



Okotoks family a wiz at finding together time

Theatre: The Wizard of Oz opens Nov. 17

By Bruce Campbell

Staff Reporter

An Okotoks mother knows exactly where her little munchkins are spending their time these days.

They are at the Highwood Memorial Centre in High River rehearsing for Windmill Theatre Players' production of *The Wizard of Oz*. Trisha Newman, is right there with her daughters Emily, 9, and Adryann, 12.

Newman, a Kindergarten teacher at Dr. Morris Gibson School in Okotoks, is returning to the stage after a nine-year hiatus.

"My dad (Kevin Newman) read about it in the newspaper (The Western Wheel) and because this play has kids in it, he thought we should try out for it," said Adryann. "My mom used to be in plays when I was really little and she's doing it too.... It's really fun."

It's the first time all three Newmans have been on stage together.

"Kevin said 'It's with children, so you have to take the girls,'" Trisha said. "It's been really a long time since I was in a production and I really missed it."

"When I saw I could do it with my daughters I was



BRUCE CAMPBELL/OWW

Trisha Newman and her two daughters are performing in Windmill Theatre Players' production of *The Wizard of Oz*. From left, are, Emily, 9, mom Trisha, and Adryann, 12. The curtain goes up for the play Nov. 17 in High River.

excited and thought I would give it a go."

The daughters found out, unlike the famous play, in

theatre the roads aren't paved with gold, there's plenty of hard work.

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BRUCE CAMPBELL/OWW

The Tinman, Dorothy, Scarecrow and the Cowardly Lion go in search of the Wicked Witch of the West during a dress rehearsal of Windmill Theatre Players' *The Wizard of Oz* Nov. 13. They are from left, Jeff Rempel, Camille Blott, Dorian Goodwin and Doug Elliott.

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"We had to sing 'Follow the Yellow Brick Road' (in the audition) and we made it," Emily said.

They have had rehearsals sometimes three times a week, and virtually every Sunday since those auditions in August in preparation for the opening this week.

Trisha, who used to produce plays as a teacher at Senator Riley School in High River years ago, keeps an eye on her daughters but leaves the directing for *Oz* to director Carol Knox, a teacher at Big Rock School.

"It's been fun for me but it's busy having my daughters back there," Trisha said.

They do get some direction at home, however.

"Sometimes mom will tell us that we have to sing loud-

er when we are munchkins or that we have to always stay in character when we are on stage," Emily explained.

As a former drama teacher, Trisha knows the benefits of having her children involved in theatre.

"It helps them build confidence, it makes them more aware of themselves and they are learning to work with others," Trisha said. "It's exciting for me to see them learn about the craft of theatre and what's involved."

As for Kevin, an avid football fan, he's pulled off the coupe of the century. Having your wife and daughters gone every Sunday so you can lounge on the sofa and watch 12 football games at the same time is pure genius — worthy of the prestigious Golden Remote Control Award if such a thing existed.

Not quite.

"He's been bringing food

for the potluck (at the rehearsals) — he's been doing a lot of cooking and cleaning," Trisha said.

Other Okotoks residents in the production include Breighanne Brandford, Evan Nisi and Heather Avis who are also extras in the play.

There will be four dinner plays of the *Wizard of Oz*, Nov. 18, 19, 24 and 25. The buffet starts at 6 p.m. with the curtain rising at 7:30 p.m.

There is an evening performance Nov. 17 and Nov. 26 at 7:30 p.m. All performances are at the Highwood Memorial Centre in High River.

For ticket information call Celia Penman at 403-652-7913 or email at wtp@shaw.ca For further information go to www.windmilltheatreplayers.com

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*Our High River office
has moved to Okotoks.*

333-201 South Ridge Drive
(adjacent to Mark's Work Warehouse)
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A journey to Oz



Robert Massey, High River Times
The Wizard (Steve Penman) talks to Scarecrow (Dorian Goodwin) while Dorothy (Camille Bolt), The Cowardly Lion (Doug Elliott) and The Tinman (Jeff Rempel) look on during the Windmill Theatre Players' opening performance of the classic *The Wizard of Oz* on Thursday night. See photos on page 11.



The
WIZARD
of
OZ

*We've been to see the Wizard, the
wonderful Wizard Of Oz*

*We found he was a wiz of a wiz if
ever a wiz there was... ..*

and

**We thank you very
sweetly..... for all your**

hard work,

patience

and

support

TO OZ !

Carol
Celia



Windmill Theatre Players
Fall 2011



The face of the Wizard of Oz (voiced and played by Steve Penman) sprays smoke, just before being discovered for the fake he is.



Scarecrow (Dorian Goodwin), Dorothy (Camille Blott), Tinman (Jeff Rempel) and Lion (Doug Elliott) head off down the Yellowbrick Road.



Dorothy (Camille Blott) sprays the Wicked Witch (Charlotte Bouck) with water while she tries to set Scarecrow (Dorian Goodwin) on fire.



Photos by Robert Massey High River Times

The Windmill Theatre Players started their production of the *Wizard of Oz* on Nov. 17. There are over 50 members of the cast who are involved in the production that runs until this Sunday at the High River Memorial Centre. Here the Tinman (Jeff Rempel), Dorothy (Camille Blott), Scarecrow (Dorian Goodwin) and Lion (Doug Elliott) are attacked by the jitterbugs: creatures who make them dance until they drop.

The Wizard of Oz



Herb Norman Haekel as the Emerald City Guard.



Members of the Lollipop Guild hand Dorothy (Camille Blott) a lollipop.

Regional ~ Nov. 30, 2011



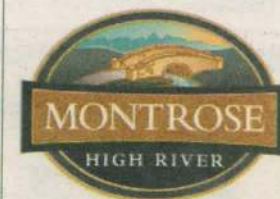
The Cowardly Lion (Doug Elliott) tries to find his courage during the Windmill Theatre Players' opening performance of *The Wizard of Oz* on Nov. 18 in High River.

PHOTO BY ROBERT MASSEY, HIGH RIVER TIMES

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Regional

Wednesday, November 30, 2011



lifeinhighriver.com

The Regional is a section of the Claresholm Local Press, High River Times, The Macleod Gazette, Nanton News, Okotoks Western Wheel & Vulcan Advocate

Off to see the wizard

PHOTO BY ROBERT MASSEY,
HIGH RIVER TIMES

Dorothy (Camille Bolt) speaks to the Wizard of Oz (played by Steve Penman) in the opening performance of the Windmill Theatre Players' classic *The Wizard of Oz* on Nov. 17.



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