DVDs will be available for \$20.

St. Stephen's Episcopal School's Fifth Annual Community Earth Day
WHEN: Friday, April 22, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
WHERE: St. Stephen's Episcopal School, 6000 FM 3237
WHO: Guests are invited to stay for an Earth Day live program performed by the first and second graders and to bring a picnic lunch. There will be crafts and nature activities plus time to play on the playground and explore the nature trail.
INFO: www.ststeveschool.org or call 512-847-9857

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 923 Fundraiser Garage Sale
WHEN: Saturday, April 30, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
WHERE: VFW Post 3413, 1701 Hunter Road, San Marcos
WHO: Antiques, bedding, bikes, books, CDs, housewares, kitchen, bathroom, living room stuff, furniture, small appliances, picture frames, clothing, seasonal items and sporting goods
INFO: Email Veterans-Vietnam@yahoo.com with questions.

County celebrating legacy of General Edward Burleson

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San Marcos homeowners and businesses are flying their Texas flags today to honor General Edward Burleson and the pivotal role he played in the Texian Victory in 1836.

General Burleson is the father of Major Edward Burleson whose historic home is located on Lime Kiln Road.

One local history buff said General Burleson has not received as much fanfare or recognition as other storied Texas heroes yet he is equally deserving for his legacy and progressive thinking.

"General Burleson is truly one of the unsung heroes of the Texas Revolution. His exploits aren't regaled as are Austin's, Houston's and many others. But his contribution had as much impact as any others. After fighting in the war of 1812, he comes and ends up helping to win another war. How many of us now days have that sort of fortitude, courage and passion?" said Linda Coker of the Hays County Historical Commission, Heritage Association of San Marcos Board and Main Street San Marcos Board.

As a visionary, General Burleson is also significant for his contributions to the development of San Marcos and Hays County.

"I dare say Anglo settlers would have found their way to the banks of the beautiful San Marcos River to build a

life. But Burleson didn't just settle. He, along with Merriam and Lindsey, made San Marcos. They laid it out, sold land and convinced many friends to follow them here. And he gave the land that holds our beautiful historic courthouse. And he alone is responsible for the creation of Hays County," Coker said.

The historian said she wants to raise awareness about General Burleson's important achievements and cement his positive influence responsible for the framework and cultivation of the area we treasure.

"It breaks my heart that above Spring Lake are three markers that honor him and yet most of the public will not even know they are there, let alone be able to see them. I do not understand why the university is above state statutes that require public access to historical markers. I believe that they did not just buy land, they bought the history and the tradition that goes with the land. And to deny it and its impact to our community is, and this is just my opinion, hypocritical. How can you have a department that people pay to study history while ignoring and denying access to history that you own?" she said.

General Edward Burleson Day is sponsored by the Heritage Association of San Marcos and San Jacinto Honor Day sponsored by the Moon-McGehee Chapter, The Daughters of The Republic of Texas.