



THE ACT SPOTLIGHT

*Ankeny Community Theatre
A Community of Talent*

January 2012

Sing On! Takes the Stage in February

The community theater comes to the community theater again. Last summer, ACT presented *Play On!*, the hilarious show where if anything could go wrong, it did. Fast forward to February 2012, as the community theatre group is again asked to perform. Learning from the first time around, certainly things will go much smoother this time, or will they?

ACT presents the sequel to *Play On!* with *Sing On!* Many of the cast members from *Play On!*, return to reprise their characters that they so expertly created before. Mix in some ACT veterans along with some making their ACT debut, and *Sing On!* promises to be a show you don't want to miss..

Sing On! opens February 3 and runs through February 19. Friday and Saturday shows are at 7:30 and Sunday shows begin at 2:00. Barb Wagner takes on the role of director once more for this doomed theatrical group. Doug Moon joins the group as the assistant director.



Front Row: Greg Myers, Michael Porche, Matt Tuttle, Troy DeStigter, Steve Hickle
Back Row: Susan Casber, Carrie New, Kaylene Ruby, Phoebe Smith, Karen Pederson, Debi Garner

Ribbon Cutting and Open House Celebrates 30 Years of Live Theater

Ankeny Community Theatre and the Ankeny Chamber of Commerce welcomed a large crowd of area residents to the theater on December 14th to celebrate our 30th Anniversary with a ribbon cutting and open house. In attendance was Fred Lewis who started the theater thirty years ago. Actors, directors and all who attended enjoyed the stroll down memory lane while looking through multiple notebooks containing old playbills, photos and newspaper articles from the past thirty years that were put together by Lynn Arterburn and Kevin Sprague.

Kent Whitmore, ACT Board President and Randy Munson, Executive Board President of the Ankeny Chamber of Commerce, spoke to the gathering about ACT and their commitment to help the theater prosper for another thirty years. The board would like to thank the Ankeny Chamber of Commerce for helping us celebrate thirty years of live theater in Ankeny.



Larry Eisenhauer, Duane Anderson and Fred Lewis enjoyed sharing memories from 30 years ago. All three were instrumental with starting ACT and were actively involved for many years.



Kent Whitmore, current ACT President and Fred Lewis, the first ACT president, do the honors of cutting the ribbon.

Leading the Way

The ACT Board of Directors is a dedicated group of individuals leading the way for ACT to be a successful performing arts organization. Each edition of *The Spotlight* features comments from a current board member.

Many patrons have asked "How are each season's shows selected?" To answer that question, Harold Mosier, Play Selection Chair, will explain that process in this month's Leading the Way.

Every year dozens of publishing houses offer hundreds of scripts to the theater. How does the Play Selection Committee (PSC) decide which of these are going to make it to the Ankeny stage for your enjoyment? It all starts with the theater board. Every fall the board, based on 30 years of history, recent season presentations, and patron input, tells the PSC what type of shows to pick (comedies, social dramas, suspense thrillers, musical, children's) and how many of each.

The PSC compares the patron suggestions with the board guidance trying to get as many to fit as possible. This means patron suggested shows receive the highest priority on selection. Some shows have to wait a season to get presented. *A Nice Family Gathering* was on the table a season before it got scheduled. We appreciate the suggestions.

The PSC now has the number of shows it needs to find. Time to search the catalogs but where to start? Some publishing houses focus on the needs of community theater while other are more academic or Broadway focused. Applying a series of tests to the community theater publishers' scripts quickly reduces the mountain of material to a manageable pile. Some of the tests are: Are the props readily available? No helicopters no *Ms. Saigon!* Do we have the cast for it? Shows with 20 or more cast, 6 or more of one gender/age are very difficult to audition. Can we build the set? We have great set builders but with 6 weeks to build and a desire to not overwork the volunteer builders so we try to select shows that have simpler sets. The same can be said for costumes - the simpler the better.

