



Twin Lakes Playhouse

Twin Lakes Playhouse, 600 W. Sixth Street, Mountain Home, Arkansas 72654 870-424-0444

www.twinlakesplayhouse.org

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The theatre has opened my eyes and shown me the life of others in a way I could never have hoped to see by simply sharing a conversation with them. I have seen inside the souls of people whose passion for the stage is as deep as mine and whose gifts are deeper. Each time I become part of a production, I am thankful that I have the eyes to see, the ears to hear and the heart to feel what is in front of me.

- Annette Procnier, Theatre Thoughts, Ltd., Ontario, Canada



Sue Howe as Fonsia Dorsey and Lloyd Lowery as Weller Martin

The Gin Game

Directed by Bill Simpson

This winner of the 1978 Pulitzer Prize, which originally starred Jessica Tandy and Hume Cronyn and later revived with Julie Harris and Charles Durning, uses a game as a metaphor for life. Weller Martin is playing solitaire on the porch of a seedy nursing home. Enter Fonsia Dorsey, a prim, self-righteous lady. They discover they both dislike the home and enjoy gin rummy so they begin to play and to reveal intimate details of their lives. Fonsia wins every time and their secrets become weapons used against one another. Weller longs for a victory to counter a lifetime of defeats but it doesn't happen. He leaves the stage a broken man and Fonsia realizes her self-righteous rigidity has led to an embittered, lonely old age. The Gin Game runs December 11-19 at a later time, 8:00 p.m.

2010 Board Announced

Joining our current board members, John Eberhard, Mike Baker, Cindy Young, and Janet Lacefield, will be Yvonne Gehrke, W.W. McElrath, Jim Smith, and Chrissy Carney. These eight members will be working very hard for our playhouse and deserve a round of applause for their time and effort. Also, the board members leaving us in 2010, Lloyd Lowery, Bill Simpson, and Denise Jones, also deserve a round of applause for all their hard work and time spent improving and running the playhouse. It's not easy to be a board member- it's usually a thankless job. So, let's change that and thank all those wonderful volunteers who take these positions on. We are indebted to them.

Developing a Young Actor

by Flip Kobler

Flip Kobler began his performing career as an actor before morphing into a writer. Since selling their first screenplay to Paramount Studios, Flip and his wife/partner, Cindy Marcus, have been penning away for the last fifteen years. Flip and Cindy spent five years on staff at Disney where they wrote many a sequel. Their latest film, Jack And The Beanstalk, began the summer of 2007, starring Jon Lovitz, Christopher Lloyd, Wallace Shawn and James Earl Jones. Flip is also the co-author of the theatrical text book The Complete Guide To Church Play Production. His play Wild Dust is available through Samuel French. Teaming with composer, Dennis Poore, they've turned that show into Wild Dust The Musical, have transformed the myth of the Golden Fleece upside down with The Argonauts, taken the Robin Hood legend for a wild & whacky ride with Nottingham, given Don Quixote a taste of Teens angst in Quixote and are currently sentencing The Count of Monte Cristo to detention.

Everyone will have a different take on how to cultivate young talent from a stage-frightened youngun' into a glowing star. It's a problem for the ages. That's one of the obstacles of working with kids and teens. They grow up and move on. Darn kids, growing up just when we need them the most!

Our number one priority... *(Okay, I'm lying. It's not number one. Number one is usually getting the show up. Number two is not pulling our hair out. Number three is staying sane.)* So our number four priority is to find out what budding talents these young actors have besides acting. If we can tap into that, we can reach the kid and hopefully change their lives. Finding out what other talents these young people have is the key to getting them hooked on theater. I'll share a few examples of what's worked for us in the past.

Example one: **Jenny**. Jenny first came to our camp because her mother felt it would be good for her. Jenny didn't speak. Jenny did her best to impersonate wallpaper and fade into the background. We tried everything we could to bring this shrinking violet out of her shell. Joking didn't work. Bribery didn't work. Support and encouragement didn't work. We would've considered it a major victory if we simply got her to utter a single syllable. We're pretty easy to please. Nada.

Now this particular show required a sword fight. So I was trying to choreograph fairly complex stage combat to a bunch of grace-challenged youths. As it turns out Jenny's family runs a karate school and our shy heroine was pretty adept at wielding a sword. Bingo!

That was our foot in the door. I made Jenny my combat assistant and gave her responsibilities. I didn't ask; I just delegated. "You handle group A," I told her and didn't wait for her to shake her head "no." Pretty soon Jenny was talking. Jenny was teaching. Jenny was leading. When we showed our work to the cast they exploded into applause, and the look on Jenny's face is tattooed on my brain forever. She'd never been applauded before, and the theater bug bit hard right then.

Next year Jenny came back and auditioned for a role. We were all excited to hear her voice, and she blew us away! She got the ingénue that year, and by the end she was our leading female romantic lead.

