

NEWS RELEASE

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GOODSPEED MUSICALS EXPANDS ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAMMING TWO SENSORY FRIENDLY PERFORMANCES

Oklahoma! and *A Connecticut Christmas Carol*

◆ PLUS ◆

NEW! OPEN CAPTIONED PERFORMANCES

Specially scheduled performances of *Oklahoma!* and *Rags*
at The Goodspeed

Darling Grenadine and *A Connecticut Christmas Carol*
at The Terris Theatre

EAST HADDAM, CONN AUGUST 24, 2017: For Goodspeed Musicals, being the home of the American musical means maintaining a tradition of excellence, innovation and world-class entertainment, while engaging artists and audiences at all stages of the musical theatre experience. It is important that everyone in our community can experience and benefit from the power of the live theatre.

In 2016 Goodspeed offered its first-ever sensory friendly performance. The program was designed in collaboration with the staff and students of Franklin Academy. Due to the tremendous success of that inaugural performance, we are pleased to offer two this season, each specifically designed to alleviate overly- loud sounds, jarring noises and intense lighting for audience members with sensory processing issues. This year's sensory friendly performances will be *Oklahoma!* at The Goodspeed on September 24 at 2pm and *A Connecticut Christmas Carol* at The Terris Theatre on December 10 at 2pm. At these performances, the theatre environment will be altered, providing a safe, sensory friendly, comfortable and judgment-free zone that is welcoming for all. These performances are recommended for those families

and caregivers who are familiar with and accepting of behaviors exhibited by some individuals with autism – and would like to bring a loved one to the theatre.

“We especially value our partnership on sensory friendly performances, because it allows us to contribute in meaningful ways to a common good by making musical theater accessible to more people,” Mary Murphy, Residential Director of Franklin Academy shared. “We know all too well how difficult it can be to navigate life with sensory difficulties. Finding a joyful event in an accepting environment to share with family and friends is very important.”

Tickets for these performances are being sold only to those on the spectrum and their families. To purchase tickets or ask questions about these special performances, please contact Kate Micari-Miller at 860.615.0316 or kmicari@goodspeed.org. Special resources such as character guide, plot synopsis, FAQs and “coming to the theatre” videos will be provided on our website, www.goodspeed.org.

Further augmenting our accessibility programming, Goodspeed is proud to announce a new partnership with Theatre Development Fund through the National Open Captioning Initiative, a TDF program that offers two-year partnerships with regional theatres to sponsor open-captioned performances. The program provides theatres with additional resources to serve patrons with hearing loss more effectively and to increase attendance at the theater by people who are deaf or hard of hearing. For these performances, a small screen displaying the text of the show simultaneously with the performance will be mounted in the theater and a select group of seats near the display will be available for those requiring this service.

“We’re thrilled that Goodspeed Musicals has proven their commitment to further welcoming people with hearing disabilities to their productions,” said Lisa Carling, TDF’s Director of Accessibility Programs. “We’re thrilled to provide open captioning for one performance of each show in their upcoming season. Our hope is that after their second year with the program, we will not only provide the open captioning service, but also help them develop a sustainability plan so they can continue to serve their community.”

Open captioning will be available for the following performances at Goodspeed Musicals this season: ***Darling Grenadine*** on September 8 at 8pm, ***Oklahoma!*** on September 15 at 8pm, ***Rags*** on December 1 at 8pm, and ***A Connecticut Christmas Carol*** on December 8 at 8pm. To purchase tickets with the best view of the open captioning, call 860.873.8668 or email boxoffice@goodspeed.org.

Under the leadership of Executive Director Michael Gennaro, Goodspeed Musicals is dedicated to the preservation, development and advancement of musical theatre. Goodspeed produces three musicals each season at The Goodspeed in East Haddam, Conn., and additional productions at The Terris Theatre in Chester, Conn., which was opened in 1984 for the development of new musicals. The first

regional theatre to receive two Tony Awards (for outstanding achievement), Goodspeed also maintains The Scherer Library of Musical Theatre and The Max Showalter Center for Education in Musical Theatre. Goodspeed gratefully acknowledges the support of United Airlines, the official airline of Goodspeed Musicals; official audio sponsor Sennheiser; and official auto sponsor Hoffman Audi. Goodspeed is also grateful for the support of the Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts.

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