



Twin Lakes Playhouse

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

[www.twinlakesplayhouse.org](http://www.twinlakesplayhouse.org)

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## WIT Defined



Wit is a form of intellectual humor. A wit (person) is someone skilled in making witty remarks. Samuel Johnson, in his dictionary, states that the original meaning of wit is "the powers of the mind; the mental faculties, the intellects"; he also defines wit as "quickness of fancy," among the nine definitions. And, in Webster's Dictionary, wit is defined as "the association of ideas in a manner natural, but unusual and

striking, so as to produce surprise joined with pleasure."0 The play, *Wit*, written by the American schoolteacher and playwright Margaret Edson, used her work experience in a hospital as part of the inspiration for her play. *Wit* received its world premiere at South Coast Repertory, California, in 1995 and went on to win the 1999 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. The play also received the "Best New Play" award for 1999 from the New York Drama Critics' Circle. Because the play did not receive a production at a Broadway theatre, *Wit* was not eligible for the Tony Awards.

"Until a character becomes a personality, it cannot be believed. Without personality, the character may do funny or interesting things, but unless people are able to identify themselves with the character, its actions will seem unreal. And without personality, a story cannot ring true to the audience." -Walt Disney

The play is structured as the last hours of Dr. Vivian Bearing (marvelously played by Rose Mary Sullivan), a university professor of English, who is dying of ovarian cancer. She recalls the initial diagnosis of Stage IV metastatic ovarian cancer from her oncologist, Dr. Harvey Kelekian (played by Lloyd Lowery). Dr. Kelekian then proposes an experimental chemotherapeutic treatment regimen consisting of eight rounds at full dosage, to which Vivian agrees. Over the course of the play, Vivian assesses her own life through the intricacies of the English language, especially the use of wit and the metaphysical poetry of John Donne. Throughout the play, Vivian recites John Donne's Holy Sonnet X whilst reflecting upon her condition. She recalls undergoing tests by various medical technicians and being the subject of grand rounds. She remembers the first time she acquired a love of books



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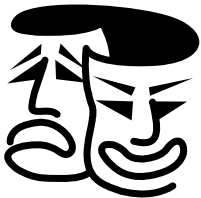
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from her father, Mr. Bearing. She also flashes back to her experiences as a student of Dr. E.M. Ashford (played by Bonnie

Mae Tucker, understudied by Donna Griffiths), an expert on John Donne. Later Vivian finds herself under the care of Dr. Jason Posner (played by Ryan Kelley), a young doctor who took her Donne class at university.

At the hospital, Vivian recognizes that doctors are more interested in her for their research, and recognizes a parallel to her approach in study and teaching. She gradually realizes she would much prefer kindness and compassion to intellect. Susie Monahan (played by Patty Brown), a nurse at the medical centre, offers Vivian comfort and mentions her medical emergency options, either code blue or "do not resuscitate" (DNR) in case of a severe decline in her condition. Vivian decides for DNR. Eventually, Vivian reaches the end stage in extreme pain, then flat lines. Dr. Posner tries to resuscitate and calls in a medical team to administer CPR. Nurse Monahan tries to stop him by pointing out the DNR instruction. The team is stopped and as the play ends, Vivian walks from her hospital bed "toward the light."

This play was a grand undertaking for Twin Lakes Playhouse. It is a serious subject presented with humor and yes, wit. Wit means intelligence, sharpness and cleverness. A witty person is likely to be intelligent. This play is intelligent and exceptional.



