

spotlight

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY THEATRE

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2022

aact 2023
fest

Live in Louisville

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

IN THIS ISSUE

AACTFest 2023

Adjudication Seminar

Fall Webinars

AACT Region X Festivals

Prescott Valley Theatre Opens New Theatre



aact.org/23

Mr. Sandman • Lollipop • Sugartime • Allegheny Moon • All I Have To Do Is Dream • Dreamlover • Stupid Cupid • Lipstick on Your Collar • Luck • **"THIS SHOW IS AN UTTER CHARM BOMB!"** • Hold Me • Thrill Me, Kill Me, Heal Me • With This Ring

The New York Times

I Only Want to Be With You • That's When the Tears Start • It's My Party • Son of a Gun • Maybe I Know • Needle in a Haystack • Across the Street • You and I • Light • Pomp & Circumstance / Vacation • Ding Dong • Rock Around the Clock • Rock Around the Clock • You Gotta Be a Football Hero • Personality • Dedicated to the One I Love • Only Make Believe • Sealed With a Kiss • (What a) Wonderful World • Day • Dancing in the Street • Looked on a Feeling • Just One Look • and Hopin' • The Look of Love • Baby, I Love You • Good Lovin' • Hangin' On • A Brand New Me • Liver Deep, Mountain High • Mister • Little Saint Nick • A Marshmallow World • Snowfall • The Man With the Bag • ¿Está Santa Claus? • Mele Kalikimaka • I Tannenbaum • We Wanna See Santa • Christmas Will Be Just Another Lovely Day • Run Rudolph Run • Suzy Snowflake • Ring Those Christmas Bells • Jingle Bells • What Are You Doing New Year's Eve • Come Lovin' • I Know a Place • Downtown • -O-V-E • It's Your Thing • For Once in My Life • Hurting Each Other • More Today Than Yesterday • Build Me Up, Buttercup • Tomorrow We'll Be Together • I've Got the Music in Me • Listen to the Music • Evergreen • Together • I Can See Clearly Now • I'm Woman • I Will Survive • Band of Gold • Groupie (Superstar) • Everlasting • Allegheny Moon • All Love To You

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President's Letter

Kristi Quinn
AACT President

"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@aaact.org to submit content. Visit aaact.org/advertise-through-aaact 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

Thank you to Subplot Studio for their sponsorship of the new look and design of *Spotlight* magazine. We look forward to this ongoing and growing partnership in order to bring you the best *Spotlight* quality and content. We encourage you to check out the wonderful products and services **SubplotStudio.com** has to offer you and your theatre!

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 Elena Victoria Feliz (Paul)

 Red Tape Theatre (Chicago, IL)

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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.

