

## Kevin Jones' got talent



COURTESY PHOTO | INFO@MYHORRYNEWS.COM

Kevin Jones, seated at the piano, rehearses with a group of students. Jones is the owner of Kevin Jones Performing Arts Studio, which offers two summer camps. Jones recently moved from Virginia to Carolina Forest.

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solutely perfect for a singer.

He's coached hundreds of actors into Broadway shows, national tours, and regional theater productions, as well as into film, TV, commercials and print.

"It's a one-stop shop," he said about his business.

He also founded the Opening Doors Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit in 2003 to provide theater training and performance opportunities, while offering free, quality theater productions in the Roanoke Valley. "That," he said, "made live theater accessible to everyone, regardless of their financial status."

Jones can do it all because he's literally already done it all. He acts, he sings, he dances, he teaches, he conducts, he coaches. He toured Europe right out of college with "Annie Get Your Gun." He's been in commercials for Advance Auto, Woodfire Grill and Cox Cable.

Right now he's the musical director for "Hairspray" which will be performed at Socastee High School in March, and is musical director for "Footloose" which will be performed at St. James High School in April.

And he's especially excited about the current movie, "Into the Woods." The girl who plays Rapunzel, Mackenzie Mauzy, was one of my students," Jones beamed. "We cast her in "A Christmas Carol" when she was a kid and helped her get an agent in New York City.

"We've cast her on and off over the years, and now she's acting with Meryl Streep."

Jones' career started with piano lessons when he was 13, and he went on to get a music degree in college. "My last year in high school I was in a musical version of "The Hobbit," and it was so much fun, it occurred to me I could do this as a living," he said.

Jones and his wife of 18 years have two children, 15-year-old Miranda and 11-year-old Noah. They live in Carolina Forest and they attend Christ Community Church.

To reach Jones, call 251-9542, email him at Kevin@kjpa.com or visit www.kjpas.com.

For 17 years, Jones has offered a performing arts camp in Virginia, and this summer, the same kind of camp will be available on the Grand Strand also. The camp offers acting and musical theater experience for rising first graders through high school seniors. Each camp is one week long, and is divided age appropriately. Jones said his is the only camp in the country that offers free, professional headshots as part of the tuition.

"What I like best about this business," Jones said, "is the fact that it's always different. Right now I may be musically directing something, and next month I may be shooting a commercial as an actor."

## New resident brings talent firm to The Forest

BY ETTIE NEWLANDS  
ETTIE.NEWLANDS@MYHORRYNEWS.COM

Mackenzie Comer got the part! The 17-year-old is going to play Elle Woods in her Virginia high school's production of "Legally Blonde," and says she owes it all to Kevin Jones.

Jones, who with his wife Melia owns Kevin Jones Performing Arts Studio, gave Comer eight singing lessons via Face Time. "We did a crash course of four lessons a week, and I taught her how to sing in those eight



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lessons," he said. Recently moving to Carolina Forest from Virginia, Jones coaches children and adults all over the country by way of Face Time and Skype, as well as locally in person.

He helps them prepare to audition for a show or for a college theater program.

Jones has been coaching Comer since she was about 6 years old, but she's always performed as an actress.

This is her first singing gig. "I can get anyone where they need to be," Jones said. "I know the audition process, I know what someone needs to get a part."

"People were amazed by how well I could sing which is all thanks to you," Comer wrote in an email to Jones. "I am miles away from where I started with you."

Having one of the largest private collections of musical scores in the country - more than 10,000 songs - means he can find the song that's ab-

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