



*Presents*

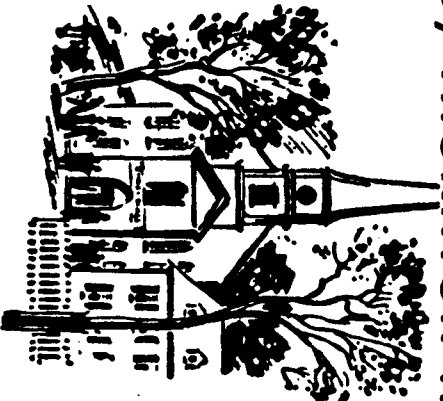
• ANKENY COMMUNITY THEATRE •

P. O. Box 122 Ankeny, Iowa 50021

THE PULITZER PRIZE PLAY

# CURB YOUR TOWNSHIP

by THORNTON WILDER



*Written By*

THORNTON WILDER

Oct 28 - Nov. 12, 1994

Ankeny Community Theatre Presents:

# OUR TOWN

A PLAY

IN THREE ACTS

*BY*

THORNTON WILDER

**Directed by Steve Stone**

**Produced by Susan Rhoades  
Frank Rhoades  
Beverly Stone**

October 28 - November 12, 1994  
Ankeny Community Theatre  
1932 SW 3rd St., Ankeny, Iowa

## Director's Notes

Although written over fifty years ago, *OUR TOWN* is more appropriate today than it was in the eighties. With scores of books on angels filling the best-seller lists and the immense popularity of *Embraced By the Light*, we are discovering (or rediscovering) our spirituality. Are the Dead waiting for the "eternal part in them to come out clear?", as the Stage Manager asks? The play is affirmative in spirit at a time when people are in need of affirmation.

*OUR TOWN* relates the ordinary events in the lives of ordinary people to a metaphysical framework that broadens with each act. Life is, at once, significant and trivial, noble and absurd, miraculous and humdrum. We begin with the history and geography of everyday life, expanding with the relationship between personal aspirations and those of Mankind in all ages; finally, with the relationship between life and eternity. Life is largely wasted and its tragedy lies in the failure of human beings to feel the full intensity of each moment, good or bad. Even such a routine matter as greeting the milkman is a precious part of a priceless gift.

Enlarging the scope of human love is Wilder's purpose. "The United States of America; Continent of North America; Western Hemisphere; the Earth; the Solar System; the Universe; the Mind of God. And the postman delivered it just the same. What do you know!"

Steve Stone

Our Town is not offered as a picture of life in a New Hampshire village; or as a speculation about conditions of life after death (that element I merely took from Dante's Purgatory). It is an attempt to find a value above all price for the smallest events of our daily life. I have made the claim as preposterous as possible, for I have set the village against the largest dimensions of time and place. The recurrent words in this play (few have noticed it) are 'hundreds,' 'thousands,' and 'millions.' Emily's joys and griefs, her algebra lessons and her birthday presents - what are they when we consider all the billions of girls who have lived, who are living, and who will live?

Thornton Wilder

## THE CAST

(In the order of their appearance)

STAGE MANAGER	
DR. GIBBS	<i>Al Price</i>
JOE CROWELL	<i>Al Iles</i>
HOWIE NEWSOME	<i>Aaron Price / Zack Schmidt</i>
MRS. GIBBS	<i>Troy DeStigter</i>
MRS. WEBB	<i>Monica Green</i>
GEORGE GIBBS	<i>Anne Claus</i>
REBECCA GIBBS	<i>Chris Merrifield</i>
WALLY WEBB	<i>Uma Ntinger / Laura Rhoades</i>
EMILY WEBB	<i>Aaron Price / Zack Schmidt</i>
PROFESSOR WILLARD	<i>Ellen Wilshusen</i>
MR. WEBB	<i>John Claus</i>
AUDIENCE MEMBERS	<i>Greg Krause</i>
SIMON STIMSON	<i>Jan Price, Susan Rhoades, Steve Stone</i>
MRS. SOAMES	<i>Kevin Sprague</i>
CONSTABLE WARREN	<i>Jo Reid</i>
SI CROWELL	<i>Mike Kentopp</i>
KATHRYN CRAIG	<i>Aaron Price / Zack Schmidt</i>
JOE STODDARD	<i>Kathy Bisbey</i>
PEOPLE OF THE TOWN	<i>Jimmy Dean</i>
	<i>Dale Hunter, Avonda Gindka</i>
	<i>Grace Leverenz, Joyce Naffier, Jan Price</i>
	<i>Jerry Reid, Susan Rhoades, Beverly Stone</i>

The entire play takes place in Grovers Corners, NH

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Director	Steve Stone
Producers	Frank Rhoades, Susan Rhoades, Beverly Stone
Lights	Frank Rhoades
Sound	Jim Bisbey
Set Construction	Orville Ballard, Bill Shay
Shift Crew	Chuck & Bette Honeck
Costumes	Kathy Bisbey
Trickets	Jimmy Dean, Grace Leverenz
Publicity	Monica Green
Playbill	Steve Stone

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

**AL PRICE** (Stage Manager) - Al has directed and been in many ACT productions including *Oklahoma*, *City's & Dolls*, and *Annie Get Your Gun*. He has also appeared at the Drama Workshop in Des Moines. Al is currently on the ACT Board and is proud to have been involved in getting this new theater started.

