America’s National Community Theatre Festival
June 12 - 17, 2023
Louisville, Kentucky

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Adjudication Seminar
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“During these uncertain times...blah, blah, blah”

Yes, folks, these are uncertain times—and who knows this better than those who dedicate themselves to community theatre. After all, when have we had “certain” times?

Ever heard this conversation between a friend and a community theatre-volunteer, professional, or board member? (Insert which is appropriate for you.)

“Hi G.B., how are things going at Limping Armadillo Community Theatre?”

“Thanks for asking, things are certain.”

No, never. Never certain. Even if you don't factor in a worldwide pandemic and recession, things in the world of nonprofit theatre are never “certain.” Of course, there are community and nonprofit theatres who are financially secure and artistically realized, but solid and continual work—hard work—goes into keeping them successful.

Many organizations struggle, even in good years, with the reality of a fickle audience, varying economic tides, and alternate entertainment competition. When community members struggle with making hard decisions about their entertainment dollar or health, and competition for the entertainment dollar is stretched to the maximum, our audiences grow smaller.

The bottom line is that if audiences dwindle and costs rise, many community theatres will not survive.

But I am certain about one thing. Yes, certain, that audiences who love live theatre will continue or return. The romance and excitement of seeing live theatre will triumph.

And while some theatres will close, many others will rise like a phoenix. Sure, we may have to dust off a few golden oldies to attract audiences back, but we can slip a Sam Shepherd in there for good measure, and the audience may love it.

We may have to adapt and (gasp) change to attract those theatre lovers, but it will happen. Certainly!
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AACT welcomes Spotlight input and requests for advertising rates. Contact David Cockerell at david@aact.org to submit content. Visit aact.org/advertise-through-aact for advertising rates and specs.

On the cover: Amy Scheidegger Ducos, Founder/Director of Rock & Roar Creative, created the poster and graphics for the AACTFest 2023 National Festival.
THERE’S NO PLACE LIKE HOME...
Enthrall your audiences with this enduring tale of humor, heart and the power of hope
at concordsho.ws/WizardOfOz

By L. Frank Baum
With Music and Lyrics by Harold Arlen and E. Y. Harburg
Background Music by Herbert Stothart
Dance and Vocal Arrangements by Peter Howard
Orchestration by Larry Wilcox

Based upon the Classic Motion Picture owned by Turner Entertainment Co. and distributed in all media by Warner Bros.
Adapted by John Kane for the Royal Shakespeare Company

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"a brilliant, harrowing interpretation of Remarque’s famous novel"
Karen Tophan | ChicagoOnStage.com

"Very few playwrights try to take on as much as this script does. Even fewer plays succeed as much in telling their tale so powerfully."
Amy Munice | Picture This Post

All Quiet on the Western Front

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Adaptation by MATT FOSS

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Marc Edson
Chico CA (2023)
Jon Douglas Rake
Tacoma, WA (2022)
Dane Winters
Germany (US Army) (2022)

Upcoming Events

AACT Script Club
November 3 – The SpongeBob Musical, based on the series by Stephen Hillenburg, book by Kyle Jarrow, musical production conceived by Tina Landau
aact.org/club

AACT Industry Connection
November 9 – Instant Encore
aact.org/ic

AACT Online Roundtables
November 15 – Board Development
aact.org/roundtables

AACT Virtual Masterclass
December 1 – Finders Keepers: Volunteer Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition
aact.org/masterclass

AACT Executive Committee Meeting
November 19, 2022
Hyatt Regency Louisville
320 West Jefferson Street
Louisville, Kentucky
aact.org/calendar

AACT 2023 Board Winter Meetings
February 24-25, 2023
Courtyard San Diego Old Town
2435 Jefferson Street
San Diego, California
aact.org/calendar

Spotlight

Spotlight is published bimonthly by the American Association of Community Theatre for its members, and is annually distributed to an expanded list of known community theatre organizations and interested individuals.

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Register Early and SAVE! AACTFest 2023
Join us as we celebrate the return of community theatre together!

Early Bird Rates good through March 1, 2023
aact.org/23

This year we are celebrating the return to theatre by planning a festival that you will not forget! How exciting it will be as we reconnect, re-energize, and work to revitalize community theatre in America. Register early and save up to 50% with the early-bird rate!

Festival registration includes tickets to all 12 AACTFest and Youth Festival shows, vetted and sought-after workshops, Broadway keynote, exhibitor booths and giveaways, plus access to the virtual and onsite design competition displays, awards show, and social events.

Since some festival offerings have limited capacity, we encourage you to register early so you don’t miss any of the fun, excitement, and great theatre that only AACTFest can offer.

The Hyatt Regency Louisville will serve as the Festival and conference headquarters, and is within walking distance of the Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts, and Actors Theatre of Louisville. (A trolley will also be available to transport those staying at the hotel to the festival theatre.) The Kentucky Performing Arts Center is where the Festival shows will be performed.

To help with travel, AACT has contracted special airline discounts for festival attendees. To learn more about hotel and travel visit: aact.org/go23

With more than 120 attractions Louisville has something for everyone to see and do. With the festival hotel and theatre located right downtown, attendees will be in walking/trolley distance to top tier restaurants, cultural sites, and shopping.

