

JANUARY 2018



NEWSLETTER



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From the Director

From the Director
of Development

From Box Office
Volunteer

Reach Us

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Tomah, WI 54660

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TomahAct.com



Directed by Rocky Shutter

ARSENIC and Old Lace

Written by Joseph Kesselring

February 15-18 & 22-25, 2018

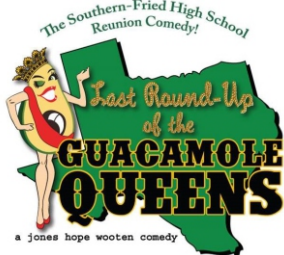
Arsenic and Old Lace is a dark comedy centered on the Brewster family. Drama critic, Mortimer Brewster is planning to marry Elaine Harper before he is forced to deal with his "unusual" family. His sweet aunts Martha and Abby Brewster have a unique method of helping lonely gentlemen find peace.

Thursday - Saturday 7:00pm
Sunday Matinee at 1:00pm (note a change from 2:00)
Season Ticket holders - tickets on sale January 29, 2018
No online tickets available for season tickets
Box office opens February 5, 2018
Monday - Friday 2:00 - 5:00pm
One hour before each performance

Adults \$20
Students \$10

Permission by Dramatists PlayService

Coming
April 12 -15
&
April 19 - 22



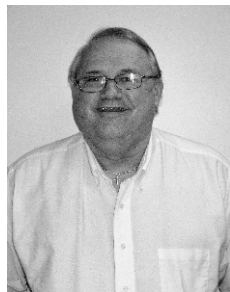
Directed by
Dr. Bridget Owens
Samantha Komay

Auditions
held at ACT
Jan 29 & 30
6:30 - 8:30 pm

In this deliciously funny Southern-fried comedy, the Verdeen cousins of Sweetgum, Texas - Gaynelle, Peaches, and Jimmie Wyvette - are up against the clock as they frantically attempt to produce the ultimate high school reunion before the old building is demolished. But they've got a bushel of obstacles to overcome before they can pull off this miracle.

LAST ROUND-UP OF THE QUACAMOLE QUEENS is the third and final comedy in the Verdeen Cousins Texas Trilogy that begins with THE RED VELVET CAKE WAR and continues with REX'S EXES. You'll laugh so hard you might even consider attending your next high school reunion!

Due to increased expenses our ticket prices have changed. Individual adult tickets are now \$20 and tickets for children (3-18) are now \$10.



From the Director...Rocky Shutter

Rehearsals are underway for Area Community Theatre's winter production of Joseph Kesselring's classic "Arsenic and Old Lace." It has been a wonderful opportunity for me to work with such a talented group of actors. Many of my

fellow cast members from this past summer's musical "Oliver" are in the show. It's so much fun to be reunited with Justin Towne, Barb Sullivan, Christine Jacobsen, Brad Lindberg, Marcus Rowan and Collin Dowson along with noted ACT actors including Barb Mundinger, Richard Kling, Jordyn Price, Wayne Kling and William Clyma. Newcomers to the ACT include Jess Betts, Jay Tiarks, and Dakota Abbott. I must say that I don't remember the last time I was so relaxed at rehearsals. It could be due to the fact that Steve Jones and Cherie Lipp are working so hard to build and decorate the set. Perhaps it's because I can't help but laugh at some of the stories that Justin comes up with. Maybe it's because Jess keeps bringing such wonderful sweets to practices. I can't resist his cookies and cake. So much for dieting right now!!

I have always admired this classic play. I recall, as a young boy, being taken to The Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis, Minnesota to see one of my first professional theatrical productions. My wonderful aunt, who provided me with so many cultural experiences, invited me to attend "Arsenic and Old Lace" with her and my two cousins. She kept reminding me that if anyone asked who I was, my response was to be that I was one of her sons. You see, she had received the "family discount" and wanted me to go along with her scheme. I guess favorite nephews were not included in this special package.

I was mesmerized by what I saw that day. I vividly recall how the two aunts were serving elderberry wine in these fancy goblets. It reminded me of the wine that we drank during monthly Communion at church. I was fascinated by the two elderly aunts in the play and wondered if this were a true story. These ladies certainly were

eccentric and applied a logic in life that I simply couldn't understand. (Once you see the show, this will all make perfect sense.) I recall being terrified by the character of Jonathon. He was so cruel to everyone else in the play!! I feared that he might come out into the audience and grab me taking me off to a fate that I simply didn't want to consider!! Most of all, there was this window-seat that intrigued me especially when I discovered how this important piece of furniture fits in the play. I wanted to go on stage and look inside of the window-seat to discover all of the things inside of it. I was fascinated yet a bit nervous about looking inside thinking that some strange force might compel me to be zapped into the seat like Heather O'Rourke ended up being inside of the TV in Spielberg's "Poltergeist."

As these great memories come back to me, I can't help but feel excitement about directing "Arsenic and Old Lace." It will be an incredible experience sharing this unique story of the dysfunctional Brewster family with an audience. I truly hope that everyone embraces this play like I did. I look forward to seeing all of you at one of our eight performances beginning the weekend of February 15-18 and February 22-25. Keep in mind that evening performances now start at 7:00pm and Sunday matinees are at 1:00pm. Tickets will go on sale February 5th at our box office or order tickets online at www.tomahact.com. For further information, call the theatre at 608-374-7469.

Spotlight on Boris Karloff

The role of Jonathan Brewster in the original production of *Arsenic and Old Lace* was played by English actor William Henry Pratt (November 23, 1887 - February 2, 1969), better known by his stage name Boris Karloff. Known mostly for his horror films, Karloff portrayed Frankenstein's monster in *Frankenstein* (1931), *Bride of Frankenstein* (1935), and *Son of Frankenstein* (1939), which resulted in his immense popularity. He also appeared as Imhotep in *The Mummy* (1932).