**ALTTES** (Dr. Gibbs) - Al has become an important part of ACT over the past year. He began with us as a chorus member in last fall's *Musical Revue*. Since then, he has appeared in *Play On*, in *Cradle Spell*, and in *The Villain of Giltner Gulch*. Al is also actively involved with in ACT II. He and his family, wife - Sue, and daughters - Amy and Marissa, have lived in Ankeny for about nine years. In his spare time, Al likes to hunt and fish.

**AARON PRICE** (Joe Crowell, Wally Webb, & Si Crowell) - Aaron is alternating with Zack Schmidt in these roles. Aaron has been in *Wizard of Oz* and *Annie Get Your Gun* with ACT, but has also performed in *Music Man* at the Ankeny High School, and had a large part in his Junior High play. Aaron is an eighth grader at Parkview Middle School and is in band, chorus and swing choir. He also sings with his church choir, the Young Prophets.

**ZACK SCHMIDT** (Joe Crowell, Wally Webb, & Si Crowell) - Zack is alternating with Aaron Price in these roles. He is an eighth grader at Parkview Middle School where he played the title role in *Under the Yolkies Hide*. This is Zack's debut with ACT.

**TROY DESTIGTER** (Howie Newsome) - Troy is an Ankeny native. After graduating from high school he was able to get some acting experience at Paloman College in southern California. He returned to Iowa three years ago and joined American Republic Insurance Company. Previous plays include *You Can't Take It with You*, *Whose Life is it Anyway?*, *Playboy of the Western World*, *The Front Page*, and *Tactus Flower*.

**MONICA GREEN** (Mrs. Gibbs) - Monica first appeared on the ACT stage as Mama in *I Remember Mama*. Since then, she has appeared in *Play On*, and in *The Villain of Giltner Gulch*. Monica credits her son, Nate Green, with getting her started with ACT (as a stage mom) and she especially likes doing shows with him. She is President-elect of ACT's Board of Directors and chairs its publicity committee. Professionally, Monica works in the Public Affairs department at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa.

**ANNE CLAES** (Mrs. Webb) - You may recognize Anne from ACT II, which she joined this past season, but she is new to the ACT stage. She brings a lot of experience to *Our Town*, having been involved in theater in Washington, Iowa City, and Cedar Rapids communities in *The Nerd*, *The Foreigner*, *Natalie Needs a Nightie*, and *Wally's Cafe*. Anne lives in Des Moines with her husband John and works for Together.

**CHRISTOPHER MERRIFIELD** (George Gibbs) - *Our Town* is Chris' first appearance with ACT. He is a senior at Ankeny High School where he is active in chorus, drama and art. He has performed in *Travis*, in *Sharing*, and in *A Certain Just Man*, as well as in *Girl in the Mirror* for A.H.S. Chris' parents are David and Lynn Merrifield of Ankeny.

**CAMI MUNGER** (Rebecca Gibbs) - Cami and Laura Rhoades are sharing this role. Cami was in *Wizard of Oz* for ACT as well as in several shows at the Ingersoll Children's Theater and a number of school plays. She keeps busy with dance, baton, acrobatics, and gymnastics.

**LAURA RHOADES** (Rebecca Gibbs) - Laura is sharing this role with Cami Munger. Laura and her talent are quickly becoming regulars with ACT. She has appeared in *Wizard of Oz*, *Musical Revue*, and the *Villain of Glimmer Gulch*. Besides her love for acting, Laura is heavily involved in her school band and her dance classes.

**ELLEN WIESHUSEN** (Emily Webb) - As a newcomer to ACT, Ellen takes great pleasure in playing Emily. She has participated in a few other productions including, *Annie Get Your Gun*. She is actively involved in her church drama team. Ellen is a sophomore at North Polk High School where she enjoys taking part in band and chorus. She is also participates in Christian Club and her church youth group.

**JOHN CLAES** (Professor Willard) - John was talked into accepting this role at the last minute when he made the mistake of joining his wife, Anne, at a rehearsal. This is John's first, and sadly, last role for ACT because he has accepted a new job in Cedar Rapids and will be leaving us shortly.

**GREG KRAUSE** (Mr. Webb) - Greg and his family moved to Ankeny two years ago from Iowa Falls. He and his wife, Brenda, have a 9th grade daughter, Ronnie, and a 7th grade son, Robbie. Greg played Dr. Gibbs in his high school's performance of *Our Town* which is what caused him to search us out. This is his acting debut for ACT.