And of course, we cannot forget the bourbon. The Urban Bourbon Experience is comprised of more than ten distilleries that are open for public tours and tastings. The Urban Bourbon Trail boasts over 35 bars and restaurants with more than 60 bourbons and bourbon-inspired culinary delights—so download the passport at kybourbontrail.com, collect a stamp from each distillery you visit, and enjoy a special prize at the end.

Mark your calendar to join your colleagues and friends for a great time—and great theatre.

VIP Festival Package: $550

Experience AACTFest 2023 at its best by becoming a VIP! Space is limited to 100 people.

- Access to all Festival shows, workshops, and special events
- AACTFest Welcome Gift Package
- Reserved seating – pick and reserve your seat ahead of time for all 12 shows!
- Early hotel reservations at our host hotel—valid up to October 1, 2022
- No-hassle festival check-in – Festival registration items will be delivered to your room if you stay at the host hotel, or expedited at the registration desk
- Belle of Louisville Steamboat Dinner and Cruise

Contact Conference Coordinator Jill Patchin by email jill@aact.org for VIP Package questions and group-seating reservations.

Register at aact.org/register23

More festival information at aact.org/23

AACTFest 2023 registration rates continued on page 11
Just Keep Swimming...

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PLAYS

www.trwplays.com
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Festival Registration

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<td>Advance</td>
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<td>$490</td>
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<tr>
<td>Onsite</td>
<td>$485</td>
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<td>(June 2, 2023-June 13, 2023)</td>
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AACT Youth Discount
(18 and younger): $75 off registration

Competing/Advancing Company Member
$10 off registration

Special Events, Training, and Competitions

Adjudication Training Workshop
(limited to 30 people) - $50

The success of any AACT Festival is in large part dependent upon the skill of its adjudicators. In this introductory workshop you’ll learn what guidance comes from the festival handbook and what kind of autonomy is granted to adjudicators, as well as how to find the best people for the job.

Adjudication Training Seminar
(limited to 15 people) - $150

The AACT Adjudication Training is an add-on event that will be held before (virtually) and in Louisville, during the national festival. The $150 fee helps cover the costs of the five-plus days of intensive instruction. Registration to AACTFest23 is required. As a part of the curriculum, participants will also view AACTFest performances and receive additional training/assignments during festival week. Register for the training when you register for AACTFest.

Note: Adjudication Training 2023 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Scholarships are available. AACT will be providing two scholarships to support and mentor theatre-makers of color.

Youth Conference
(limited to 30 people) - $40
aact.org/youthconf

The AACT Youth Theatre Conference is for youth who aspire to be leaders within the arts and theatre communities. Participants will be exposed to a line-up of powerful theatre performances from around the country, engage in educational workshops, receive mentoring and shadowing from arts professionals and take part in activities that are challenging and fun! The conference is open to ages 12-18.

Belle of Louisville Sunset Steamboat Cruise - $30

Whether you’re admiring the sunset or dancing in the moonlight, enjoy yourself out on the river with a gentle breeze and good company. Concessions and bar will be available. The cruise two-hour excursion on the Belle of Louisville will be the evening of June 15, 2023.

AACTFest 2023 continued on next page
**Belle of Louisville Sunset**
**Endowment Dinner and Cruise - $150**

Indulge in a truly special evening aboard the **Belle of Louisville** for AACT’s Steamboat Dinner and Cruise. Proceeds go to support the AACT Endowment. This two-hour sunset cruise on the evening of June 15, 2023, will include dinner, two drink tickets, music, and fun for all.

**Monologue Competition**
(adult and youth) - $25
aact.org/monologue

Registration for the Monologue Competition must be completed with your online festival registration. There will be a youth division and adult division. Participation is limited, so early registration is highly recommended.

**Design Competition**
aact.org/design23
Virtual Entry Fee: $35
Onsite Display Entry Fee: $35

The AACT 2023 National Design Competition showcases the best of community theatre in this country. It is an opportunity for your theatre and designers to shine. AACT-member theatres and their designers enter designs for projects occurring between **July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2023**.

There are five design categories: Scenic, Lighting, Properties, Costume, and Special Design. Cash prizes for top designs in each category.

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**In conjunction with, held prior to AACTFest 2023:**

**Community Theatre Management Conference (CTMC)**

June 11-13, Louisville, Kentucky
aact.org/ctmc

**AT CTMC you will:**

Learn, Discover, and Fine-tune

- Learn through a customized series of intensive, topic-specific, large and small group discussions that speak directly to your unique challenges and experiences.
- Discover important perspectives from administrators at all levels—from the volunteer who “runs things around here” to the “just starting” part-time administrator, to the full-time professional manager. All are encouraged to attend!
- Fine-tune your management skills

---

**Violet Sharp**

*Winner of the Julie Harris Playwriting Award*

“It both blew my mind and broke my heart... a wonderful blend of murder mystery, historical drama, family saga, immigrant story, American Dream, plight of the underclass, tabloid sensationalism...”

-Moira Bengochas, actress, Reno Little Theater

“Our highest attended drama to date.”

-Melissa Tasker, Executive Director, Reno Little Theater

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**An Untold Tale of the Lindbergh Kidnapping**

Violet Sharp, a serving girl for the Lindbergh family, finds herself a key suspect in the crime of the century.