### *You Know You Work in Community Theater If...*

- Your living room sofa spends more time on stage than you do.
- You have your own secret family recipe for stage blood.
- You've ever appeared on stage wearing your own clothes.
- You can find a prop in the prop room that hasn't seen the light of day in ten years, but you don't know where your own vacuum cleaner is.
- You've ever appeared in or worked on a production of *Love, Sex and the IRS*, or any other show written by Van Zandt and Milmore.
- You have a Frequent Shopper Card at The Salvation Army.
- You start buying your work clothes at Goodwill so you can buy your costumes at the mall.
- You've ever cleaned a tuxedo with a magic marker.
- You've ever said, "Don't worry - we'll just hot glue it."
- You've ever appeared on stage in an outfit held together with hot glue.
- You've ever seriously considered not doing in the murder victim because the gunshot might wake up the audience.
- You name your son Samuel and tell him that his middle name is in honor of the French side of the family.
- You've ever appeared in a show where tech week is devoted to getting the running time under four and a half hours.
- Your lighting director has ever missed a cue because he was blinded by the glare from the sea of bald heads in the audience.
- You've ever appeared on stage in an English drawing room murder mystery where half the cast spoke with southern accents.
- You've ever called for a line -- in front of an audience.

- Your children have ever begged you not to buy them any more Happy Meals.
- You think Neil Simon is a misunderstood genius.
- You've ever appeared in a show where the cast outnumbered the audience.
- You've ever gotten a part because you were the only guy who showed up for auditions.
- The audience recognizes you the minute you walk on stage because they saw you taking out the trash before the show.
- You've ever menaced anyone with a gun held together with electrical tape.
- You've ever had to haul a sofa off stage between scenes wearing a dinner gown and high heels.
- You've ever had to haul a sofa off stage between scenes wearing a dinner gown and high heels - and you're a guy.
- You've ever played the father of someone your father's age.
- Your kids know your lines better than you do.
- Your kids SAY your lines better than you do.
- You get home from rehearsal and have to go back to the theater because you forgot your kids.
- You've ever appeared in a show where an actor leaned out through a window without opening it first.
- You've ever had to play a drunk scene opposite someone who was really drunk.
- You ever heard a director say, "Try not to bump into the furniture," and mean it.
- You've ever appeared on stage with people you're related to.
- You've ever heard the head of the set construction crew say, "Just paint it black - no one will ever see it."
- Your mother has ever greeted you after a performance with the words "Don't give up your day job."
- You've ever appeared in a show featuring a flushing toilet sound effect.
- The set designer has ever told you not to walk on the left half of the stage because the floor's still wet -- five minutes before curtain.
- You've ever been told your director has no eyebrows because he handled special effects for the last show.

## Letter from Your Chairman

*By Anne Johnson-Loftis*

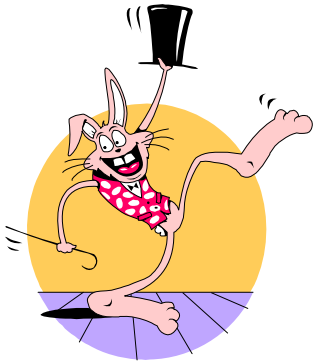
DRAMA comes to Twin Lakes Playhouse! Oh my-

After attending the Benefit night of the newest play on the slate, *Wit* certainly evoked many emotions and thoughts throughout the entire production. It may be hard to deal with the thought of dying but this play had the humor, the feelings, the confusion, the "aloneness" one might experience when facing a "death sentence such as Cancer" all rolled up in one short play. For over 90 minutes our star, Rose Mary Sullivan, has almost every line- a huge undertaking for one person and so totally well-delivered that the audience laughed at the wit of the delivery and, of course, she received a standing ovation at the end for the brilliant rendering of her lines. You feel the pain, the acceptance, the drama in the truth of dying, and this is truly dramatic. The parts played by the supporting cast- their feelings, and how to handle caring, or not caring, for someone critically ill, only made the story more believable. The mundane details, the discomfort, and the repeated embarrassment and mediocrity you are subjected to, being treated like a "chart" or statistic, rather than a real person going through HELL, was apparent throughout.

We all know that musicals and comedies draw crowds, and a drama, especially one with an emphasis on dying, is hard for some people to deal with, especially since most have had personal experiences with cancer and/or the death of loved ones, but this is *life* and dying is just a part of it. Marge, Jill, and Donna put this together and portray the details so effectively that you do laugh, while in the next moment you may get teary-eyed, but... that is drama. I hope to see more productions along this line, maybe not about dying, but more dramas, just the same. I know the Playhouse used to have more dramas than they've had in recent years. It's good to see us going in this direction again. There are different challenges in putting on a drama, for the actors as well as the director, but it is rewarding. I hope the coming weeks will bring packed houses and people don't feel they can't attend because it is too depressing to think about. I know they will be pleasantly surprised.

