Review

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cations, slapstick and drollery in a satisfying but uneven production.

Director Julie Arnold Lisnet fails to mine the script for all the physical comedy it holds, but the cast, for the most part, delivers a fun evening of theater.

Patrick Malloy is delightful as Antipholus of Ephesus, one of the separated twins. He perfectly allows the character's frustration and anger to build to an explosion in the final act. Malloy's melodious vocal tones are a perfect match for the bard's language.

The performance by his "twin," Nathan Roach as Antipholus of Syracuse, does not match Malloy's, even though the two have similar physical features. Roach is adequate in the role but falls short of Malloy's depth of character or pacing. It's also nearly impossible to distinguish this role from others Roach has performed.

Adam Cousins and Brogan Kelley are wonderfully frantic and marvelously frazzled as the servant twins, both named Dromio. The actors look nothing alike but give their characters similar enough mannerisms that theatergoers can suspend their disbelief and believe the two look so much alike their masters, the Antipholi, cannot tell them apart.

Many of the laughs in "The Comedy of Errors" stem from the servants' interactions with the man each thinks is his master but is really his twin. Cousins and Kelley allow their reactions in these encounters to slowly build to the point where both characters are convinced they've crossed into the bard's version of "The Twilight Zone." Cousins and Kelley are equally delightful.

As Luciana, Aimee Gerow gives the woman more charm and depth than Shakespeare did. Her layered performance stands in stark contrast to that of Katie Toole as Adriana, the wife of Antipholus of Ephesus (Nathan Roach). Toole gives a one-note performance — shrill. She could have been strident and showy or brazen and brash without being so shrewish.

Egeon, the long lost father of the Antipholi, delivers much of the exposition as the play begins. Ron Lisnet's years of experience performing Shakespeare are evident. He quickly and easily makes the language accessible and sets up the plot of misadventures.

Gibran Graham has tough challenges as Duke Solinus in trying to sort out which servant belongs to which master and who owes whom just how many ducats. Graham, who serves on the Bangor City Council and may wish he could take the duke's sword to meetings, is properly regal and justifiably confounded in the role.

Supporting cast members, including Ben Layman in a fun turn as a nun, and Moira Beale as the goldsmith Angelina, give fine performances

Toole and Beale's costumes are wonderful. The identical costumes worn by the twins make up for the actors' physical differences. Brent Hutchins' set, nestled toward the back of the park, allows theatergoers to feel as if they are eavesdropping on neighbors. That experience may be different for an audience at Fort Knox.

Ben Layman as Dr. Pinch tries to cure Antipholus of Ephesus, played by Patrick Malloy, of his affliction as Connor Magliozzi, a constable, keeps him from fleeing in Ten Bucks Theatre Company's production of "The Comedy of Errors."

RON LISNET | TEN BUCKS THEATRE COMPANY

Ten Bucks took up the Shakespeare mantle in 2004 after Penobscot Theatre Company's Maine Shakespeare Festival folded. The amateur company has performed one of the bard's plays outside most summers since.

Despite a few flaws, "The Comedy of Errors" is worth the trip to Brewer or Bucksport, because seeing Shakespeare outside is always magical.

"The Comedy of Errors" will be performed through Saturday at 6 p.m. and at 4 p.m. Sunday at Indian Trail Park in Brewer. It also will be performed at 6 p.m. Aug. 4-7 at Fort Knox in Prospect. For more information, call 844-1030 or visit tenbucksstheatre.org.

Editor's note: Judy Harrison's son Padraic Harrison is vice president of Ten Bucks Theatre Company but was not involved in the production "The Comedy of Errors."

Potter

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make you a more thoughtful and empathetic person. There's research to support this.

As a teacher and a mom, I feel it's important to make a big deal out of books. Look what we do for athletes and celebrities. If we want our children to grow up as readers, let's celebrate authors and books as well.

Thankfully, I think our culture has done a good job with this when it comes to J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series. A new book by J.K. Rowling is a big deal, and your local library or bookstore is bound to be doing something to honor this occasion. I think it's important that we take advantage of this opportunity to celebrate writing and literature and get our children to these events. It really can inspire them to read and certainly helps teach them that reading is important.

In the Bangor area, our local children's bookstore, The Briar Patch, is celebrating the book release with a midnight Harry Potter release party. My husband was hesitant to keep our 7-year-old out that late, but I've made the case that this is important.

Well, of course, I want to go too, and I'm sure there are many grownups who can't wait for the new Harry Potter book. But that's beside the point. Think of the children!

Here's what The Briar Patch has planned.

From 10 p.m. until midnight Saturday, July 30, The Briar Patch will be hosting a party in honor of the book's release. The event will feature a variety of fun Harry Potter activities, and other shops downtown are getting in on the action.

Specialty Sweets will serve as the official Honeydukes of Diagon Alley, and Central Street Farmhouse will be serving up some nonalcoholic Butter Beer as The Leaky Cauldron. 'Nique Imaging will be taking photos as The Daily Prophet, and Hot Topic will be coming to downtown to serve as Madam Malkin's Robes for All Occasions and will offer a variety of Harry Potter merchandise for sale. But I think I'm most excited that the Temple of the Feminine Divine will be serving as Olivander's Wand Shop and will have wands for sale! And there's more — too much to list.

Part of Central Street will be closed down, and the whole area will be transformed. The night will culminate with the release of the book at 12:01 a.m., and you never know what kind of fun will erupt when you get a bunch of Harry Potter fans together!

My oldest son, who is now in college, grew up on Harry Potter. I took him to a few release parties, dressed him in costume, and we always had a blast. He also learned to love reading, and like so many of his contemporaries, had his nose in a Harry Potter book for many of his childhood years. The best part is that it led to him having his nose in all kinds of books. This love of reading has served him well.

Now, I have passed on the Harry Potter tradition to my youngest son. When he was 4, I tried to read "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" to him, but he wasn't quite ready. Last year, with the release of the beautiful illustrated version of "The Sorcerer's Stone," I tried again. It was a success! He was only 6 years old, but I managed to hook him. He loved the story, and we ended up making dragon eggs this Easter.

Making a big deal out of books is a great way to make reading seem fun and important, and it's a great bonding experience as well. Our whole family will be at The Briar Patch's Harry Potter party this weekend. We hope to see you there!

The Briar Patch is located on Central Street in downtown Bangor. For more information about the Harry Potter event, check out the store's beautiful Facebook page. There are still a limited number of books available for preorder. You can order over the phone at 207-941-0255 or stop by their location at 27 Central St.

Crystal Sands is a former academic and award-winning writing teacher turned hobby farmer/homeschooling mom/freelancer. Read more from her at csands.bangordailynews.com/.

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