**photo courtesy of Beautiful Theater**
Auction Donations Support AACT Endowment Fund

Add to the fun of AACTFest 2023 by contributing a special item to the Silent Auction. Donations are currently being accepted, even if you’re unable to attend the festival.

Auction proceeds benefit the AACT Endowment’s Festival Support Fund, which helps companies representing their regions with some of their travel expenses to the national festival, or to subsequent international festivals.

How to Contribute Items

Visit [aact.org/auction](http://aact.org/auction) to submit your donation. (Donations must be received by [June 14, 2023](http://aact.org/auction).)

Items Sought

Donations are requested with a minimum value of $100 per item, basket, or group of items to be auctioned together. Suggestions for best-sellers:

- Fine jewelry, gourmet candy or chocolate (from your state or region)
- Expert training, services, and goods
- Fine works of art
- Gift certificates for destination experiences or entertainment
- Gift cards to national chain restaurants, department stores, movie theatres, Amazon, etc.
- Or surprise us with something fantastic!

Schedule Your Donation

Visit [aact.org/auction](http://aact.org/auction) to schedule your donation. Complete the Auction Contribution form or email [info@aact.org](mailto:info@aact.org) with a description of the items you are sending, their value, the method you intend to use for delivery, and when they will arrive.

Questions? Contact the AACT office at [817-732-3177](tel:817-732-3177) or [info@aact.org](mailto:info@aact.org). Our thanks to all who have already donated.

Ready to Bid?

Auction items will be available to view and purchase online, beginning several weeks before AACTFest 2023. Winners are notified at festival’s end, and you do not need to be registered for the festival to bid or purchase.

Make a Difference!

End-of-Year Giving

The AACT Endowment Fund began as an idea—and a challenge—to make the national community theatre festival more accessible to theatres in communities all over the United States.

Since 1991, AACT has been able to provide travel grants and mission support through the generous donations of its members like you. However, these past few years have shown us that there’s still much work to be done to rebuild and strengthen the festival cycle nationwide.

This holiday season, we ask for your continued support as we move forward with greater determination and purpose to help theatres thrive. To learn more about how to donate and support AACT’s Mission or Festival Funds, visit [aact.org/endowment](http://aact.org/endowment).
Moving On
Theatres recently selected to represent their states/regions

State winners moving on to their regional festival are shown below. Some states qualify to send two shows to their regional festival. Winners of the regional festivals will move on to the national festival in Louisville, Kentucky.

Productions advancing to the AACTFest national festival are in bold type. See all theatres representing states and regions in the AACTFest 2023 cycle at aact.org/moving

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<th>Theatre</th>
<th>From</th>
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<td>IV b</td>
<td>Venice Theatre</td>
<td>Venice, FL</td>
<td>Hamlet POV</td>
<td>William Shakespeare, adapted by Murray Chase</td>
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<td>IV b</td>
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<td>VI</td>
<td>Untitled Pop Up Theatre</td>
<td>Elk City, OK</td>
<td>Commencing</td>
<td>Tiphani Henderson</td>
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AACT Members SAVE 30%
www.subplotstudio.com/aact
“The purpose of AACT adjudication is threefold: to accurately reflect to the performing company what has been successfully achieved; to outline reasonable steps that might be taken to enhance interpretation of the story; and, finally, to select which of the companies will receive awards. At its best, adjudication both educates and illuminates.”

- AACT Adjudication Committee

Over several festival cycles, AACT’s Adjudication Seminar has provided adjudication training in both virtual and in-person formats. In 2023, AACT is embracing the benefits of both formats by presenting a hybrid model designed to maximize the experience.

AACT’s 2023 Adjudication Seminar will begin with six virtual sessions, two and a half hours each, scheduled March-May. Having completed the training, participants will view the performances at the National Festival in Louisville, and respond to them with techniques learned in training, receiving feedback designed to polish both message and delivery. In-person sessions during the festival will include how to negotiate with fellow adjudicators to determine award outcomes, and how to prepare for a work as an adjudicator.

Kristi Quinn will be the instructor for the seminar, and will be joined by other nationally recognized adjudicators, who will drop in for coaching and to address specific topics. Kristi is the AACT President, and has adjudicated at festivals at many levels.

Join us for the AACT 2023 Adjudication Seminar. Registration information and further details will be available in January at aact.org/seminar.

AACT will be providing two BIPOC scholarships for the Adjudication Seminar to support and mentor theatre makers of colors. Details will be available in January at aact.org/seminar.

Virtual Session Schedule:
March 18, 25
April 1, 15, 29
May 6

Murder’s in the HEIR
By Billy St. John

Every suspect in this hilarious mystery has the weapon, opportunity, and motive to murder tyrannical billionaire Simon Starkweather.

It’s up to your audience to determine who actually did it!

See for yourself why this topselling mystery has had THOUSANDS of productions!

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Upcoming AACT Webinars

AACT Webinars offer a collection of virtual programming designed to benefit theatre organizations and individual artists across the nation, regardless of location or budget size. Below are some of the upcoming Roundtables, Virtual Masterclasses, Industry Connections, and Script Club sessions.

All events begin at 2:00 PM (Eastern) /1:00 PM (Central) /12:00 PM (Mountain) /11:00 AM (Pacific). For complete details and registration info, please visit aact.org/webinars.

