

Theatre Lawrence director says nostalgic ‘White Christmas’ has ‘a moment for everybody’

By SYLAS MAY
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Even if your family watches the Bing Crosby classic “White Christmas” every year, the stage version, opening today at Theatre Lawrence, might still have something new for you to unwrap.

One of its gifts to director Joshua Shockey was a classic song he’d never heard before – one from the late ‘40s or early ‘50s called “Falling Out of Love Can Be Fun.”

“It’s almost like an Andrews Sisters-type three-part harmony, you know, ‘Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy’-type thing,” Shockey said. “And I really wasn’t aware of that song until this show. And it has become my and some of the cast’s favorite of the entire show.”

That’s only natural when a musical is built around the work of Irving Berlin, who wrote more than 1,000 songs over his half-century career.

See THEATRE, A7

TOP: Ellen Welander, left, and Abby Ilardi rehearse “White Christmas” at Theatre Lawrence. ABOVE: Conner Booton, left, and Jeremy Willmoth rehearse. BELOW: Cast members rehearse an ensemble scene.

Eudora takes steps toward new industrial park near highway

County working on multisite 500-acre plan

TOWN TALK

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A hunt is on to find 500 acres of Douglas County land suitable for industrial development, and Eudora might end up producing the first trophy.

Douglas County economic development leaders on Thursday said they were excited about the possibility of a new 100-acre industrial park forming on the eastern edge of Eudora. The project is not a done deal, but it won a key rezoning vote from the Eudora Planning Commission on Wednesday evening.

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County takes no action on ‘rainy day’ fund balance

By JOSIE HEIMSOTH
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After hearing some citizen concerns and some commissioner questions, Douglas County does not yet have a new policy spelling out how much money should be kept in rainy-day reserve accounts.

Instead, a split Douglas County Commission on Wednesday decided to wait to tackle the issue again, perhaps with new information. But when that may happen was left unclear. Two of five commissioners sought for a review in February when the county is tackling other year-end financial matters, but the idea failed to gain a needed third vote.

See COUNTY, A7

Residents asks whether city is doing enough on housing

By SYLAS MAY
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It was called a debate, but there were no panelists or winners or losers – just a big circle of residents at the school district offices, taking turns with the mic and answering this question:

Is Lawrence doing enough to be a place where there is housing for all?

For Trina Tinsley, the answer was personal: “For my family, they have been.”

Tinsley was the first speaker to give her view at Thursday’s event, which was associated with the city-county “A Place for Everyone” housing and homelessness plan in partnership with the Kansas Leadership Center. Tinsley said she was a homeowner in 2013, married and pregnant with her son.

But her housing situation became unstable after she had to flee from domestic violence, and a few years after her son was born, things got even worse: she got a felony on her record.

“In 2018, I was presented with a decision to keep my son and I safe,” she said. That decision involved them fleeing to Mexico for a time, and that eventually led to her conviction for interference with custody.

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