Now not every show requires combat, so let's look at another example. **Duncan** wanted to be part of theater, but wasn't blessed with natural talent. We simply couldn't give him a meaty role. He was wooden as a popsicle stick. But Duncan loved stagecraft. He helped build the set, which was great and got him excited about the production. But it didn't help with his acting skills. However, we got inspired and asked Duncan to run our lights.

He'd never done it before, but he was game. He went home and spent the weekend Googling everything he could find. He designed a plot, hung the lights and ran the board. And here's where he really got his theater education. He

learned about projection because he couldn't hear his light cues from some of the cast. He learned about blocking because the actors weren't hitting their marks and kept stepping out of his precious light. He learned about pacing because every performance was different. Duncan absorbed it all.

The next year Duncan got our comic lead, which was hard for us because he didn't have much time to do lights that year. Bummer for us. Duncan is now a film major at a prestigious New York university.

Of course, not everybody is as self-motivated as Duncan. Take **Rachel**, for example. This little sprite had a small role her first year. But we just couldn't inspire her. She didn't care if she missed rehearsal. Didn't mind if she was late. Just didn't want to commit. You know this type of teen, I'm sure. Rachel walked through her part umbilically connected to her cell phone. Apathy, thy name is Rachel.

But Rachel liked to do crafts. Scrapbooks, bedazzle, anything with sequins. So we put her in charge of props. Not all, just a few special props that needed a little pizzazz.

Rachel was in her element! Her work was going to be seen by an audience. She now had something invested in the show. She was never tardy again, and the theater bug bit her too. She was fully committed and enthusiastic about every rehearsal.

So there you have it. When nurturing young talent, take the time to find out what else they are good at. Learn what they love, what they are passionate about. That can quite often be your key.

Got someone who loves music? How about having them choose the "scene change" music? Or better yet, have them compose it themselves. Got a writer? Can they do the programs? Have them write the synopsis and press releases and morning announcements! Is your pain-in-the-rump actress a budding chef? Can she be in charge of the cast party, or pre-show dinner? How about snacks for hell-week?

The point is to try and get young talent involved in the theater family. Let them be part of something bigger than themselves. Once the theater bug bites and they're part of that theater geek family, there's no turning back.

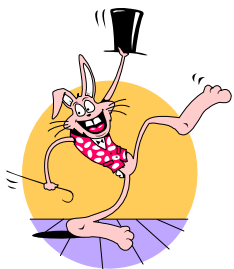
Then you won't have to nurture; they'll be hungry to learn. Theater isn't always about acting, singing, talent and skill. It's about passion. Unleash the passion and get out of the way.

And always remember... you rock.

Did you know we are selling gift certificates to our performances? If you are interested in purchasing some as gifts for your friends, please contact Shirley Spitzer to make the arrangements.

Setting the Stage

By John Eberhard



Board stuff.....

First and foremost, a standing ovation is due for our chairman and board members whose terms are coming to an end. Y'all done good! Thank you ever so much for the time, effort, and thought you have expended on behalf of the Playhouse over

the last two years! Saaaaaa-lute! I want to also recognize the many committee heads and participants who quietly get so many things done without fanfare.

I am excited about our Board of Directors for next year. Seems we have achieved a very nice mix including longer-term members who know where the bodies are buried, can keep us from re-inventing the wheel, and are aware of the "why" behind our way of doing some things. To balance that, we have new voices and fresh ideas which will help us to grow and to stretch ourselves. We have the best of both worlds, lucky us. Welcome aboard, new members!

Your chairman and your Board, along with the committee heads who step forward, will be depending on the help of the membership. Please, please either

volunteer to help out or at least step up when these folks track you down, corner you, and beg for your assistance! Those who graciously have acceded to give of their time on the Board didn't really volunteer to do everything by themselves.

And, a heads up to the new chairman and committee heads: if you make it fun and do things in an organized and well-planned fashion so that folks can take pride in their achievements and have a good time too, then you will obtain adequate participation to "get 'er done"! Folks are here because they want to be here and to be involved; it isn't as if they are being paid to drag themselves through unrewarding drudgery. Also, make

it a point to involve new people in new tasks and positions. The folks who learn today are those who can teach tomorrow. Efficiency, experience, or competence isn't the only yardstick for measuring what is "best". Give the inexperienced an opportunity to learn how to be efficient and competent, and to become experienced.

Our facility is better, our membership is growing, our financial situation is (at last!) comfortable, we are stretching ourselves with different genres, we had a solid year of good productions, and I am so excited about the upcoming year of creating live art and having fun together! I hope at the end of it we are all saying "Wheeeee! What a ride!"

MEETINGS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, BOARD MEETING AT 6:00 P.M.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, MEMBERSHIP MEETING AT 7:00 P.M.

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, BOARD MEETING AT 6:00 P.M.

MONDAY, JANUARY 25, MEMBERSHIP MEETING AT 7:00 P.M.