## Setting the Stage

*By John Eberhard*



One of the best ways to prepare for an audition begins long before auditions open. It consists of getting involved in the group and working backstage. This gives future directors the opportunity to see first hand that you are dependable and responsible, qualities that every director will

take into account when choosing between two equally qualified auditioners.

It is always a good idea to check out a copy of the script and read it beforehand. From this you will glean the 4 W's: Who the characters are, When the action takes place, Where the scenes are set, and What the characters are each trying to achieve in a given scene. It should also give you some insight into the relationships between the characters.

Dress comfortably, preferably in clothing that will not distract attention from you and what you are doing. Arrive in time to complete some basic paperwork, which will include a list of your previous experience and any special talents such as dancing, singing, playing a musical instrument, juggling, magic tricks, etc.

Don't limit yourself by only being available for one role. If the director asks you for which role you are trying out, by all means express your preference but make it clear you want to read for every role for which you are suited. Even though you may think you are perfect for a specific role, the director may see it otherwise....and it is the director who will be making the casting decision.

Sometimes the director is seeking a certain quality--like vulnerability--or a special look, or how a person looks with other people whom the director has already decided on. Don't be disappointed if you read best for a role but didn't get the part....there are other factors that the director considers.

When you are actually on stage and reading, there are a number of additional things the director will be looking at. Are you stiff and frozen or are you comfortable enough on stage to move? Are you creative? Can you establish relationships with the other characters on stage? What are your voice characteristics: lively or monotone? Loud enough to be heard at the back of the theatre? What about variety, pace, emphasis, pause?

If you are dead set on having a specific role, prepare a two minute monologue from the script or from another script showing those particular character qualities. Inform the director that you have a prepared scene to do at his/her convenience.

Other than that, relax and have fun without being disruptive. These are qualities that every director is sure to be looking for!



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**WE STILL COLLECT BEST CHOICE LABELS**  
**Please return them to a BOARD MEMBER...**

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## Director's Notes

*By Marjorie Rock*

The play 'WIT' is completing it's first weekend of performances. Well, actually it's almost more like a week of performances. I am so proud of our cast and crew. This has been a difficult show to direct, get props for, and to "choreograph," so to speak.

In the script it says that the show is to last only 90 minutes with NO INTERMISSION. That is always one of the biggest challenges in directing a show – to bring it down to the time required. When I directed GODSPELL, we were “told” in the script to bring the first act down to one hour. Well, the first time we tried to pull the act together – it took three hours!!! However, in the end, we did get it to come in at one hour and it surely did make a difference. “WIT” has so many vignettes that it takes quite a bit to bring it in at 90 minutes; however for your sake and ours we are doing it – most of the time!

