

‘Rocket Girl’ looks at first female rocket scientist in U.S.

As the first female rocket scientist in the United States, Mary Sherman Morgan was a living legend — and the Lee College Theatre Department will soon bring her incredible story to the stage.

“Rocket Girl” will debut at 8 p.m., Friday, Feb. 20, at the Melva Johnson Black Box Theatre inside the Performing Arts Center. Additional performances are set for 8 p.m. nightly on Feb. 21, 27 and 28; 2:30 p.m. on Feb. 22 and March 1; and 7:30 p.m. on March 5, in support of the spring meeting of the Texas section of the American Association of Physics Teachers that will be held on campus.

“The play recognizes the continued struggle to support, acknowledge and encourage underrepresented members of our society in their struggle for opportunities and advancement,” said Kim Martin, director and technical theatre instructor. “We have assembled a fairly large cast of experienced as well as new actors, and I believe their performances will reflect both their hard work in rehearsals and their commitment to those ideals.”

Written by her son, George, “Rocket Girl” explores Morgan’s journey from a harsh and difficult childhood to her work at North American Aviation in the 1950s as the only woman among 900 engineers. She is credited with developing Hydyne, the fuel used to launch America’s first successful rocket in 1957.

The play also pulls back the curtain on the tensions surrounding the United States and former Soviet Union as both countries raced to be the first to launch a rocket into orbit around the Earth.

“It presents a time of great drama and passion in recent American history, when the free world turned to the United States to make strategic advancements in the implementation of science and technology to make sure that these advancements would serve democratic goals of space exploration,” Martin said.

Tickets for each performance of “Rocket Girl” are \$15 and available to purchase online. Discounted tickets are available for students.