

2012

THURSDAY June 21, 2012

www.hjnews.com

# The Herald Journal

Vol. 102 No. 173

Bridgeland's daily news

Logan, Utah \$0.50

## Valley arts

# Over the rainbow



Jeff Hunter/The Herald Journal

Hallie Hansen, who plays Dorothy, takes a bow at the end of Wednesday's dress rehearsal for "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" by the Nibley Children's Theatre.

## Nibley Children's Theatre presenting 'Wizard of Oz' as part of Heritage Days

By Jeff Hunter  
staff writer

NIBLEY — With the dress rehearsal for the "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" already under way nearby, stage manager Christy Johnson was still hard at work completing the costume for the Tin Woodsman.

"I apologize ahead of time for stabbing you," Johnson said to Samuel Sweeten as she carefully — but quickly — added even more bits of shiny apparel to his uncomfortable-looking getup.

Based on the book by L. Frank Baum rather than the

MGM film, rehearsals for "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" by the Nibley Children's Theatre started just two weeks ago.

"In just seven hours of practice, the kids learn a song, they learn a dance, they learn lines and movement on the stage and then perform it in front of a couple hundred people," Johnson explained. "It's really amazing. We have so many volunteers and parents that are willing to pitch in and help, and I think that's because there's so many people in the community who are proud of the play."

The Nibley Children's The-

atre will present "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" at 7 and 8:30 p.m. today and Friday at the Jessie Datwyler Amphitheater at the Old City Park, 325 W. 3200 South in Nibley. Admission is free.

"This is our 30th production," Johnson noted. "It's the oldest city-run children's play in Utah, and we're quite proud of that."

The Nibley Children's Theatre was started in 1983 by Jessie Datwyler, who went on to form the Smithfield Children's Theatre after she moved toward

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# Oz

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the north end of Cache Valley. The first show included about 20 kids, while this year's show has 157 participants.

Brie Corrington is the director of this year's production, as well as the mother of four of the actors.

"It means we have a very dirty house," Corrington admitted with a laugh. "But it's also what I grew up with since my mother was a director and a choreographer."

This marks the second time Corrington has served as writer and director for a Nibley Children's Theatre show and the sixth time overall that she has helped direct a production. Her brother, Samuel Neipp,



Jeff Hunter/Herald Journal

The Scarecrow (A.J. Brimley) helps fix the ax of the Tin Man (Samuel Sweeten) as the Wicked Witch of the West (Madeline Johnson) looks on prior to Wednesday's dress rehearsal for "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" by the Nibley Children's Theatre.

also composed the music for this year's show "free of charge."

"There's an amazing amount of volunteer work that goes into this," Corrington said. "And there's

no participation fee, which is unusual for any children's theater. We rely entirely on grants from the Utah Arts Council, Rocky Mountain Power and the city of Nibley."