Those scripts that pass these tests still have one very important test to pass. The scripts have to be read! This is where community standards and just plain common sense come into play. The PSC member will read the scripts looking for language and adult content as well as total suitability for the target audience.

The remaining scripts are voted on by the entire PSC and the top vote getters are placed on the final selection list which is submitted to the board for final approval.



Father of the Bride Cast to be Selected

Auditions for *Father of the Bride*, written by Caroline Francke, will be held on Sunday, February 12 and Monday, February 13 at 7:00 at the theater. Performance dates are April 3 - 29. Cast requirements for the show are: five women (ages 18 - 60), seven men

(ages 18 - 60) and two teen boys (ages 15 - 20). There are also several nonspeaking roles for any age over 18. Some small parts may be combined. For more information on the characters, please visit <http://ankenycitycommunitytheatre.com/spotlight.html>. For further information, please email bride@ankenycitycommunitytheatre.com or call the theater at 964-5007 and leave a message. *Father of the Bride* will be directed by Lynn Arterburn.

Mr. Banks' life is turned upside down after his daughter announces her engagement to Buckley. All the happy couple wants is a small wedding but trouble begins as the guest list grows out of control. Chaos abounds as caterers, florists, furniture movers and dressmakers take over the household.

A Salute to ACT Volunteers

ACT would like to recognize people who have generously given their time to help behind the scenes but seldom receive public recognition for their work. The following people donated their time to helping at ACT:

Preparing and mailing postcards for *A Nice Family Gathering* - Dottie Blewer

Serving concessions at *A Nice Family Gathering* - Steve Raver, Georgene Raver, Cheryl Kimberling, Evelyn Vos, Creston Vos, Bob Kuel, Dori Kuel, and Mary Johnson

Providing cookies for *A Nice Family Gathering* - Dolores Van Oort, Carrol Rolow, Evelyn Vos, Jen Anderson, and Mary Anderson

Ushers for *A Nice Family Gathering* - Tom Bullington, and Creston Vos

Cleaning and organizing makeup shelves - Cheryl Kimberley

Writing new computer program for Children's Summer Camp registrations - Doug Arterburn

Preparing and mailing postcards for *Sing On!* - Joan Gibson



A Nice Family Gathering - Anything But Your Typical Thanksgiving Gathering!

As Co-Director of this show I would like to say thank you to those who attended, baked goodies, helped with concessions and ushering. All your efforts and time are greatly appreciated and it helps make our show a success.

For those of you who were able to attend I hope you left feeling a bit better about your own family. If not, my sympathy goes out to you. For those of you, who were not able to attend, let me give you a quick synopsis.

This is the first Thanksgiving since Dad died. The family is gathering as usual: Carl- the never good enough son, Michael- the older brother and doctor who can never do anything wrong and Stacy-the younger sister, always forgotten and invisible to the whole family including her own Mom. Mom-seems to have lost it completely, bringing the term “blonde moment” to a whole new level.

During the traditional gathering for turkey dogs and Sausalito cookies for Thanksgiving dinner a variety of humorous situations take place:

Dad decides to join the family, but only Carl can see him. Carl must do a favor for Dad in order for Dad to “rest in peace”, he needs Carl to tell Mom that Dad loves her. Just a little something Dad neglected to do while he was alive in their 20+ yrs of marriage. Surprise for Dad, Mom has a date for Thanksgiving, an old family friend, Jerry. UH OH, not something that went over well with Dad. Not only does Carl have to channel Dad to Mom, but now he has to get Jerry out of the way in order to do this.

Michael and wife are having issues with having a baby, with Jill on fertility drugs it is a constant emotional roller coaster, not to mention the financial situation with the IRS he has gotten them into, to a tune of \$60,000. Now that Carl has been put in charge of Dads estate, Michael has to grovel to kid brother for the money.

Oh yes and let us not forget Stacy. Poor Stacy, no one knows she’s there until she mentions she is pregnant and gay. Jerry is chastised by Michael as being after their Mothers money which almost ends up in fist to cuffs.