**Roundtable:** Board Development
**November 15**
Free for AACT Members
Enhance your board’s effectiveness by clarifying and developing roles and responsibilities, policies, recruitment strategies, and more. Top tools for governing, advisory, fundraising, and working boards.

**Virtual Masterclass:** Finders Keepers: Volunteer Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition
**December 1**
$15 for AACT Members; $25 for Non-Members
Discover how to identify new volunteers and keep them coming back with practical volunteer management strategies.

Presenter Mary Jo DeNolf spent 22 years as the Director of Operations and Volunteers at Grand Rapids Civic Theatre, where she also worked as stage manager and props designer. She was the production manager for AACTFest in 2017, 2019, and 2021, and is currently AACT’s Festivals/Engagement Coordinator.

**Script Club:** The SpongeBob Musical, based on the series by Stephen Hillenburg, book by Kyle Jarrow, musical production conceived by Tina Landau
**November 3**
$10 for AACT Members
With strong title recognition, a successful Broadway run, and a hit score featuring songs from Aerosmith, Sara Bareilles, David Bowie, Cyndi Lauper, John Legend, Panic! At the Disco, and many more, it’s easy to see why so many community theatres are eagerly producing the Nickelodeon blockbuster. Brainstorm with other organizations and artists on all the creative opportunities and challenges you’ll face on your way to Bikini Bottom.

**Industry Connections:** InstantEncore
**November 9**
Free for AACT Members and Non-Members
Introducing InsideGuide—“The only digital program book you’ll ever need.”

Presented by David Dombrosky, Chief Marketing Officer, InstantEncore
Over the past two years, arts organizations have examined every aspect of their operations for new ways forward - from providing safer experiences to generating revenue and reducing expenses. This has led to a growing shift from printed programs to digital program books. Join this presentation for a closer look.

**Script Club:** Clue, written by Sandy Rustin; based on the screenplay by Jonathan Lynn
**January 5**
$10 for AACT Members
Join playwright Sandy Rustin for an engaging and enlightening discussion on her popular play, Clue: On Stage, based on the popular Paramount Pictures film and Hasbro board game.

For more information and registration links for all upcoming webinars, visit: aact.org/webinars
AACT Salutes Veterans
Veterans Day, November 11, 2022

Veterans Day honors all of those who have served the country in the United States Armed Forces in war or peace.

AACT honors and thanks the brave men and women who serve, and have served, our country at home and overseas. We are particularly proud of the partnership we have built with Army Europe Entertainment to support theatre in the military.

Veterans Day was originally called Armistice Day, commemorating the end of World War I.

World War I officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919. However, the fighting had actually ended about seven months earlier, when the Allies and Germany ceased battle on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month.

For that reason, November 11, 1918, was largely considered the end of the war, and was dubbed Armistice Day. In 1926, Congress officially recognized it as the end of the war, and in 1938, it became an official holiday, primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I.

But then World War II and the Korean War happened, so on June 1, 1954, at the urging of veterans’ service organizations, Congress amended the commemoration yet again by changing the word “armistice” to “veterans” so the day would honor American veterans of all wars.

This year, the Veterans Day National Ceremony will be held on November 11th at Arlington National Cemetery.

AACT joins in the national salute to all those who have served in this country’s Armed Forces—including AACT members of Army Europe Entertainment, profiled by AACT Region X Representative Dane Winters.

BEETS

Drama by Rick Padden      Cast: 7 m, 2 w

At the height of WWII with a frantic need to produce food, yet faced with a critical shortage of labor, American farmers were compelled to accept help in their fields from prisoners of war. While farmers’ sons fought men just like them in trenches and tanks in Europe, the presence of these POWs in rural America led to plenty of emotional conflict at home.

This is the story of small-town humanity, the simplicity of rural life, the conflicts from economic desperation, and unrequited love. There is conflict for some, acceptance by others, and adjustments for all.

We are all prisoners of fate...
The Terrace Playhouse in Ansbach, Germany, hosted the 2022 US Army IMCOM Europe Entertainment One-Act Play Festival and YouthFEST ‘22, the weekend of Oct. 7-9.

US Army Europe Entertainment is part of the U.S. Army Family and Morale, Welfare, and Recreation program, and also functions as AACT Region X.

Besides the one-act play and YouthFest competitions, the festival weekend included a monologue competition and theatre skills workshops for youth and adults in acting, directing, singing, dancing, auditioning, stage combat, and technical design. All events were free and open to the public.

The competitions were adjudicated by professional theatre artists from Austria, the United Kingdom, and the United States, including AACT’s Ron Ziegler and Kathy Pingel.

The weekend culminated in an awards ceremony during which a one-act play and a YouthFEST show were selected to represent Army Europe Entertainment, the US Army, and AACT Region X at the AACT National Festival in June, 2023.

The event also allowed Army Entertainment staff and participants from Germany, Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands to meet, work with, and learn from other theatre participants and theatre professionals.

“Army Europe Entertainment provides U.S. soldiers and their families the opportunity to be part of and enjoy quality theatre while they are stationed far from home and serving the nation,” explained Army Europe Entertainment Program Manager Dane Winters. “The program also serves military civilians and retirees and citizens from host nations.”

In addition, it provides soldiers and their families a ‘home away from home,’ said Victoria Hanrahan, Ansbach, Germany Entertainment Director.

