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#### (Neb.)-Audiences Entertained By Two One Act Performances

By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 11/20/2012 08:25 AM



(Rushville)-One act teams performed for a packed house on Monday night at the Historic Plains Theatre in Rushville. The teams from Chadron and Gordon-Rushville presented two plays, which both reflected somewhat the same mood.

The Chadron team, directed by Jill Pao Pao and Katy Dobry, presented "Crimes at the Old Brewery," by Tim Kelly, which tells the story of a makeshift boarding house for vagrants and vagabonds in New York City. The self-proclaimed inn keeper, Jack O'Lantern, played by Lane Chasek, and his wife Margaret, Kodi Milburn, keep the crew of questionable characters in line, and in exchange for a small fee, the crew is allowed to sleep at the run down old brewery.

The regular routine of stealing or cheating to get money is disrupted when Jack takes a fancy to a socialite, and arranges to have her kidnapped. A police inspector, who has been working with Jack to keep the law breaking crew in the brewery and out of the streets, informs Jack that this last caper has pushed a group seeking to close the brewery, who purchased the property and is planning to close it down. A reporter who infiltrated the group is able to help the socialite escape, but Jack's boarders turn on him after Margaret's jealousy over the socialite causes her to "out" Jack's intentions to destroy the building before it can be destroyed by someone else.

The Gordon-Rushville team, directed by Candie Johnson and Ryan Lovell, performed "Nicholas Nickleby," by Charles Dickens. The namesake for the production, Nicholas, played by Ryan Burdine, accepts employment with Squeers, played by James Neeley, after the passing of Nicholas's father so he can support his mother and sister. Little does he know that Squeers is the operator of a boarding house for young boys who are unwanted for one reason or another. Nicholas discovers horrible living conditions for the young boys, and befriends one with physical disabilities, Smike, played by Michael Barth.

Nicholas is informed by Mrs. Squeers, Brittany Hoagland, that the boys are given brimstone so they won't be hungry for food, which makes it more profitable for the Squeers family. After seeing the boys treated inhumanely, Nicholas feels compassion, and tells Smike about "away," and how it is better than with Squeers. Smike tries to run away, but is caught and Squeers plans to beat him. That is, until Nicholas steps in, and turns the cane on Squeers himself.

Both teams had sizeable casts, and simple sets, as the teams must be able to set up and tear down quickly for competitions. The district one act competition for both teams will be held on December 1 in Alliance.

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