



THE ACT SPOTLIGHT

Ankeny Community Theatre

A Community of Talent

Spring 2017

Aliens Invade Ankeny

Audiences enjoyed *A Delightful Quarantine*, which ran March 24 to April 9. The comedy told the story of a middle-class community in Pennsylvania that is invaded by extraterrestrials and places its residents under house quarantine. Secrets are revealed, conflicts erupt, and friendships are terminated or rekindled.

Dawn Hockemeyer directed her second show at ACT. "The play takes us from home to home and allows us to explore a variety of fun-loving people and funny situations. The play is a challenge as it tells the story of seven different groups affected by the quarantine. I like the challenge of trying to figure out how to tell the story of this large cast within a limited space."

Beth Feilmeier played Judeen Dempsey, who is a woman with a fondness for felines and very set in her own peculiar ways. "The show has a very unusual concept, with a large cast, but many cast members only interacting with one or two other people. It blends a variety of humorous scenes as well as some very poignant and emotional scenes for a show that should hold people's interest. Each character is unique and has their own story. With every character being confined to a house, the acting space is smaller, so not only do the actors get to really tune in to their acting skills as opposed to action, but the audience can focus more on each person instead of looking around the stage to see what else is going on."

Veteran ACT actor Troy DeStigter has "been doing shows since we opened the doors in our current location in 1994. It is always a privilege to be able to be back on stage at ACT and I really enjoy being in the midst of great actors and the most wonderful audiences any theatre could wish for. I play Chester Banderhorn, an eccentric, wimpy gentleman with a larger than life (strong and opinionated) woman (aka Beth Feilmeier's character). I'm drawn to great character roles where I can use physical comedy. I know the audiences will be able to laugh out loud and have a really good time. Good theatre is able to transport people from 'real life' to taking a break for laughter and fun. You can't beat it!"

Melanie Jones appeared in her first ACT production. "My character, Sue, is somewhat more subdued than most, but I think she brings an element of intensity and humanity that I feel will resonate throughout the production and the audience will be able to empathize. I'm amazed at the amount of talent and professionalism exhibited by the cast and directors. But we also have fun, which I think is extremely important. It's been exciting to witness the character development and the invention of nuances that weren't visible in the beginning. I enjoy an ensemble cast with so many personalities and story lines. It gives both the audience and the performers a chance to experience the various emotions of real life as we experience it in the everyday sense." of real life as we experience it in the everyday sense."



Back Row: Jim Leeper, Melanie Jones, Troy DeStigter, Beth Feilmeier, Becky Plager, John Claes, Anne Claes, Kent Whitmore, Debbie Rasko
Front Row: Wendi Taylor, Whitney Welp, Deb Ivis, Stacie Bendixen, Susan Casber
Floor: Elisa Richter, Callahan Barton
Not Pictured: Garren Bugh, Lily Bretthauer

The Middle of Yesterday Takes the Stage in June

The cast has been selected for ACT's June show, *The Middle of Yesterday* by Ken Jones. Cast members are John Claes, Riley Devick, Ali Kirwen, Joe Kirwen, Doug Moon, Mike Ream, and Anna Sunstrom. Cheryl Clark is directing the show. Thomas Foster is serving as the assistant director. The show runs June 2-18. Friday and Saturday shows begin at 7:30. Sunday performances begin at 2:00. To make reservations, go online to Midwestix.com or call 244-2771 Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

What goes on in the minds of people suffering from Alzheimer's Disease? *The Middle of Yesterday* tries to give us an answer. Kilby Fleming, an aging ex-war hero, struggles between reality and the hauntings of his memories as he declines into the dark world of Alzheimer's. Locked in time, Kilby is forced to view his past as the people in the present fight to bring him back.



Spotlight on Volunteers

Michael Hollister might be a new face to ACT, but he is well known in the community theatre world in central Iowa. He has been involved with the Drama Workshop, Ingersoll Dinner Theater, Ames Community Theatre, and StageWest. You might have seen Michael on stage last October in our production of *Done to Death*; however, he was just behind the scenes as assistant director in our AACT-Fest production of *110 Stories*. He is also instructing our Acting Tools and Techniques: An Acting Workshop Series for Adults, using his knowledge of the stage and his graduate studies in directing at the University of Wisconsin to help better ACT's actors. When asked why he volunteers for ACT, Mike enthusiastically responded, "I specifically chose ACT because the people are not only talented but also warm-hearted, and the ACT audience is so supportive of their theatre. It's truly a COMMUNITY theatre." Whether he is on stage performing or behind the scenes directing, Michael is bringing the spirit of community theatre with him everywhere he goes.



Here to Serve You: Contacting ACT

As an all-volunteer staff, we are always looking for ways to better serve you. To that end, we decided to eliminate ACT's phone line (964-5007), which went straight into a voicemail box. Please note that our phone number is no longer in service. This will allow us to focus more resources into our mission and our service to you.