More festival information at **aact.org/23**
Register at **aact.org/register23**

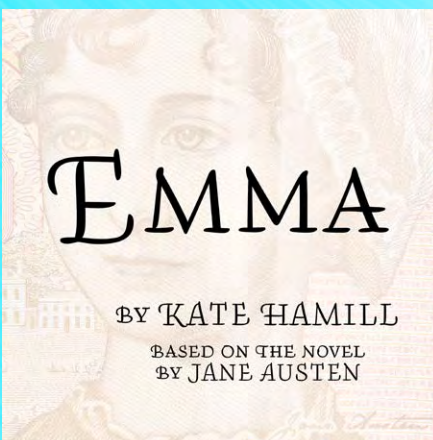
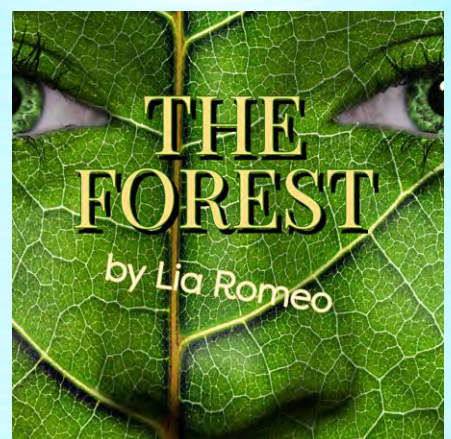
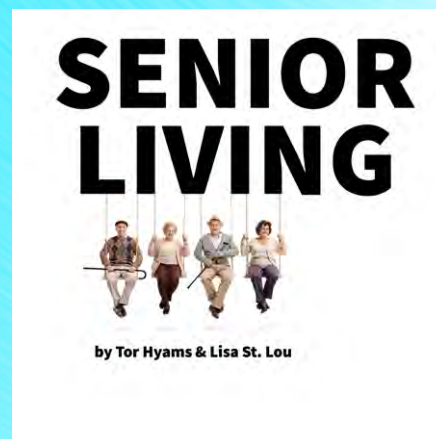
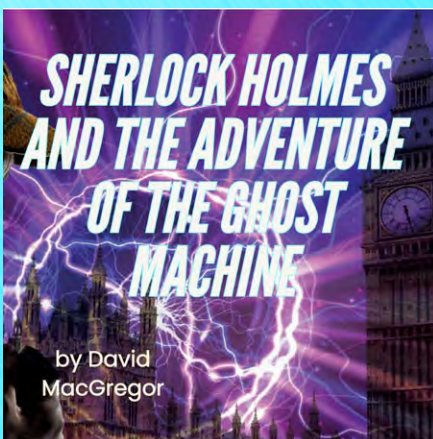
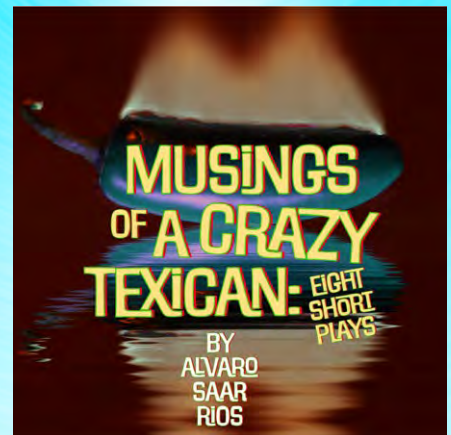
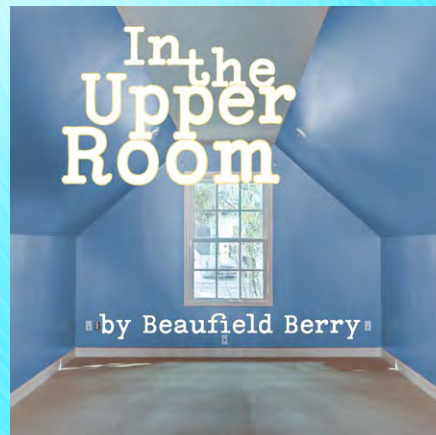
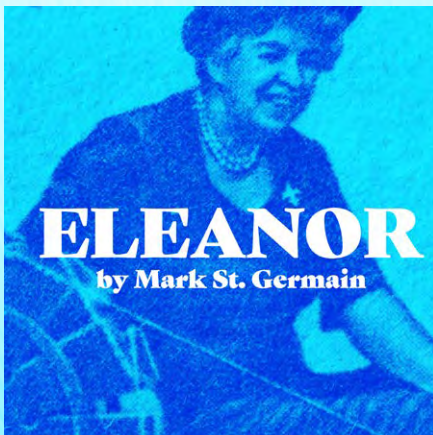
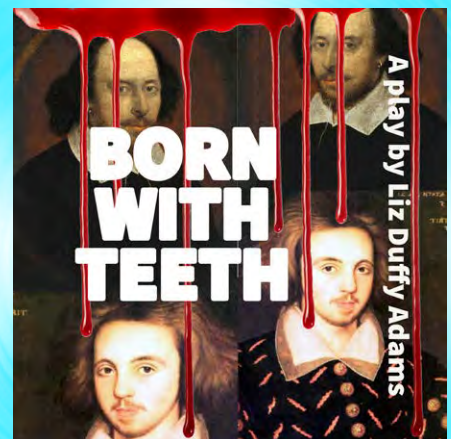
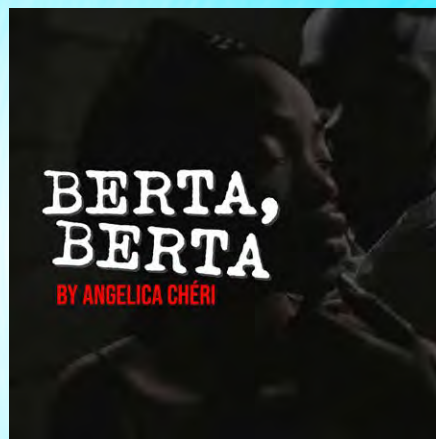
AACTFest 2023 registration rates *continued on page 11*

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Festival Registration

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Early Bird (Sept. 1, 2022-March 1, 2023)	\$315	\$390
Advance (March 2, 2023-June 1, 2023)	\$415	\$490
Onsite (June 2, 2023-June 13, 2023)	\$485	\$560

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

**"Can't repeat the past?
Why of course you can!"**

A century ago this summer a mysterious character named Jay Gatsby held extravagant parties at his Long Island estate. Gatsby's parties remain memorable and iconic over time--who still wouldn't want to be invited to one?