“They often feel isolated in countries where English is not the native language. A sense of family and community is vital for their well-being, and like all community theatres, we help people find a ‘family’ by being in a show. Our annual festival expands that family by providing participants a chance to meet other theatre people from across the region.”

Hanrahan was excited about Ansbach's Terrace Playhouse hosting the 2022 festival in her community, for the first time, calling it “a great opportunity for our Ansbach community to welcome people from across Europe and to show off our theatre program.”

More information about Army Europe Entertainment and AACT Region X can be found at aact.org/army
AACT National Awards Nominations

Open Mid-November

AACT National Awards recognize outstanding contributions to community theatre, and the 2023 Awards will be presented in June at AACTFest 2023 in Louisville, Kentucky.

Visit [aact.org/national](http://aact.org/national) to submit a nomination by the deadline, January 20, 2023.

Anyone may nominate a candidate for a National Award. To submit a nomination uniquely suited to your theatre “hero,” visit the AACT website for criteria for each award, and a list of previous award recipients, as well as the online nomination form. [aact.org/national](http://aact.org/national)

The AACT Awards Committee encourages community theatres to consider nominating individuals of all ages for those awards whose criteria are based on merit, rather than age or length of service.

AACT bestows 10 major recognitions in its awards, each focused on a different area of service, honoring those who have contributed significantly to community theatre nationwide:

- Art Cole Lifetime of Leadership Award
- David C. Bryant Outstanding Service Award
- Diamond Crown Organization Award
- Distinguished Merit Award
- Mort Clark International Achievement Award
- Robert E. Gard Superior Volunteer Award
- Shining Star Award
- Special Recognition Award
- Twink Lynch Organizational Achievement Award
- Corporate Award

Spotlight Awards

Nominations are welcome anytime for the AACT Spotlight Award, presented locally by AACT and an AACT member theatre for long or special service that has had a significant impact on the quality of local theatre. Nominations are accepted for persons of all ages. For more detail and to submit a Spotlight Award Nomination visit [aact.org/spotlight-award](http://aact.org/spotlight-award).
The Miracle on Main Street

Linda Miller, AACT Arizona State Contact

With theatres struggling, some closing and others managing to claw their way back to life following the pandemic, the town of Prescott Valley Arizona witnessed what might be called a theatrical miracle: the long-awaited construction of a new community theatre.

Over 20 years ago, theatre founder Clyde Neville had the dream of starting a theatre where participants of all ages were welcome to “come play” in a family-friendly theatrical environment. Over the years the group moved nomadically between various loaned/rented spaces—never losing sight of the dream of having their own permanent home. And, now, despite these most challenging times, that dream has become a reality. And, as with most things community theatre, it took a village.

Persistence and unwavering faith. Despite facing a lot of “no,” “you can’t,” and “it won’t work,” Clyde and his supporters kept their eye on the prize and never wavered in their belief that a community theatre could and would be built in the town of Prescott Valley.

Community support. Over the years, local commercial developer Fain Signature Group had allowed the group to use its vacant commercial units for theatre productions, workshops, camps, etc. Approximately four years ago the development group made the decision to lease a prime commercial building lot to the theatre for 20 years at $1 a year. Being adjacent to the existing Findlay Toyota Event Center provided not only great visibility but also easy access and ample parking. Local businesses donated supplies, time, expertise, and grant funding and individuals bought bricks, donated funds, and provided nearly 20,000 hours of volunteer service.

Local government support. The Town of Prescott Valley had for 15 years held donated funds while looking for a usage that would satisfy both the donors’ intent and the community’s needs. In 2021 approximately $256,000 of the fund was pledged to the theatre, providing funding to finish construction, form a youth choir, and develop a city-run musical theatre day camp to compliment the theatre’s existing youth programs.

Through persistence, confidence in the need, and generous community support, what began over 20 years ago as the nomadic Lonesome Valley Playhouse, emerged as Prescott Valley Performing Arts. Their comfortable, versatile 150-220 seat Main Street Theatre opened in May of this year, proving once again, in spite of challenges (including a pandemic) when it comes to community theatre...miracles can and do happen!
Jim Carver, who passed away September 25, 2022, leaves a legacy of a life in the theatre that will influence theatre production throughout this country for generations to come.

Jim spent a lifetime in rehearsals as either director or actor, saying, “I don’t know how many plays I’ve directed or how many roles I’ve played. I don’t keep track of a thing like that. The next project is what is important, not the last one.”

More important, perhaps, the thousands of theatre people who were directed by him, mentored by him, taught by him, and loved by him will continue to share his practical knowledge of the theatre craft and his imaginative vision of theatre art in their own work.

Born in a trunk, Jim claimed to have learned theatre by osmosis. His actress mother and arts administrator father propped him up in a theatre seat at their rehearsals for the theatre they helped create—the Kalamazoo Civic Theatre in Michigan. In 1958, Jim joined the Civic staff as a Production Assistant. In 1974, he followed his father as the company’s Managing Director. By the time of his retirement in 1997, Jim had built the theatre into one of the country’s largest. Even after retirement, Jim continued to direct and act around the country, mostly in his adopted state of Colorado.

He believed that while other countries might have a dedicated building named as their national theatre, community theatre was our national theatre. And Jim Carver was community theatre to those who knew him.

