



Twin Lakes Playhouse

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

www.twinlakesplayhouse.org

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*I will accept anything in the theatre.
provided it amuses or moves me.
But if it does neither, I want to go
home.*
- Noel Coward



Letter from Your Chairman

By Lloyd Lowery

To paraphrase Mr. Shakespeare; "To save or not to save..." In these turbulent economic times, i.e. recession, should we explore possibilities of spending a little less of our income while maintaining the quality of our productions? After managing the fiscal past last year, one thing is very clear- we cannot operate on ticket sales alone., which could diminish somewhat until the economy recovers. Also, our other major revenue source, namely contributions/donations, may be somewhat less. This is a difficult thing to predict but we must keep it in mind. While sitting in my man-cave and pondering these issues, I jotted down some possible areas when savings could be made and herewith pass them on to the membership to chew on. And in the end, there may be no need to be concerned. Anyway, here goes:

1. We might wish to consider dropping one weekend of performances while adding a Thursday performance to one weekend. A reduction of two performances resulting in royalty savings of \$80-\$150 per show plus one weekend less of utilities. This possibility was explored at the January board meeting (with only five members present) and was deemed unnecessary. The members felt it would be too much of a change and that there were too many negative factors involved.
2. We might wish to consider having volunteers do the mowing and grounds keeping rather than hiring it done. This could save approximately \$250 annually.
3. We have already implemented the plan of having all our printed materials done by *Good Impressions Printing*. This company charges considerably less than others and the quality of work is the same.
4. We might wish to choose plays available from smaller companies which charge smaller royalties. For example, Samuel French and others now charge \$75 per performance (9 x \$75 = \$675) while Pioneer and others still charge \$40-\$50 (9 performances = \$370). This is a moot point for the 2009 season since plays have already been selected but it could save us approximately \$1,200 annually. It goes without saying that we should not compromise on the quality of our productions so we would need to be judicious in our selections.
5. We have already implemented a plan to sell advertising on the back of the tickets resulting in savings of approximately \$200 annually.

6. We might wish to consider encouraging directors/producers to always check for materials and supplies on hand before purchasing some and to continue to closely monitor the heat and air usage during and between rehearsals.

7. I saved this one for the last since it may be too silly to even think about. We might consider, each of us, donating bathroom supplies such as hand soap, paper towels, and toilet paper. Suppose that at one of our monthly meetings everybody brought one roll of paper towels and the other items at subsequent meetings. We probably would not need to purchase such items for a couple of years or more.

I offer these ideas as food for thought and discussion.

Director's Notes

By Carol Eberhard

Hi everyone! I'm hoping this finds all of you warm and with power.

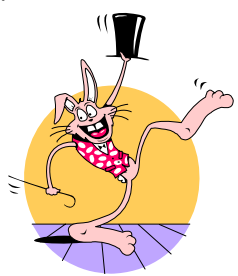
"Barnaby" is still a go. The show lost a whole week's worth of rehearsals, but, fortunately for me, I have a cast and crew that is willing to put forth a little extra effort. They are willing to do what it takes to get this show on in time. And, personally, I think they are going to do it in grand style! I can't say thank you enough to all of them. There is still a lot of work to be done. If you want to lend a hand and help in the concession stand, park cars, and clean...please let Lisa Hammett know. We need your help and it would be greatly appreciated.

I look forward to seeing all of you on membership night. Get ready and brace yourself, this show is going to make your sides hurt with laughter!

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

Setting the Stage

By John Eberhard



It seems like increasing attendance at shows may be one of the TLP "hot topics" this year. The following is not a sure-fire guarantee, but is one consideration that can certainly stack the odds in the director's favor for a good turnout.

First of all, however, a disclaimer: Making money by putting the maximum number of butts in the seats for a performance is great....BUT, it is not the priority of Community Theater. It is the priority of Professional Theater. The priorities of Community Theater include community participation, community education, and providing the opportunity to create art through live performance. Income and attendance are not the only--and not even the main--- yardsticks by which Community Theater is measured.

Granted, we have to make a certain amount of money to keep our doors open and to be able to obtain all of the nice things we have gotten and more--things such as our new curtain, the green room on the side so we don't have to walk in the rain to get backstage, the new lights, the raked floor, etc. We do have bills to pay, and it is certainly desirable to have big crowds. Still, we mustn't lose sight of our primary functions. Hopefully, enough money to get by will be a by-product of our attention to our first priorities.

