

Rocky Hock Playhouse brings summer production to COA



By **Robert Kelly –Goss**
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Jeff Emmerich would like to see a summer theater program at College of the Albemarle. The theater arts director there says he's confident it would be a boon to the college.

But until then, he's found a way to keep theater alive until his annual fall show. He's rented out the Community Auditorium for a production of the original play, "Under His Wing," and he's holding auditions Monday and Tuesday, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

"They used to have a summer theater program here," says Emmerich. "There are so many things in the works so when I approached them about it, it got tabled. I said, 'Well, let's do something this summer.'"

You might recall that Emmerich along with his wife Gloria founded the Rocky Hock Playhouse in Edenton. It's a Christian-based theater company performing largely original, Biblically based plays. That's where he came up with "Under His Wings," the story of Ruth, Naomi and Boaz.

"It's full of delicious music and wonderful humor," says Emmerich of a play that tells the story of the Old Testament's Ruth.

The story is, according to Emmerich's Rockyhock Playhouse website, the story of tragedy and love, and redemption.

Written by Mike Harren, Emmerich has performed it and directed this show.

"This is the show we did when we first went (to the Outer Banks) in 1997," said Emmerich.

Emmerich and his wife had been teaching at North Central University in Minneapolis, Minn. In 1997 he had a student from Wanchese on Roanoke Island who had been hired as the drama at the Dream Center in Nags Head. She was comfortable directing the theater alone and needed assistance.

The Emmerichs came to North Carolina and produced "Under His Wing," and the couple's life has been entrenched in the Tar Heel state ever since.

Emmerich says there are eight speaking roles for men and eight speaking roles for women. There are also plenty of spots in the chorus.

He says folks interested in auditioning for the production should come prepared to read and sing, but they don't have to prepare a song. They'll be taught a song and they'll read from the script. In fact there is a script available at the COA box office at the Community Theater. It's available for reading onsite only.

The play will be produced one day only. It will happen June 29 and there will be three performances that day, a morning, afternoon and evening show.

For more information you can call Emmerich at 252-482-4621.