Now you can invite your audience to Gatsby's mansion to relive his story over one night from the initial rumors and lies about him, through his reunion with Daisy and confrontation with Tom, and ending with his lonely farewell.

A NIGHT AT GATSBY'S
Adapted by Richard Vigilante
anightatgatsbys.com

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. AAAC-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.

In conjunction with, held prior to
AACTFest 2023:

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June 11-13, Louisville, Kentucky

aact.org/ctmc

AT CTMC you will:

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- 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

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a drama
by William Cameron




photo courtesy of Reno Little Theater

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plight of the underclass, tabloid sensationalism...”**
- Moira Bengochea, actress, Reno Little Theater

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- Melissa Taylor, Executive Director, Reno Little Theater

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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 to submit your donation. (Donations must be received by **June 14, 2023**.)

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 to schedule your donation. Complete the Auction Contribution form or email 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** or 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.



AACTFest Silent Auctions create great fun as fans bid and outbid each other for fantastic items, and all proceeds benefit the AACT Endowment Festival Support Fund

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

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

Region	Theatre	From	Production	Playwright
I	The Lexington Players of New England	Windsor, CT	<i>Winter Flowers</i>	Lily Rusek
III	Actors Collaborative Toledo	Toledo, OH	<i>Alabaster</i>	Audrey Cefaly
IV b	Venice Theatre	Venice, FL	<i>Hamlet POV</i>	William Shakespeare, adapted by Murray Chase
IV b	Highlands Lakeside Theatre	Sebring, FL	<i>Head of the Family</i>	Laura Byron Wade
VI	Untitled Pop Up Theatre	Elk City, OK	<i>Commencing</i>	Tiphani Henderson

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March 2023

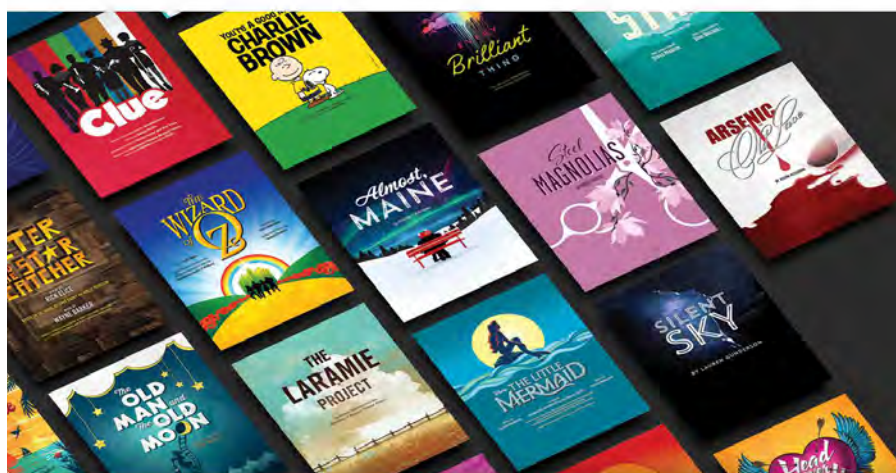
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Adjudication Seminar 2023

"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

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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.

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.

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: *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**](https://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.



2022 Veterans Day Poster
Competition Winner, U.S.
Department of Veterans Affairs

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.



The Rialto Theater in Loveland, CO

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...

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Army Europe/AACT Region X Hosts Two Festivals

Held October 7-9, 2022

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



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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 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]

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.


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Publisher: ConcordTheatricals.com
Playwright: LuigiJannuzzi.com

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.



Judy Bourassa, Leslie Adler, John Baumann, and Bob Roecker (L-R) enjoy VIP Night for the theatre opening.

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



Technical Director Randy Smith (L), Founder and Artistic Director Clyde Neville, and Actor Adam McDonald.