**KEVIN SPRAGUE** (Mr. Stimson) - Since moving here with his wife, Lisa in 1993, Kevin has participated in *I Remember Mama*. He was light manager for the musical review of *Play On*. He also directed this summers melodrama alias Smedely Pawtree. Kevin is employed by ISU Veterinary Teaching Hospital as an anesthesia technician. We can look forward to Kevin directing our spring production of *Arsenic and Old Lace*.

**JO REID** (Mrs. Soames) - Jo has been active in the ACT since she moved to Ankeny ten years ago. She has been on stage in *(arrousel, (ickspell, and Remmon Revue*. She was producer for *Ten Little Indians*, and has been director for six productions including *(uys & Dolls, Annie (iet Your (um, and (ickspell*. Jo is also the director of ACT II.

**MICHAEL KENTOPP** (Constable Warren) - Mike started with *The Pied Piper* in kindergarten and hasn't stopped since. As an adult he's been in *South Pacific, (amelia, (liver, and most recently as the lead in (iddler on the Roof* for the Northeast Nebraska Community Theater. A new resident in Ankeny, we welcome him in his first role with ACT.

**KATHRYN BISBEY** (Kathryn Craig) - Kathryn has a degree in music theater and dance, has numerous theatrical credits to her name and is gifted with a beautiful voice. Since her arrival in Ankeny, she has participated in most ACT productions and sings in ACT II. She is also on the ACT Board of Directors. When not involved with ACT and ACT II, Kathryn works in marketing at KVI.

**JIM DEAN** (Joe Stoddard) - Jimmy has performed in many shows for ACT, most recently in *Wizard of Oz*. He has also been instrumental backstage for us as well as being a member of our Board of Directors. Jim sings in ACT II and church choir, peddles coffee services and loves his five grandchildren.

**AVONDA GUDKA** (Choir/Dead Person) - This is Avonda's third show with ACT, after living in Ankeny only one year. She performed in *Play (m and Villain of Giltner Gulch* prior to *OLIVIA TOWN*. Originally from Denver, Colorado, in the past Avonda has done child care and foster care, but is currently busy bringing up her own three children. Besides her husband and children, she enjoys cross-stitch, crafts, camping and boating.

**JAN PRICE** (Choir/Dead Person) - Jan has had small parts in plays since high school. She met her husband (Al, the Stage Manager in our show) while putting on his makeup in a college production and has enjoyed having the whole family in different productions through the years. She is a former dental assistant now working for Maurices Distribution Center in Johnston. She has three children, Sarah, Andrea, and Aaron, who is also performing in our show.

**STEVE STONE** (Director) - Steve has directed several productions for ACT and was last seen on our stage in the title role of *The Nerd*. He claims that he can't count the number of shows he has worked on for both ACT and the Playhouse in Des Moines. Steve is also valuable to our organization as a member of the Board of Directors, Treasurer, and Chairman of the fund raising drive to refurbish our theater. When not working with the theater, he is a Pension Consultant with The Bryton Companies in West Des Moines.

**FRANK RHOADES** (Co-Producer) - Frank began working with ACT on the stage crew for Wizard of Oz. He then graduated to stage manager for *Bell, Book & Candle* and also stage crew for *Play On*, and *William of Giltter Gulch*. Frank likes working backstage with the lights, sound, and special effects, which makes him so much fun at home.

**SUSAN RHOADES** (Co-Producer) - Susan's first experience with ACT was as a herder of jitterbugs and munchlins in the *Wizard of Oz*. She performed in the *Musical Revue* and *The Villain of Giltter Gulch*. Susan has also co produced *Bell, Book & Candle* and *Play On* for ACT.

**BEVERLY STONE** (Co-Producer) - Beverly got her job by sleeping with the Director. She has participated in a number of ACT productions including *Carnaval*, *Ten Little Indians*, and *The Odd Couple*. Most of the time, however, she is an Account Executive for Shopper News Network.



## SPECIAL THANKS TO:

- **Ankeny Community Education Office** and **Kevin Koester** for the free use of all of the chairs used in our theater (until we get our new ones bought)
- **Bill Shay** and **Orville Ballard** for all of their ceaseless work in building walls and everything else it takes to get our theater operational. It just goes to show that sometimes retirement doesn't pay!
- **Denny Elwell** for donating our theater space to us rent-free for ten years!!!! (plus a sizable cash donation).
- **Ankeny True Value Hardware** for the use of ladders in *OTHR TOWN*



Thank you to **EVERYONE** who has contributed so much valuable time, materials, and effort to the building of Ankeny Community Theatre.



## CONTRIBUTORS

We appreciate the generosity of the following "Friends of ACT". You are invited to join them in assuring the future success of locally-produced live theater in Ankeny.

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## ***DON'T MISS ANY OF OUR 94-95 SEASON***

**In February:**

### **COMPANY**

A musical by Stephen Sondheim

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