So, how do you increase attendance? Of course, the simple answer is to have consistently high-quality shows. Word gets out and the community responds. Word of mouth is the absolute best (or worst) advertising you can get! Unfortunately, due in part to the "participation" goal of Community Theater, the quality of shows tends to be uneven. That is the nature of small town Community Theater. So, what else can help to put butts in the seats?

Well, doing a large cast show helps put butts in the seats. People like to see people whom they know on stage. Most of us have a sphere of influence, including family and friends, who will come and watch us. Obviously, a cast of 15 will have a lot more family and friends--and those whom they influence--- trekking through the door than a cast of two. There is a down side to this, however. If one director uses up most of our available manpower in one show by having a huge cast, it can really hurt the other directors and the rest of the shows on the slate for that year. So when we consider a very large cast show, we need to be sure we don't burn up our human resources for the rest of the year on that one show.

Do comedy or farce. People like to laugh. A very good drama will usually bring in a good crowd; a fair comedy will usually bring in just as big a crowd, if not bigger. As part of our mandate to educate, and for us to grow creatively, we need a varied slate. All things being equal, though, a comedy will put more butts in the seats.

Do a musical.....or a show with music. Musicals are an even bigger draw than comedies and have the added advantage of bringing in even more of the community to participate. Look at the crowds we had for *Nunsense*, *Godspell*, *The Spitfire Grill*, and *Foxfire*. Not only were they very well done shows, just the fact that they were musicals added punch. The caveat to remember here is that royalties for musicals are a lot more than for regular plays. The other caveat is that when you select a show, the director needs to have a pretty good idea that they will be able to cast it....and our membership is not noted for vast numbers of singers and musicians.

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 a Shirley Spitzer to make the arrangements.

CURTAIN CALLS



The curtain's calling us... to the theatre... to express ourselves and how we can develop dreams into a craft and an art.

By Marjorie Rock

Did the curtain call you recently? Carol Eberhard put

Do a "name" show. People will turn out to see a show whose title they recognize. This is especially true of shows that have been movies: *On Golden Pond*, *The Rainmaker*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Godspell*, *The Odd Couple*, *Bus Stop*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and so on. That little bit of familiarity makes a difference.

Do a show with a theme that serves as a "hook". Folks turn out when you punch the "patriotism" button, the "gospel songs" button, the "holiday" (like Halloween or Christmas) button, or the "hillbilly antics" button. Old Town Alexandria, Virginia has a signature show (musical) they do every few years: *1776*. What a great theme to latch on to in George Washington's home town!

Go on-line and find which shows are doing well across the country. Pick a proven winner. AACT and Community Theater Green Room are a good place to start for this type of information. If audiences in small town Oklahoma, Washington, Pennsylvania, and Texas respond well to a show, audiences in small town Arkansas will respond to it also.

Put a lot of these concepts together and you might come up with something like a Melodrama, for example. Let's see....large cast? Check. Comedy? Check. Music? Check. Theme? Check. Melodramas contain a good many of the above elements and we usually have very good success with them.

The director who selects a show combining several of these elements will give himself (or herself) a head start on increasing the turnout for their show.

out a call for auditions for her show that will open soon. Did you think "I would love to try out for a show - but I probably wouldn't be chosen - or I'm not good enough - or I don't have enough time, etc."

The trick is to show up for the audition and if nothing else just be there to support those that are trying out for the play. If you are anything like me - in time you might say to yourself - "I could do better than that".....or....."...as good as that"or "...that doesn't seem so hard." And the next thing you might find is yourself up on stage doing a reading. Acting is not such

a difficult thing. With each performance you will learn a lot about yourself. Carol is an excellent director and you can learn a lot by working with her. If you don't want to be in the show, perhaps you could help out backstage, or doing costumes, set building, set decorating, doing props, or be a House Manager, and there are also opportunities to learn about lighting and sound. There are so many ways to be involved. And I promise you, in time, you will find yourself on stage, perhaps in a small role. Well, actually you will often hear that there is no such thing as a "small role" - all roles are important to the play - some just have more lines than others. The more "fear," the better the chance that you will be a good actor. In my own experience I have found that the more fear I have - the greater the gift once I face that fear. "Fear is a harbinger that Truth is just around the corner." So go for it - you will have great support! There will be at least three more opportunities this season to test your mettle.

So, in the future: When coming to an audition, bring any planner that you have to see if there will be any conflicts re: your ability to rehearse and be in the show. Interested artists should be able to thoroughly memorize lines on schedule, arrive in a punctual manner and possess excellent communication skills.