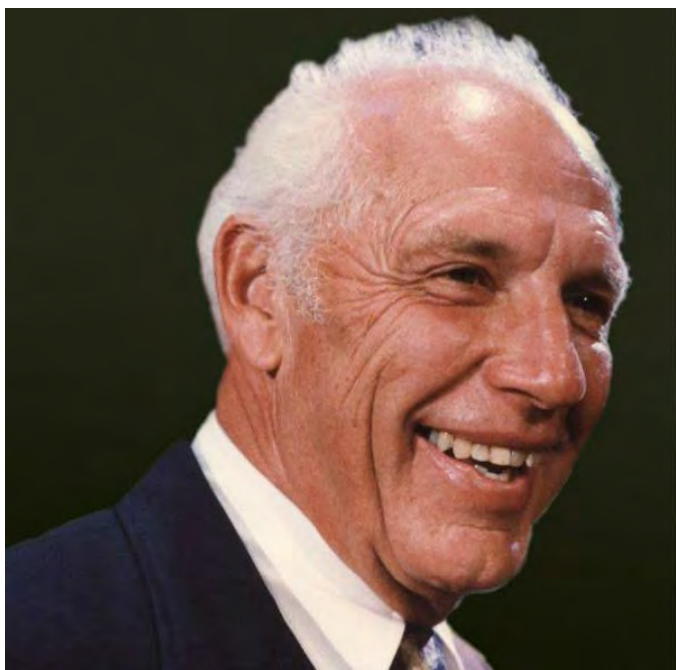
businesses donated supplies, time, expertise, and grant funding and individuals bought bricks, donated funds, and provided nearly 20,000 hours of volunteer service.

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!*



AACT Arizona State Contact Linda Miller (R) congratulates PVPA Executive Director Rebecca Riffle-Bakody (L) on her performance as Ginger in the theatre's opening production Gilligan's Island The Musical.



Friends We'll Miss Jim Carver

Morrie Enders

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."

Jim Carver, who passed way 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 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.

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.



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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."

AACT On the Road



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@aaact.org to have your theatre and new staff featured in Spotlight.