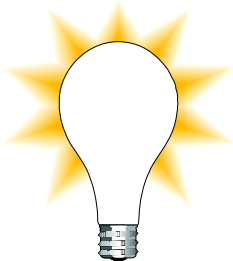
Rose Mary Sullivan who plays the lead role of “Vivian Bearing, PhD.” is doing a masterful job with the majority of lines in the show. Her grace and courage has been a great example for all the rest of us. Lloyd Lowery is very convincing as Dr. Kelekian and also in the role of Vivian’s rather disinterested father. Ryan Kelley, playing the role of Dr. Jason Posner has a bunch of the craziest medical terms that he has to say rather quickly and with a great deal of enthusiasm! AND he does it – good job! Patty Brown is right at home in her role of Susie Monahan, RN. Susie shows some interest in Vivian while she struggles with her illness – Vivian is not used to “simplicity and kindness.” E.M. Ashford, Ph.D, played by Bonnie Tucker and understudied by Donna Griffiths – is Vivian’s teacher while in college. She teaches the finer nuances having to do with John Donne’s Holy Sonnets. Ms. Ashford is Vivian’s last visitor. And then there are the students/technicians/fellows/clinicians. There are supposed to be four of them and we kept losing them on the way to opening night....soon we were down to two and then Rose Chism appeared and stepped in at the last minute. However, Sunday June 1<sup>st</sup> will be her last performance – so Denise Jones will be stepping into that role. Rose did a wonderful job, took direction well and we invite her back!!! Kelsea Jacobs, who had been in Lloyd’s show just before ours started, signed right on to be one of the students and she does a marvelous job. We lose Dillion Mincey the last day of the show as he is leaving for summer theatre training on June 15<sup>th</sup>! His help has been immeasurable. Donna Griffiths agreed to do back stage duty during the shows and Bill Simpson took over lighting when Bill McElrath needed surgery. Jill Chandler has helped every inch of the way....and most all of the cast helped with props, big and small – with scrubs and lab coats. Lloyd was always there for help when needed, Bonnie helped with finding sponsors, Jimmy Seaman helped with sound. I am grateful to all of you. Great thanks! Sorry about any I might have missed....Oh, and Debby Stanuch who donated our “signed Emma Thompson” director’s chair – Get some “opportunity tickets” for this chair – it could be yours!!!

This is an opportunity to see a show that has qualities of a “Broadway” Show...so sayeth the audiences. We will be performing “WIT” six more times – closing June 15<sup>th</sup>. Invite your friends – don’t let this opportunity pass you by.

## WHO'S THE BRIGHTEST BULB?

How many producers does it take to change a light bulb?

*Do we really have to have another light bulb? It's not in the budget, you know.*



How many playwrights does it take to change a light bulb?  
*Change? Change? Why does it have to change? It's perfect just the way it is.*

How many Directors does it take to change a light bulb?

*Three. No, five. No, you go away -- four. YES! Four! Perfect! I think...*

How many stage managers does it take to change a...  
*Never mind. It's done.*

How many set designers does it take to change a light bulb?

*Does it really have to be a light bulb?*

How many lighting designers does it take to change a light bulb?

*Why bother, the actress can't find the light anyway.*

How many props masters does it take to change a light bulb?

*Light bulb!? No one told me they put a lamp on the set.*

How many theatre students does it take to change a light bulb?

*Uh, what's the deadline, 'cause I may need an extension?*

How many lighting techs does it take to change a light bulb?

*It's not a bulb; it's a lamp, stupid.*

How many conductors does it take to change a light bulb?

*Seven. Of course, I wouldn't expect you to understand.*

How many actors does it take to change a light bulb?

*All of them. One to change the bulb, and the rest to talk about how much better they could have done it.*

How many performance artists does it take to change a light bulb?

*I don't know. I left before the first act was over.*

How many theatre critics does it take to change a light bulb?

*One to be highly critical of the design elements, one to express contempt for the glow of the lamp, one to lambaste the wattage used, one to discuss at length his interpretation of wattage used, one to observe how trite the use of a light bulb was, one to critique the performance of the bulb itself, one to recall superb light bulbs of past seasons and lament how this one*

*fails to measure up, and all to join in the refrain, reflecting on how they could build a better light bulb in their sleep.*

How many audience members does it take to change a light bulb?

*Four. One to do it, one to cry all through Act I, one to loudly say, "LOOK ROSE. HE'S CHANGING THE LIGHT BULB," and one to frantically try to silence their cell phone as it plays the Hallelujah Chorus.*



\*\*\*AUDITIONS\*\*\* for *The Spitfire Grill*, Music & Book by James Valcq, Lyrics & Book by Fred Alley, based on the Film by Lee David Zlotoff, will be held **June 14<sup>th</sup> at noon** at the Playhouse.

We are reprising a show from our 2006 Slate of Plays that did not get to complete its run due to unfortunate circumstance; therefore, only the following roles will be open at auditions:

Sheriff Joe Sutter: Mid-late 40's. A small-town policeman with an appealing intensity and a restless nature. Strong fold tenor to a 'G' (touches an 'A').

The Visitor: Mid-40's. A mysterious figure who never speaks. An actor with powerful eyes and a very strong sense of his body.