It is requested and required that each member fill out a new application form when paying this year's membership dues. If you have not done so already, please update your membership. If you cannot attend a meeting, you can download a membership form off the website, fill it in, and submit it and your \$5.00 check to:

Twin Lakes Playhouse, P.O. Box 482, Mountain Home, AR 72654



Soliloquy

By Deb Smith

Choosing plays for production at our little playhouse is not always simple. There are many, many plays I would love to direct; however, some of them contain the "questionable language" that has been referred to in several editorials in this newsletter throughout the six years I've been involved. I have not chosen to produce those plays because I was concerned about offending some audience members, members who have been with us for many years, who donate money to support our theatre, and who have spoken

well of us to their friends and neighbors, creating a larger audience base.

The point is, if we continue on the safe path we have always tread on, will we be challenging ourselves and our audiences by bringing more controversial subject matter to our theatre? Those controversial plays are ART, too, and should be explored. Case in point, I recently read an absolutely fabulous play, *The Best American Trailer Park Musical* and truthfully, it's terrific. The music is bold and brash, the subject matter is funny yet poignant, the characters are well-

defined and remind me of some people I know in life- yet, the "F-bomb" is used several times, making it a questionable piece of performing ART in this Bible-belt area.

There are other plays as well that I would love to direct- all containing the prohibited "f" word. Since I am a stickler for directing the play "as written" and never consider changing or dropping a line or word, it makes it difficult to pass on these fabulous plays. My inner spirit is saddened; but should my feelings be more important than those of our audience? Should we choose a play because we think it's worth it and not consider the moral issues of the community? I'm in a quandary.

With *The Gin Game*, we tried to experiment with such a play to see how the audiences would respond. The jury is still out at this writing but I have a feeling there will be some backlash. *I hope I'm wrong.*

I would love to bring forth more drama, more suspense, more romance, more history, more controversy, and thus more interesting plays, yet I have the fear that we may alienate some of our audience members. And they are the ones paying our bills and making it possible for us to play at acting, directing, and creating technical genius. Help! Life is complicated enough without throwing more fuel on the fire.

WE STILL COLLECT BEST CHOICE LABELS
Please return them to Patty Kotlicky.

Twin Lakes Playhouse Members Meeting
November 16, 2009

Meeting called to order at 7 p.m. by Lloyd Lowery

One new member present.

Minutes from previous meeting were approved as published in newsletter and on website.

Treasurer's report was given. Report was approved

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership: 90 paid members

Patronage: No Report

Maintenance: Buttress Wall work should begin right after Thanksgiving

Publicity: No Report

Benefits: No Report

Nominating: has slate and ready for election

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Estimate for the entire roof to be redone comes to about \$10,000 if work is done all at one time. Bid was given for sections as well. Membership decided to table the roofing project for the time being

At this point Steel Magnolias has made \$4,850.

NEW BUSINESS

There is a leak in the basement. Needs repairing. Membership decided to fix the basement and clean up the upstairs on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday between Christmas and New Years. If the basement is fixed and cleaned up there should be plenty of room for storage so a shed will not be necessary at this time.

Bill Simpson reported on the adult language play, *The Gin Game*. Rehearsals are going well and the performances are to be on December 11th, 12th, 18th and 19th at 8:00 p.m. and December 10th being members' night starting at 7:00 p.m.

Membership agreed to buy a padded stool with a back for the Sound Booth as requested Mike Baker. As long as it's under \$100.

Shirley Spitzer reported on the Madrigal Feast at the High School December 5th and 6th. Tickets are \$20.

December meeting will be a Christmas party with food being brought in by membership. This meeting will start at 6:00 p.m. rather than 7. Carol will bring Soda and set ups.

The election of board members was held. New Board Members are Bill McElrath, Jim Smith, Yvonne Gehrke and Chrissy Carney.

Deb Stanuch requested borrowing two headsets. Membership agreed. Bill is getting a hardwire headphone set for the Playhouse.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:50 p.m.

Submitted by Mike Baker

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR:



Have a Happy Holiday Season!
See you next year.

Deb Smith

If anyone has any announcements, articles of interest, would like to contribute an editorial or submit a picture, please let me know. This is the membership's newsletter, after all, and it is up to all of us to make it successful. Therefore, please contact me by phone at 870-421-6099 (cell), 870-467-5608 (home), or by e-mail at ozarktootsie@centurytel.net.

Board of Directors 2009: Lloyd Lowery, Chairman; Bill Simpson, Vice-Chairman; Mike Baker/Denise Jones, Recording Secretaries; Cindy Young, Treasurer; Yvonne Gehrke; Janet Lacefield; and John Eberhard.

Editor: Deb Smith (421-6099 or 467-5608 for suggestions or submissions); Copy Editor: Sally Mollenkopf; Consulting Editor: Carol Eberhard; Contributing Editors: John Eberhard and Deb Smith; Website-Webmaster: Bill Simpson.