Beverley Lord

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



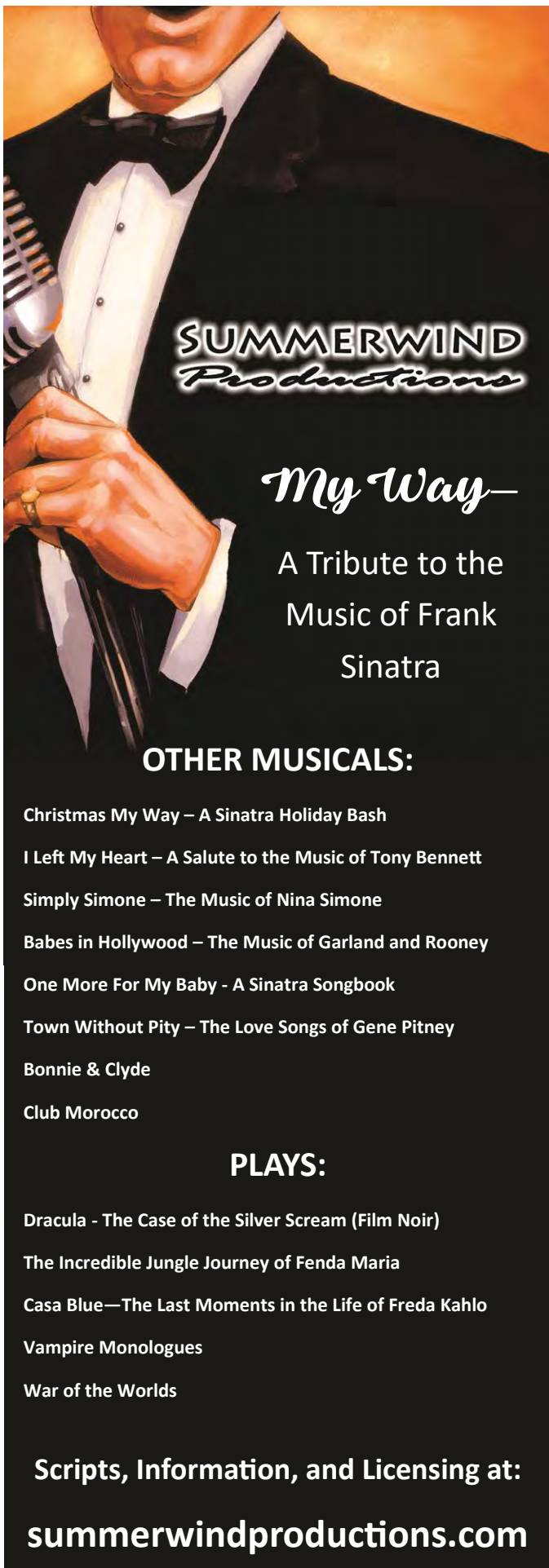
Sharon Burum

AACT Board Members Kay Armstrong and Sharon Burum, Oklahoma state festival organizer Shonda Currell, and Oklahoma Community Theatre Association (OCTA) Board Member Doobie Potter enjoy OCTAFest 2022, in Weatherford, Oklahoma, March 17-19, 2022



Adam Miller

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)



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Spotlight on Discounter

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- 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

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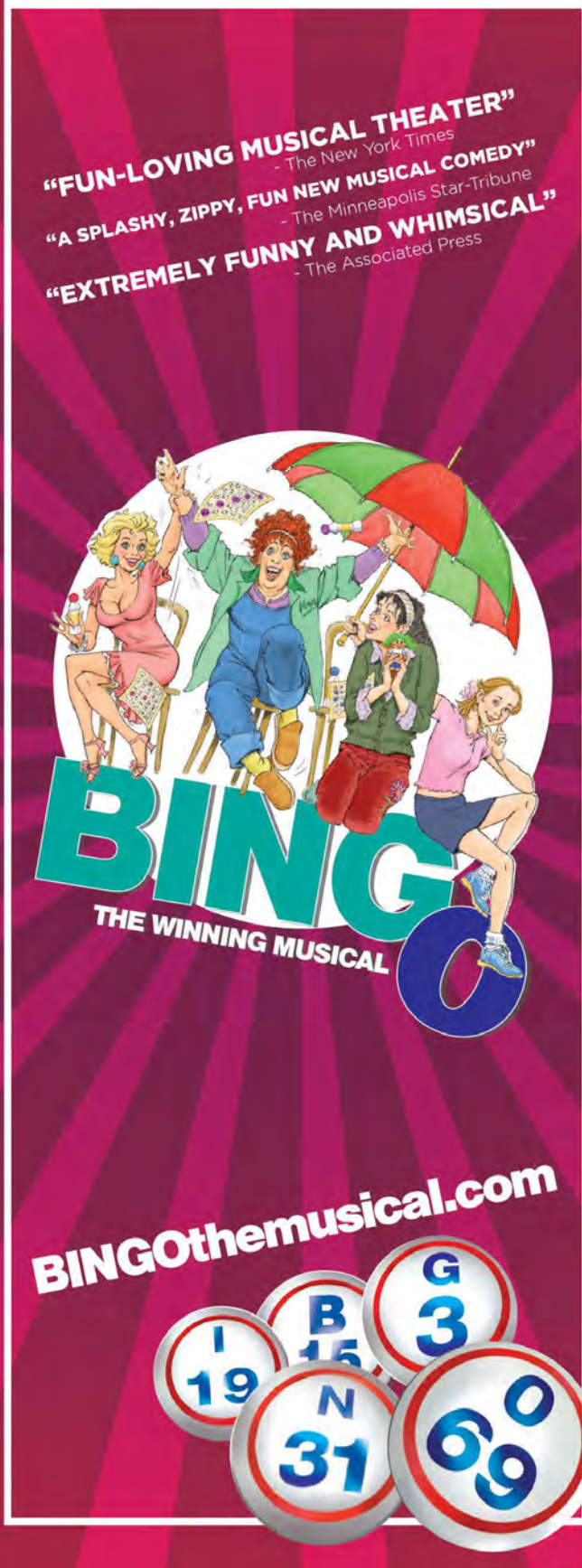
This election season, we hope that you will go to the polls with the arts community also in mind and support candidates with arts friendly policies and incentives. The Arts Action Fund has online resources to see your legislator's voting records.

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

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Calendar of Events

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

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by Londos D'Arrigo

writer for JOAN RIVERS, PHYLLIS DILLER and LILY TOMLIN

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Reviews and photos: www.londos.net

Publisher: www.canadianplayoutlet.com



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Cast size: 4m., 2w.

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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.

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