Now that Midwestix handles our ticket sales and reservations, patrons can call Midwestix at 515-244-2771 and talk to someone right away - no more need to leave a message and wait for a return call. Midwestix's friendly staff are also happy to answer questions, and if there's something they can't answer, they work with us to resolve it for you. Midwestix's phones are answered Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Of course, you can order tickets (and make season pass reservations) 24/7 online at www.midwestix.com.

You can always contact us at information@ankenycommunitytheatre.com. We're happy to have someone call you if you prefer - just let us know in your email. (Please note: All ticket orders/reservations must go through Midwestix.)

Thank you for your support!

ACT Fares Well at Iowa Festival

Ankeny Community Theatre competed at Iowa Festival 2017 with a production of *110 Stories: A 9/11 Tribute* by Sara Tuft on March 17 at the Martha Ellen Tye Playhouse in Marshalltown. Six other theatre companies from across Iowa also competed. The festival was part of the American Association of Community Theatre's AACTFest 2017.

ACT placed as Alternate to Regionals with the theaters from Red Oak and Newton advancing to perform in Brainerd, Minnesota. ACT also received special honors: Outstanding Achievement in Editing, Outstanding Performance by a Supporting Actress (Stacie Bendixen) and Outstanding Performance by a Supporting Actor (Michael Porche).

Members of the ACT cast and crew for Iowa Festival were Joel Anderson, Stacie Bendixen, Cheryl Clark, Monte Engh, Michael Garrison, Troy Gould, Mike Hollister, Doug Moon, Shawn Pavlik, Michael Porche, Nicole Titus, Matt Tuttle, Barb Wagner, and Kent Whitmore.



Front Row: Stacie Bendixen, Nicole Titus, Monte Engh, Doug Moon, Kent Whitmore
Back Row: Cheryl Clark, Troy Gould, Joel Anderson, Michael Garrison

Final Show of the Season Announces Audition Dates

ACT will be holding auditions for *Unnecessary Farce*, written by Paul Slade Smith, on Sunday, June 11 and Monday, June 12 at 7:00 p.m. Possible callbacks will be held Tuesday, June 13 at 7:00 p.m.. The cast calls for four men and three women.

Information about the characters may be found at www.ankenycommunitytheatre.com/unnecessary-farce.html. Please fill out the online audition form found at <http://www.ankenycommunitytheatre.com/audition.html> before auditions. Show dates are August 4-20. Barb Wagner director while Michael Hollister will be serving as the assistant director. For more information about auditions, please email information@ankenycommunitytheatre.com.

In a cheap motel room, an embezzling mayor is supposed to meet with his female accountant, while in the room next door, two undercover cops wait to catch the meeting on videotape. But there's some confusion as to who's in which room, who's being videotaped, who's taken the money, who's hired a hit man, and why the accountant keeps taking off her clothes.



Registration for ACT Jr. Summer Camps Now Open



Registration for ACT's Summer Youth Drama Camps is now open. Several educational opportunities for youth in grades Kindergarten through 12 are available this summer. In addition to our popular production camps that culminate in performances, youth can explore creative drama camps and workshops which focus on improving acting skills and increasing knowledge of theater and the world around them. Half-day and full-day camps are available. Sessions run June 12-16, June 19- 3, and July 10-14. Camps will be held at Lutheran Church of Hope Ankeny and at Prairie Ridge Church.



Our first week of camp's theme is "Exploring Theater." Youth will learn basics of preparing for and performing a show or improve their skills. "Crazy About Literature" is the focus for the following week. Participants will spend the week bringing popular children's literature to life.

In July, our theme is Harry Potter. Campers joining us for this week will journey on a magical adventure as we put our own spin on the *Harry Potter* and *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* series. They will create their very own world premiere of these favorite stories to share on Friday. Please note that our *Hogwarts Academy* camp has filled. If you would like your child's name to be placed on the waiting list, please email the camp director at the address below. *The Magical World of Potter and Friends* has only five more spots available. A waiting list will be started once it is full.

For more information about these camps or to register online, please go to www.ankenycommunitytheatre.com/summer-camp.html. For more information, please email Lynn Arterburn, camp director, at camp@ankenycommunitytheatre.com.

Teen Acting Camps Available

ACT Jr. is offering camps for teen actors. *LOL Lab* for grades 9-12 will be held June 12-16 from 1:00-4:00. Expand your imagination through improvisation! Explore techniques, games, tricks, and tools that will help improve your communication and public speaking skills, stimulate fast thinking, and cultivate spontaneous responses.

Greece is the Word for grades 6-10 will be held June 19-23 from 9:00-4:00. Create a show inspired by classic Greek stories as well as modern adaptations (Percy Jackson) to share with families on Friday.

The week of July 10-14 offers two camps for youth in grades 6-10. *The Magical World of Potter and Friends* uses the 'Harry Potter' and 'Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them' series as the guide for campers to invent their own beasts or characters, create their own adventures, and bring to life another magical wizarding world right here in Ankeny! *The Magical World of Music* will explore the three disciplines that make up the musical theater genre: acting, singing, and dancing while learning 3-4 popular songs. Using warm-ups, theater games, and singing exercises, youth will develop an understanding of ensemble and musical theater.