In his book, Carver’s Manual for Directing Community Theatre, Jim noted the special nature of community theatre: “I have always said that the production of a community theatre play is an amazing process. We gather together a group of people, many of whom do not know each other, many of whom have no theatrical experience, and in the course of a few weeks of rehearsal we produce a piece of art of good enough quality to be viewed by an audience. Amazing!”

Jim’s impact on those who gave their time to community theatre spans generations, and people’s memories attest to his impact. Beau Dameron, an actor in Wichita Falls, Texas, said that while they worked together on only three shows, “I grew so much, not only as an actor but as a director sitting under his learning tree.” Brandy McGreen, an actor in Boulder, Colorado, agrees: “That smile! He’s directing, guiding, pushing, and then you finally ‘get it’ and the difference is almost palpable. You look out at his seat and see him leaning forward with that huge smile, as if to say ‘Yes! Nice work, kiddo! See what you did there?!’”

When Jim retired, he was asked to select a role to finish his Civic career. Some may have thought he would want to reprise one of his legendary comic performances from A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, Little Me, or Sugar Babies. Instead, he chose to perform Tevye in Fiddler on the Roof. Tevye was the perfect choice, because in addition to being a great role (no fool, Jim) the show’s story was about family. Jim not only came from a theatre family, he created theatre families with each of his productions. He came from tradition and left us with tradition.

On the national scene, Jim served as President of AACT and was honored as an AACT Fellow in 1988, and as recipient of the Art Cole Lifetime of Leadership Award in 1994. He also led countless workshops and was a valued adjudicator at festivals. Plays he directed represented the U.S. at international theatre festivals in both Monaco and Ireland. As if that were not enough, Jim also published two books on community theatre.

Those who worked with Jim will carry with them two of his mantras. The first: “If it ain’t fun, it ain’t worth doing. But the fun comes from doing good work.”
The second was a saying he would share with his cast and crew on opening nights. In a Civic season brochure, Jim shared it with the audience, too:

“Something electric happens when theatre hits a perfect moment. The audience knows it. The actors know it. There is a sense of achievement. The audience responds to it, the actors thrive on it. When it happens in every moment, in every breath, the play becomes an exhilarating experience.

“The players strive for this perfection at every moment of rehearsal and performance. It is in our consciousness as we ready a production. Each actor, each crew member, gives their total commitment in striving for the “perfect experience.”

“There will be descents, there will be plateaus, there will be breathtaking heights. But we are truly committed to striving for the perfect, the ideal.

“The last thing our actors hear before they go onstage is ‘Give ’em your best.’”

Jim Carver always gave us his best. As Pat Puia, a Kalamazoo Civic Theatre volunteer, put it, “He brought out the best in us, both artistically and personally.

Thanks, Jim, for a lifetime of wonderful memories, outstanding shows, powerful lessons about the art of making theatre, and introductions to all the amazingly talented and inspirational people who graced the rehearsal hall and stage, with you at the helm.”

Morrie Enders is Executive Director of the Lincoln Community Playhouse in Lincoln, Nebraska, and served as Artistic Director of Kalamazoo Civic Theatre, working closely with Jim Carver.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THESE AND OTHER PLAYS BY THE AUTHOR: WWW.THOMASHISCHAK.COM
New Roles

**Chris Hamby**  
*Peoria, Arizona*

Chris has been named Executive Director of Theater Works, after serving as the Theater Works Artistic Director for the past seven years. Justin Shaver, chair of the Theater Works Board of Directors, notes that “Chris has been key to the artistic growth of Theater Works and is the right person at the right time to continue his services of excellence. He’s a thoughtful leader with a foundation of stellar theatre artistry.”

Hamby began his association with Theater Works as a teen and directed his first production for the company in 2000, later serving the theatre as Education Director. He has also worked with other Arizona theater companies, including Greasepaint, East Valley Children’s Theatre, Mesa Encore Theatre and Desert Foothills Theater. However, “Theater Works has been my home for many years,” he said, “and I am proud to steward it into the future.” Another recent accomplishment: Hamby was elected to AACT’s Board of Directors.

**Josiah B. Tropp**  
*Madison, Wisconsin*

The Gerald A. Bartell Community Theatre Foundation has named Josiah B. Tropp as its new Executive Director. At a young age, Josiah was exposed to the arts by his parents, who often brought him with them to the theatre and other artistic events. In 2015 he received his B.F.A. in Theatre Management and Promotions from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. He then served as part-time Executive Director of the McCombs/Bruchs Performing Arts Center in Wautoma, Wisconsin. When asked about next steps in his new role at the Bartell Theatre, Josiah said he plans on working to “continue making it a safe space for organizations and patrons to create and appreciate great performing art. Also, making the space available for potential outside art organizations to showcase their art in an intimate setting.”

**Todd Allen Martin**  
*Wimberley, Texas*

The Wimberley Players has announced Todd Allen Martin as its new Technical Director. He served as the Managing Director of the Cheyenne Little Theatre Players from 2017-2021 and as the organization’s Technical Director from 2001-2004. Todd worked at Baylor University from 2012-2017 as an Assistant Technical Director at Waco Hall. Previously, he was Artistic Director at the Gaslight-Baker Theatre in Lockhart, Texas. His production credits include lighting design for Disney’s Beauty and the Beast and The Addams Family, lighting and scenic design for Of Mice and Men, director and lighting design for The Last 5 Years, and director for Boeing Boeing. He also enjoys treading the boards as an actor from time to time.