As we all like a happy ending, this show did not disappoint. All is well in the end, Dad talks to Mom, Michael and Jill get the money and Jill is going off the fertility drugs, Stacy is having a baby and Jill is going to help her take care of it. Carl gets a chance at being a writer with a local paper and Dad gets to “go into the light”.

Oh, I forgot to mention, the audience participation, of finding the bathrooms via the front porch on stage. A surprise for us all!

Hope your holidays were full of love and laughter.

Becky Plager



A Round of Applause

This month's Round of Applause goes to the Ankeny Walmart and it's manager, Pete Scheurman. The store graciously gave their remaining Halloween costumes to the Ankeny Community Theatre's Children's Drama Camp. Numerous participants must be costumed during the summer camps. Their generous contribution will bring many smiles to the young thespians and the camp instructors this summer and in the years to come. Thank you, Pete!

We Asked and You Responded

Once again our patrons reached out with helping hands when we asked. We would like to thank those who responded to the request of needed items to help out upcoming shows and the Children's Summer Camps.

Thank you also goes out to Karen Swift, Eric Erickson and Duane Anderson who heard the call to help me fill in the gaps that are in our historian's books. We would always be happy to take more pictures or other items to add to our collection. If you have anything that you would like to donate or give us copies of, please let us know. Guests attending the Ribbon Cutting and Open House really enjoyed looking through the archives and reminiscing about shows that they were involved in.

Thank you for your help.

Lynn Arterburn





Registrations Already Rolling in For Summer Camps

It may still be winter but now is the perfect time to start thinking about scheduling your child's summer activities. ACT is offering several opportunities for your aspiring actor or actress to attend drama camp this summer. Please check out the flyer to discover the exciting adventures that are available for students Grades K - 8. Grades are for the year that the student will be attending in Fall 2012. Class space is limited and camps can fill quickly. The camps will be held at Ankeny United Methodist Church Christian Life Center which is located at 710 NE 36th Street in Ankeny

Registration for our camps will take place on-line. Please go to www.ankenycommunitytheatre.com and click on the link to our camps to register your child or to find more general information about the camps . Registration fees must be mailed to the theater. Financial scholarships are also available. Fees must be received before your child is officially enrolled in a session. A confirmation email will be sent once the registration fees have been processed.



Final information about the sessions will be sent to participants one week before the camps begin. If you would like more information about the camps or the scholarships, please call 964-5007 and leave a message for the camp director or send an email to camp@ankenycommunitytheatre.com.

ACT - This is Your Life!

In this season's newsletters, we would like to look back over the past 30 years. Lots of memories have been made and shared by dedicated casts, crews, directors, board members and volunteers. If you have any interesting tidbits that you would like to have published please email or call and let us know. We would be happy to pass on the information!

- ◆ The first play in our current location was *Our Town* which opened on October 28, 1994.
- ◆ Shows have been performed in the following locations during the past 30 years: Ankeny High School, DMACC, Frontier Theater, Neveln gym, Lakeside Center, and at our current location.
- ◆ ACT will have performed 115 shows at the end of our 2011-2012 season.
- ◆ The first Children's Summer Drama Camps were held in 2003.
- ◆ Ankeny's own Jessica Keenan, now an actress in television and film, appeared as Greta in *The Sound of Music* in 1984 and as Dorothy in the 1992 performance of *The Wizard of Oz*.



ACT Calendar of Events

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| <i>Sing On!</i> Performances | February 3 - 19 |
| <i>Father of the Bride</i> Auditions | February 12 & 13 7:00 |
| <i>Father of the Bride</i> Performances | April 13 - 29 |
| <i>The Baseball Show</i> Auditions (tentative) | April 22 & 23 |
| <i>The Baseball Show</i> Performances | June 8 - 24 |
| Summer Drama Camp Session 1 | June 11 - 15 |
| Summer Drama Camp Session 2 | June 25 - 29 |
| Summer Drama Camp Session 3 | July 9 - 13 |



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