His best-known non-horror role is as the Grinch, as well as the narrator, in the animated television special of Dr. Seuss's *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* (1966). For his contribution to film and television, Boris Karloff was awarded two stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Although Frank Capra cast Raymond Massey as Jonathan Brewster in the film version of *Arsenic and Old Lace* (which was shot in 1941, while Karloff was still appearing in the role on Broadway), Karloff reprised the role on television in the anthology series *The Best of Broadway* (1955), and with Tony Randall and Tom Bosley in a 1962 production on the *Hallmark Hall of Fame*.



Boris Karloff in Bride of Frankenstein



Boris Karloff in Arsenic & Old Lace

**ACT
Summer
production
held at
Tomah High
School
July 19-22**



**Director
Samantha Komay**

**Auditions held
May 30 & 31
6:00 - 8:30pm
at ACT**

With a wink and a nod to Lewis Carroll, the new kid in town discovers that Wonderland High is not your typical high school in this buoyant new musical.

Filled with jokes, puns and portmanteau, *Wonderland High* celebrates the writing of and wit of Lewis Carroll, as his characters are reimagined to be students in a contemporary high school.



**From the Director of Development..Sharon Larkin
EXCITING CHANGES FOR ACT**

There have been many exciting times over the forty-one years ACT has been in existence. The purchase and move to the building on Superior Ave in Tomah in 2002, after being forced to leave Fort McCoy, was an exciting change. Only five years later, your Board of Directors made the bold move to purchase the building on Kilbourn Avenue that we now call home. Challenges come with running any business and it is the way they are faced that determine success or failure. There is no doubt that any future year will be as eventful or as challenging for ACT as this year has been. The year began with having to raise enough money to install a desperately needed new roof over the second floor, along with repairs to the air conditioning system. We are so grateful for the generous donations that ACT received toward those projects.

After the roof was installed, the Chamber of Commerce, who had been renting a large portion of the first floor, moved to another location, and we found ourselves facing another challenge. But your Board of Directors made another bold move and decided to utilize that area with ACT offices, a library for scripts and a new box office! Those weeks were very busy, moving all the files and furniture down from the second floor. It took many volunteer hours of labor to make the move, followed by more hours to paint and decorate the inside as well as the outside of the building. Kudos to Farmer Construction for donating labor and materials to spruce up the outside steps! But things didn't stop there. During that time, it was discovered the lower roof over the first floor entry needed replacing. Money was raised and that project was completed.

We were on a roll and not intending to stop! With money from a recent grant, we replaced the flooring in the first floor reception area, near the elevator. Ray Olsen Construction donated time and material to widen three doorways and once again we used ACT volunteer labor to paint the walls and donated money to purchase

new furnishings for that area. At the same time, we began another huge project on the second floor. Doorways have been removed and widened, new flooring has been installed in the entire hall, new furnishings are on the way and walls are being painted. The second floor women's bathroom is being redecorated and with money from another grant, a bathroom that has been out-of-order since we purchased the building is being remodeled into a large handicap restroom. Most of the labor and furnishings for the second floor projects have been donated.

Recently, ACT was given some nice used kitchen cupboards and countertops. We have desperately needed a remodeling in the upper kitchen so that project was undertaken as well. Ken McClurg has donated his time to install the cupboards and John Shuck is donating his time to move the sink and dishwasher. The newly remodeled kitchen will have more work area and will be more efficient.

Once again, thank you to those who have helped us come so far in such a short time. We look forward to eventually replacing the worn out carpet in the two banquet rooms and enjoying the beautiful new ACT building! Most of the projects should be finished before the next play in February. Come to the play and take a look! The ACT offices are open most weekdays from 10 - 3, and sometimes longer. You are welcome to stop in any time to visit us. When you drive by the building, take notice of the new look, with the new paint and signage, there is no doubt Tomah has a PROFESSIONAL PERFORMING ARTS THEATRE and you can be proud of that! We sure are!!!!



Pat Boelsing...Volunteering for A.C.T

I love the theatre. I also love volunteering at the theatre. Whether your passion is on stage or off there is plenty to do to help out your local area community theater. The Tomah community is very fortunate to have such an active group. But volunteers are always needed and much appreciated.

I enjoy helping out at the Box Office. The work is not hard, there is a little computing required but mostly it's about visiting and seeing friendly faces. Prior to each play volunteers are needed to man the box office.

Hours that are needed for the box office are week days 2-5 and 1.5 hours prior to each performance. We answer the phone, check the email and sell tickets to walk ins at the Administrative Offices of the theatre. Additionally, we might be called up on to fold bulletins, hang posters or even some light cleaning.

No matter your talent, opportunities abound. Please consider joining your local Area Community Theatre volunteer family.

Tomah Arts Guild Gallery

on the 2nd floor of the
ACT building
New hours

Open by Appointment only!

Call 608-344-8128 or 608-343-5867

**TAG will be open during ACT shows
and special occasions**

If you are looking for a unique gift
or a personalized gift made to order, make sure to
visit the gallery and talk to one of the artists!

Steve Jones

President

Samantha Komay

Vice-President

Rocky Shutter

Secretary

Barb Sullivan

Treasurer

Sharon Larkin

Director of

Development

Larry Baribeau

Bridget Owens

Christine Hennegan

Lori Ripley

Sharon Frenz

Colleen Richer

Facility Manager

Wayne Kling

Historian

EXPERIENCE LIVE THEATRE!