**Toni Simmons Henson**  
*Greensboro, North Carolina*

Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC) has named Toni Simmons Henson as Executive Director. She brings to her new role over 30 years of expertise in business development, theatre and entertainment production, and marketing. In addition, she has launched and operated three franchises and four businesses in her career, most notably, the Atlanta Black Theatre Festival, Black Family Table Talk Podcast/ Blog, Black Theatre TV, and ABTF Travels. She is a graduate of New York University (M.P.A.) and Howard University (B.B.A.) and earned Executive Certificates in Non-profit Management and Women in Leadership. “I am so humbled and honored to accept my next assignment as the executive director of this prestigious organization,” she said. “I am fueled by my love for the arts and the extraordinary gifts that we as humans possess.”
Dave DeChristopher
Spencer, Iowa

Spencer Community Theatre (SCT) recently welcomed Dave DeChristopher as Artistic Director. He previously served as Director of Education and Outreach for the Black Hills Community Theatre in Rapid City, South Dakota. Dave spent 24 years in New York City as an actor, director, playwright, and artist in schools. He also served as a corporate trainer with Performance of a Lifetime and was a founding member of the Jewish Repertory Theatre for Young Audiences. He also spent more than a decade as the Artistic Director of the Toledo Repertoire Theatre. He’s a member of Actors’ Equity Association, serving on its Theatre for Young Audiences committee for a decade, and is also a member of The Dramatists Guild.

Congratulations to all those with new roles! It is wonderful to see so many additions our member theatres are making to their staff. If you have someone in a new role at your theatre, email info@aact.org to have your theatre and new staff featured in Spotlight.

AACT Region I Representative Bevie Lord (right) congratulates Amy Newberg and Lida McGirr on their outstanding performances in the Lexington Players of New England’s production of Winter Flowers, by Lily Rusek, at the New Hampshire Community Theater Association’s state festival held at The Players of Concord, in Concord, New Hampshire, August 27, 2022. Bevie is also congratulating Sal Jones, director of the production, for being named Best Director and for the production receiving the recognition of being named the Best Production.

Theatre Tuscaloosa Executive Director Tina Turley, AACT Education Coordinator David A. VanCleave, Playwright Michael Higgins, AACT NewPlayFest 2022 Dramaturg Kathy Pingel, and Theatre Tuscaloosa Managing Director Adam M. Miller visit during the NewPlayFest workshop at Theatre Tuscaloosa, September 26, 2022, in preparation for the world premiere opening of Launch Day (Love Stories from the Year 2108).
OTHER MUSICALS:

Christmas My Way – A Sinatra Holiday Bash
I Left My Heart – A Salute to the Music of Tony Bennett
Simply Simone – The Music of Nina Simone
One More For My Baby - A Sinatra Songbook
Town Without Pity – The Love Songs of Gene Pitney
Bonnie & Clyde
Club Morocco

PLAYS:

Dracula - The Case of the Silver Scream (Film Noir)
The Incredible Jungle Journey of Fenda Maria
Casa Blue—The Last Moments in the Life of Freda Kahlo
Vampire Monologues
War of the Worlds

Scripts, Information, and Licensing at:
summerwindproductions.com

Spotlight on Discounter

Broadway Media works to break down barriers to the performing arts by innovating on everyday technology and creating resources that help build a more empowered and creative theatre industry. As a Corporate Partner of AACT, Broadway Media is delighted to offer member organizations discounted resources that will help bring your stage to life.

AACT Members receive:

• 10% off the purchase of Scenic Projections, a script-accurate show package that follows every scene, setting and magic moment in the script, along with pre-programmed cues. Plus, you get instant rehearsal and performance materials through the easy-to-use app, StagePlayer.

• 10% off Choreography Guides, an easy-to-use digital video resource, which features dance instruction for all experience levels, and is geared towards performers of all ages. Inspire your cast and enrich the educational experience as you learn the stories behind the steps and the vision from the actual creators.

• 20% off select Broadway Media Projection Hardware rentals. Enjoy stunning, shadow-free production values with super-bright projectors that are made for the stage.

Web Power

One of the great advantages of AACT membership is access to a wide range of discounts. Some are special offers (often for a limited-time), while others are ongoing—and all can be found on the AACT website.

For example, AACT organizational members receive substantial discounts on scripts, materials, and royalties from many different publishers. Discounts are also available for everything from box office and member management software to graphics and web design, from backdrops and projections to car and truck rentals.

Go to aact.org/discounts and check out the many offers for AACT members. Details on how to redeem these benefits are at aact.org/discounts2 (member sign-in required).

Watch for Web Power in every issue of Spotlight—and learn how to get the most from the AACT website.
New Play Contests

Woodward Newman Award

The Woodward/Newman Drama Award is an exclusive honor offered by Bloomington Playwrights Project, remembering the many great dramas that Joanne Woodward and Paul Newman performed in together. It presents the best unpublished full-length drama of the year with a cash prize of $3,000 and a full production as part of the BPP’s Mainstage season, along with travel reimbursement.