Directors differ from one another - in their methods of directing and expectations. Generally a director will let you know what he or she expects from you. You will be given a schedule of rehearsal dates and when you are expected to know your lines - this is called 'being off book'. That can be one of the most exciting/scariest times - when you let go of your script and it's just you and the other actors. However, this is also when the "acting" starts. You will be amazed at what a difference it is to go without your script and the freedom it gives you.

Some years ago I was directing a musical and the lead in the show was having a hard time learning his lines. Admittedly he had a lot of them. At the end of each

week of rehearsal he would tell me, "Honest Marge, I will know my lines by Monday." Well, soon we were up to the week before the show was to open and he was still struggling with his lines and I was getting the same earnest promise. Next thing I noted that the Music Director was carrying a stool onto the stage and looking for a place to put it. I asked her what she had in mind. She noted that the stool was going to be for the prompter! I said, "Absolutely not" and then I asked our lead "Do you have an impediment to learning your lines?" He said, "NO"....and I said "Good." From that point on he knew his lines and did an excellent job as I knew he could and would. As I said, "We learn a lot about ourselves when we are in a show."

Often times a Director has to be part therapist. I had a fear of heights years ago when I was in a play - I was playing a Pirate Captain in the musical and had to climb up a ladder and sing and dance up on an upside down great big high box on stage. I said that I couldn't do it - my director told me that she would have to find someone else who could do it then!!! I didn't want to lose the role - and so I made myself get over the fear and by the end of the show I was running up and down that ladder as easy as pie. Amazing what you can learn about yourself!

Some directors act as if they are God and you aren't! AND some work in a more cooperative fashion with the cast members. Some are open to suggestions from others and some are not. It's best to take your lead from the director. Believe me, when the show is over and you are enjoying your cast party - there is a great sense of satisfaction at what has been learned. In my mind, when a show opens - it's like a boat leaving the dock - and then when the show is over, the boat returns safely to the dock. It's an experience that can become addictive in a good way. And for those of us who thrive on applause and attention - I have found that it's a healthy way to get that fix. Come on in and step out on faith - knowing that we are there to help you when the Curtain Calls.....

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

Education/Outreach

We encourage students to attend our plays but sometimes the \$10.00 ticket price is difficult for them to pay. That's why we invite students to attend our family/membership night, held the Wednesday before the opening of

each production, for only \$5.00. Our family/membership night for the next play, "But Why Bump Off Barnaby?" is February 25, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. Please pass on this information.



MEETINGS

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, BOARD MEETING AT 6:00 P.M.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16, MEMBERSHIP MEETING AT 7:00 P.M.

MONDAY, MARCH 9, BOARD MEETING AT 6:00 P.M.

MONDAY, MARCH 16, MEMBERSHIP MEETING AT 7:00 P.M.

Soliloquy

By Deb Smith

Since I've been involved with Twin Lakes Playhouse, I've found that there is no job I wouldn't volunteer for, as long as I could be involved and feel part of the show. Members and directors have always cheered me on, thanked me profusely, given me kudos and compliments, when I asked what I could do to help. There are so many jobs to be filled at the playhouse. Many members aren't interested or think they've given enough of their time and don't want to be bothered anymore. I understand burn out. I've felt it myself. But I also know that a community theatre cannot run without the help of its members. Most of our current members have been volunteering for years, some more than others, but all have done what they felt they could do. I ask that those of you who have not volunteered in a while, or those new members that want to get involved, call someone up, ask what you can do, and get involved- either again or for the first time. It's fun and rewarding! We need you.

John Eberhard, Leigh Coulter, Steve LeBlanc, Evan Mollenkopf



That's Entertainment

The Christmas Truce by Aaron Shepard was presented as a reader's theatre piece at our January Membership Meeting. Originally, it was scheduled for the December meeting but weather prevented our Christmas get-together. The story is as follows: "On a Christmas Eve of World War I, British and German soldiers lay down their weapons to celebrate the holiday together. The Christmas Truce of 1914 is one of the most remarkable incidents of World War I and perhaps of all military history. Starting in some places on Christmas Eve and in others on

Christmas Day, the truce covered as much as two-thirds of the British-German front, with thousands of soldiers taking part. Perhaps most remarkably, it grew out of no single initiative but sprang up in each place spontaneously and independently. Nearly everything described is drawn from first-hand accounts in letters and diaries of the time." An example of the scene-

SOLDIER 1: *(to audience)* Christmas Day, 1914. Dear mother,

SOLDIER 4: *(to audience)* My darling Meg,

SOLDIER 2: *(to audience)* My good friend Charles,

SOLDIER 3: *(to audience)* My dear sister Janet,

SOLDIER 1: It is 2:00 in the morning and most of our men are asleep in their dugouts.