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2017 - 2018 Season Offers Popular Shows and New Series

ACT is excited to announce a new series coming next season. The Studio Series will offer three one-act plays separate from our regular season shows. These shows will run Thursday-Sunday for one weekend. Watch for more information regarding next season on Facebook and on our website, ankenycommunitytheatre.com.

2017-2018 Season Shows

October	The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee
December	A Christmas Chaos
February	Almost Maine
April	A Few Good Men
June	Honk
August	Over the River and Through the Woods

New: Studio Series One-Act Productions

November	The God Committee
January	The Velveteen Rabbit
April	Doubt: A Parable

On March 10, ACT Board Member, Cheryl Clark joined Elizabeth Kling on the Mediacom Newsleaders program to discuss what is happening at Ankeny Community Theatre. To view the interview, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPvn7e3rMts&feature=youtu.be>

February Show was “Fantastick”

ACT presented the longest-running musical in the world, *The Fantasticks*, February 3 - 19. This romantic comedy told the story of a boy, a girl, and their parents who try to keep them apart. Harvey Schmidt and Tom Jones’s memorable classic songs such as “Try to Remember” and “Soon It’s Gonna Rain” engaged the audience’s imagination as they journey through this timeless fable of love with Matt and Luisa.

This was Thatcher Williams’ first directing experience at ACT, but he is certainly no stranger to area theater-goers. Williams has previously played the role of “Mortimer” in *The Fantasticks* and he couldn’t pass up the opportunity to do it again. He said, “*The Fantasticks* is an adventure in pure storytelling. Far too often nowadays, theater has become obsessed with glitz and glam with hundreds of light cues and over-amplification of music instead of making sure we tell the story. With this production, while we had a bit of fun with lighting here and there, we made the actors the focus and allowed them to shine in their characters.” Williams was joined by Brenda McConahay as music director and Adam Haselhuhn as assistant director.

Julia Polson played Luisa. She said this show, while simple, has a deep meaning. “I wanted the audience to know after the performance that beauty and happiness are not dependent on grand moments and triumphs, but can be found in seemingly simple moments, and that the world is better when you’re with people you love.”

Nick Flynn made his ACT debut, playing Matt. While a new face at ACT, he found himself right at home. “I just loved the small but vastly talented cast we had,” Flynn said. “Everyone was so kind and humble. I’m typically a pretty shy and quiet guy and it takes a lot for me to be comfortable, but this group of people made it so easy for me. They were so warm-hearted and welcoming.”



On floor: Larry Mahlstedt, Al Price
 On riser: Charissa Hamel, Julia Polson, Nick Flynn, John Claes
 On benches: Nicole Titus, Nicholas Root

Evening Focuses on the Arts

An Ankeny Evening with the Arts has annually brought together in one place organizations that promote the arts in our community: Ankeny Art Center, Ankeny Community Band, Ankeny Community Chorus, Ankeny Community Theatre, and Art for Ankeny. The evening recognizes and celebrates important cultural contributions that art makes to the city. This year’s event will be held Friday, May 12 at Prairie Ridge Church, 825 NW 36th Street.

The Ankeny Art Center will host an exhibit of two local artists’ work starting at 6:30 p.m. Debi Garner is a professional watercolor artist as well as a veteran ACT actress. Zach Dow is an Ankeny dentist who creates elegant and beautiful ceramic art. The other organizations will also have information available, and harpist, Kristen Maahs, will accompany the gathering. Ankeny Community Chorus’s concert will begin at 7:30 p.m.

“Helping Hands” Fundraiser at Ankeny’s HuHot Mongolian Grill



Ankeny Community Theatre volunteers will become "Helping Hands" to cook up a little fun and funds at HuHot Mongolian Grill in Ankeny on May 22 from 5:00-8:00 p.m. Theater volunteers will assist HuHot's dining room staff. HuHot’s Helping Hands program will donate 10% of the event sale plus 100% of the tips that are left for the grillers. The general public is invited to attend. The restaurant is located at 2310 SE Delaware Ave. Suite A.

For more information about Ankeny Community Theatre's Helping Hands fundraiser, contact Ankeny Community Theatre by emailing information@ankenycommunitytheatre.com.



1932 SW 3rd Street
 Mailing Address: PO Box 122 Ankeny, Iowa 50023
 Website: www.ankenycommunitytheatre.com
 Email: information@ankenycommunitytheatre.com
 Reservations: www.midwestix.com or (515) 244-2771
 Camp: camp@ankenycommunitytheatre.com
 Like us on Facebook

ACT Calendar of Events

Evening with the Arts	May 12 @ 6:30
HuHot Fundraiser	May 22 / 5:00-8:00 p.m.
<i>The Middle of Yesterday</i> Performances	June 2 - 18
<i>Unnecessary Farce</i> Auditions	June 11 & 12 @ 7:00 p.m.
Drama Camp - Week 1	June 12 - 16
Drama Camp - Week 2	June 19 - 23
Drama Camp - Week 3	July 10 - 14