Deadline: December 1
newplays.org/opportunities/submissions/woodward-newman-award/

The Robert J. Pickering Award for Playwriting Excellence

Full length, unproduced plays and musicals. Children’s plays accepted. Branch County Community Theatre reserves the right and agrees to produce the first-place winner in this yearly competition.

Send submissions to:
Branch County Community Theatre
14 S. Hanchett St.
Coldwater, Michigan 49036.
Deadline: December 31
branchcct.org/pickering

Artie’s Advocacy Tip

Get to Know Your Candidate!

This election season, we hope that you will go to the polls with the arts community also in mind and support candidates with arts friendly policies and incentives. The Arts Action Fund has online resources to see your legislator’s voting records.

To see how your legislator voted, consult the “Congressional Arts Report Card 2022”—a one-stop guide to help you make informed decisions at the ballot box. It is configured using metrics and analysis based on previous congressional voting records, sponsorship of key arts legislation, and participation in the cultural caucuses.

If you are not seeing positive results or no data at all on your candidate, we encourage to reach out and speak directly with them or an aide to learn more about their position on the policies mentioned. To view the “Congressional Arts Report Card 2022” and other Arts Advocacy resources visit:

artsactionfund.org/ReportCard
## Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<th>City</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov 3</td>
<td>AACT Script Club: The SpongeBob Musical</td>
<td>online</td>
<td></td>
<td>817-732-3177</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dvancleave@aact.org">dvancleave@aact.org</a></td>
<td>aact.org/club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 4-5</td>
<td>Better Together (South Carolina State Festival)</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Aiken</td>
<td>843-615-0251</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ryanhewitt1228@gmail.com">ryanhewitt1228@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>southcarolinatheatre.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 4-5</td>
<td>ACTFest 22 (Alabama State Festival)</td>
<td>AL</td>
<td>Tuscaloosa</td>
<td>205-391-2925</td>
<td><a href="mailto:amiller@sheltonstate.edu">amiller@sheltonstate.edu</a></td>
<td>theatretusc.com/</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 9</td>
<td>AACT Industry Connections: Instant Encore</td>
<td>online</td>
<td></td>
<td>817-732-3177</td>
<td><a href="mailto:quiana@aact.org">quiana@aact.org</a></td>
<td>aact.org/ic</td>
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<td>Nov 15</td>
<td>AACT Online Roundtable: Board Development</td>
<td>online</td>
<td></td>
<td>817-732-3177</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dvancleave@aact.org">dvancleave@aact.org</a></td>
<td>aact.org/roundtables</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 18-20</td>
<td>New York State Festival</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Rome</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@tanys.org">info@tanys.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 18-20</td>
<td>Kentucky State AACTFest 2022</td>
<td>KY</td>
<td>Cambellsville</td>
<td>270-683-5333</td>
<td><a href="mailto:todd@theatreworkshop.org">todd@theatreworkshop.org</a></td>
<td>campbellsville.edu/</td>
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<td>Nov 19</td>
<td>AACT Executive Committee Meeting</td>
<td>KY</td>
<td>Louisville</td>
<td>817-732-3177</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 1</td>
<td>AACT Virtual Masterclass: Volunteer Recruitment, Retention, Recognition</td>
<td>online</td>
<td></td>
<td>817-732-3177</td>
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### Harris Cashes Out!

**by Londos D’Arrigo**

*writer for JOAN RIVERS, PHYLLIS DILLER and LILY TOMLIN*

Another hilarious, proven comedy from the author of **SPREADING IT AROUND**

Reviews and photos: www.londos.net
Publisher: www.canadianplay outlet.com
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Harris Cashes Out!
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Free Reads for AACT Members
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Murder's in the Heir
Spreading It Around
Subplot Studio
Summerwind Productions
My Way
Thomas Hischak, Playwright
World Classics On Stage
Theatrical Rights Worldwide (TRW)
TRW Plays
Theatrical Rights Worldwide (TRW)
TRW Musicals
USITT
Violet Sharp
An Untold Tale of the Lindbergh Kidnapping
Two plays with interwoven themes written by acclaimed playwright Steven Dietz and commissioned by Children’s Theatre of Charlotte and Actor’s Theatre of Charlotte. Although both plays are independent and stand on their own, audiences will gain a deeper understanding of the characters and storylines by experiencing both plays.

**The Ghost of Splinter Cove**

*The Ghost of Splinter Cove* is an adventure story prompted by the imaginations of three young people left to play in their basement on a rainy day. Siblings Cora and Nate and their friend, Sydney, have a lot of questions about what their parents are doing upstairs. When their adventure game becomes more real than they imagined, they unearth a history of their family that they could never have known. *The Ghost of Splinter Cove* is a fun, lively and moving play for the courageous young person inside all of us.

*Cast size: 4m., 2w.*

dramaticpublishing.com/splinter-cove

**The Great Beyond**

*The Great Beyond* reunites two sisters who have lost their beloved father and whose contentious relationship with each other remains unresolved. At the urging of their husband and girlfriend, respectively, the sisters decide to conduct a seance to contact their deceased father. Amazingly, this seance does produce the result they hoped for ... in a completely unexpected way. *The Great Beyond* is a comic drama about loss, hope and finding the power to believe.

*Cast size: 2m., 3w.*

dramaticpublishing.com/the-great-beyond

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June 12 - 17, 2023
Louisville, Kentucky