SOLDIER 4: Yet I could not sleep myself before writing to you of the wonderful events of Christmas Eve.

SOLDIER 2: In truth, what happened seems almost like a fairy tale, and if I hadn't been through it myself, I would scarce believe it.

SOLDIER 3: Just imagine: While you and the family sang carols before the fire there in London, I did the same with enemy soldiers here on the battlefields of France!

This script was a lovely way to be reminded of the true meaning of Christmas- through communication and celebration between soldiers in combat with each other. Thank you, gentlemen, for your profound performances and thank you, Carol, for putting it all together.

Twin Lakes Playhouse Members Meeting- January 19, 2009

Called to order @ 7:02 p.m. by Lloyd Lowery.

Welcome to members and guests (6) by Lloyd Lowery.

Introduction of 2009 Board Members by Lloyd Lowery.

Minutes of previous member's meeting approved as published in newsletter.

Treasurer's report for November and December, 2008 presented for membership review.

Standing committee reports:

Play Reading- chair Deb Smith with Sally Mollenkopf, Leigh Coulter, Neil Chandler and Deb Stanuch as members.

Membership- chair Bill Simpson, currently 30 members with completed paperwork and payment.

Patronage- Shirley Spitzer sending out patronage letters now.

Maintenance- John Eberhard said fire department inspection states we cannot have refrigerator backstage plugged into extension cord. The issue is resolved.

Publicity- Denise Jones had no report at this time.

Scholarship and Benefit- Janet Lacefield reported the first benefit for 2009 is Baxter County Library Foundation.

Nominating- no chairperson at this time.

Special Project- 2009 Play schedules- Anne Johnson-Loftis working on this project.

Key List- John Eberhard working on this. We are currently unable to account for 4 keys. Membership advised if you have a key, please check with John.

Ticket Sales- Brenda Jacaway has agreed to be responsible for ticket sales for 2009.

Lloyd Lowery- discussion of selling ads to be printed on our tickets in an attempt to defray printing costs. This will be coordinated with each director.

Gift certificates- these requests should be referred to Shirley Spitzer.

Dimmer Packs- there was a problem with the dimmer packs but that has been resolved by W.W. McElrath.

Carol Eberhard advised the membership on the progress of our first production for 2009, "But Why Bump Off Barnaby?" The show has been cast and is currently in rehearsal.

Lloyd Lowery asked the membership to consider having a House Manager for the whole of 2009. This person would be responsible for stocking the concession stand with water, candy and popcorn, recruiting concession workers and parkers and also cleaning the theatre. The house manager would have the membership to use as volunteers.

Prop and costume rooms- Lloyd Lowery. Shelves are needed in the "middle" room and the costumes need to be cleaned out and purged. Plans are to pick a Saturday work day and ask for volunteers.

W.W. McElrath suggested ways to improve attendance. Discussion was made of a direct mailing, discount to students, community calendars, radio stations, more coverage in the local newspaper. It was decided to form a committee to help Denise Jones, W.W. McElrath and Eddie Dry. The committee will meet before the next membership meeting and brainstorm some ideas.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

-Minutes taken by Denise Jones

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR: What an end to January we had this year! I've only been in the Twin Lakes area for 6 years (coming from California) and I was amazed at the negative impact ice can make. I didn't have power for 7 days. Luckily, my parents own a generator so we were able to cook and have water but there were so many of us using the house, we didn't have hot water- showers were scarce. Thanks to Huggies, we were able to sponge off some of the grim. But I was cheering when I got to finally step into a shower. I thought I would stay there FOREVER, it felt so good. I hope power has been restored to all of you and there were no major problems. Broken tree limbs and inconvenience is one thing but roof, car, or people damage is quite another. I was impressed with how my neighbors pitched in and took care of one another. This is truly a wonderful place to live, even in hard times. People are generous and giving and go out of their way to help. Power to the people of Mountain Home! I'm also grateful that we were able to continue with rehearsals for *But Why Bump Off Barnaby?* It will be a very cute and fun show with new faces on stage so come and bring your friends.

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.

***** **Deadline for March 2009 Newsletter is March 1st** *****

Board of Directors 2008: Lloyd Lowery, Chairman; Bill Simpson, Vice-Chairman; Mike Baker/Denise Jones, Recording Secretaries; Cindi Young, Treasurer; Donna Griffiths; 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 Marjorie Rock; Website-Webmaster: Bill Simpson.