We also require an understudy for the following role:

Effy Krayneck: 50's-60's. Postmistress and busybody, a woman with narrow eyes and a sour tongue. Solid singer in mezzo/alto chest range. (Carries close harmony.)

**DIRECTOR'S WORKSHOP** is slated for **Saturday, July 19, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sunday, July 20 from 1-4 p.m.** It is imperative that all new directors (those who have not directed at Twin Lakes Playhouse) complete this workshop before directing a play at this facility. This workshop is also open to those who are curious about theatre, the ins and outs of directing and the commitment it takes to direct a show.

**EDUCATION/OUTREACH PROGRAM** will be presenting their second teen acting workshop at the Baxter County Library on **June 25<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m.** This workshop was extremely well-received and successful last year. We will be repeating the same curriculum for beginning actors with short scenes at the end of the workshop that incorporate the information learned in the workshop. We will touch on voice, movement, and mime through various theatre exercises. If you have a teen or know of a teen who might be interested, signups are the first week of June. They can contact the library for a date and time.

**RED, WHITE AND BLUE FESTIVAL**: The cast members from THE SPITFIRE GRILL will be representing the Playhouse at the festival on **June 28** (before the fireworks) **and 29**. They intend to sing a medley of songs from the play to spark interest in the show and the theatre. Please come and support them.

### **Twin Lakes Playhouse-Members Meeting May 19, 2008**

Meeting came to order @ 1900

-Welcome to guests and visitors

-Minutes approved as printed in newsletter

- Treasurer's Report
  - Play Reading committee report, 8 plays & 4 directors
  - Directors workshop will be the end of July
  - Educational Outreach will have a teen workshop June 25
  - Patrons committee, got Dr. Warr as a patron
  - Motion to pave front area for \$1800—TABLED
  - Ladies room leak was repaired, we will see at next rain
  - Publicity committee—we are now in the Rural Electric Magazine, cast was published in the paper, Calico Rock was covered, the "Live Stage Play" banner was introduced.
  - Nomination committee will be headed by Bill Simpson
  - Membership committee introduced new format of members directory
  - Bill Simpson volunteered to work on the website
  - The director of "Wit" Marge Rock introduced the cast
  - Benefit show proceeds will go to Camp Quality
  - Deb Smith volunteered to type revisions to Standing Rules
  - New Lighting was introduced
  - Best choice labels needs a volunteer, no one came forward
  - Need volunteer for costume room
  - Discussion on Directors' duties
- Adjourned @ 1948

### MEETINGS

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

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

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

MONDAY, JULY 21, 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**

**NOTES FROM THE EDITOR:** I have been witness, in my few years with TLP, to comings and goings of some very talented people. The first production I saw when I arrived in Mountain Home was "A Piece of My Heart," a play about nurses in the Viet Nam War. It was touching and wonderfully acted. I turned to my sister and commented on the talent available in this little mountain town. I have seen many plays since then and most have been quite enjoyable. I have even had the opportunity to be cast in a couple of them and will be directing my second show this year. Who would have thought this would happen so late in my life? Having been an actress back in my 20s, I gave up drama for a more serene and predictable lifestyle. I come to Mountain Home in my 50s and I feel like a kid again. I encourage all who dare to get involved, and at a high level. It is said that we get as much back and we put into something- in this case, I get more. That's probably why I do so much for

the Playhouse. I am reaping the benefits. I am able to write, direct, act, produce, create, and **be** a theatre person again. I love it! I hope all of you can find your niche, as well.

*"It is never too late to be what you might have been." George Eliot*

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](mailto:ozarktootsie@centurytel.net).*

\*\*\*\*\* **Deadline for July 2008 Newsletter is July 3rd** \*\*\*\*\*

Board of Directors 2008: Anne Johnson-Loftis, Chairman; Shirley Spitzer, Vice-Chairman; Jim Smith, Recording Secretary; Lloyd Lowery, Treasurer; Donna Griffiths; Larry Gehrke; Jack Ortegel; and Denise Jones.

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

**Remember Father's Day** 

