

# TWIN LAKES PLAYHOUSE

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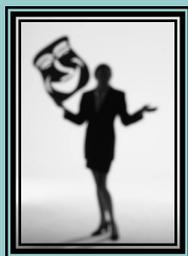
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As Winston Churchill said,  
"We make a living by what we  
get, but we make a life by what  
we give."

- Dennis Gilmore, Athens, TX



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# PLAYBILL



Volume 9, Issue 3

MARCH 2012

## ALWAYS...PATSY CLINE A HUGE SUCCESS

After four years of trying to get this play produced, we finally found the right time and the right cast to do it. Lee Anne Jackson is phenomenal as Patsy— her voice rings true to the style and personality of this legendary country singer. Some audience members commented that she must have been lip-syncing, she sounded so much like Patsy. No, that is Lee Anne all the way. And Darcy Sherrod as Louise Seger, known for her comedic abilities, doesn't disappoint. She bustles around the stage as if she owned it. The two take the audience on a whirlwind experience— lots of down-home comedy, sprinkled with show stopping tunes and the ballads for which Patsy was so known.

The two ladies are supported by the wonderful Bodacious Bobcats Band, or in real life: Randy West (musical director) on keyboard, Truman Fuller on guitar, James Ramsey on peddle steel, Larry Roberts on fiddle, Tom Olson on drums, and Gresham McMillon on bass. We've also had many audience members inquire how long the band has been playing together. To tell you the truth, we didn't have a full band until the Thursday before Opening Night. Talk about a stressful director! But when you get experienced musicians, they are able to fit right in and after a few hours on Thursday and Friday, they were poised and ready to go.



Opening Night was the best one yet— completely sold-out. You could actually feel the electricity in the air. Our wine, cheese, and mini hot dogs/sausages went over great. And because of the diligent work of our two ticket masters, Kimberly Beasley and Anne Johnson/Loftis, we had no trouble with seating. Throughout the play, we had some minor technical problems, like the spotlight blew twice, or some of the volumes on the mics weren't quite right, but all that's been fixed now.

Assistants include: Paula Hill, Amber Bauerlein, Shannon Davis, Karen McKaig, Nickolas Rice, Andrew Kibbe, Michael Johnson, Anne-Johnson-Loftis, Kimberley Beasley, John and Carol Eberhard, Lisa Hammet, Shirley Spitzer, and members of the playhouse who helped with parking, concessions, and the wine and cheese Opening Night. Thank you all for your hard work.

The purpose of doing *Always...Patsy Cline* was to build up our building fund. We should be bringing in a tidy little sum to be deposited into our capital funds account. Because we've done 12 performances and almost all of them were sold out. We have a waiting list for the last weekend of the run.

And hopefully we will be doing more fundraisers to continue adding to this account. The more capital funds we have, the more attractive we look to investors and grantors.

Another great idea that came out of this show is our "On the Boards Café" that will be opening March 24th. There is more on that further on in the newsletter.

So be well and relish the excitement this show has created at TLP.



\*\*\*\*\*  
**AUDITIONS! AUDITIONS! AUDITIONS! AUDITIONS! AUDITIONS!**  
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Auditions for **"Perfect Crime"** will be **Tuesday, March 13th at 6:00 PM** and **Tuesday, March 20th at 6:00 PM**. Performance dates are May 4 through May 20, 2012. Stacy Tiffin will need to cast the following parts:

*Margaret Thorne Brent; Psychiatrist, (female who can play age 30 to 50)*

*Inspector James Asher; Police Inspector (male, 30's to 50 or so)*

*W. Harrison Brent; Margaret's husband, also a psychiatrist who is an avowed anglophile (he likes to pretend he is British); (male 40's to 60's; needs to be a bit older than Margaret)*

*Lionel McAuley; mental patient; (male, 30's to 50's)*

*David Breuer; Host of local cable TV show; (male, 20's to 30's, must be younger and "hip", also extremely smarmy and obnoxious) The role of David Breuer will be videotaped as he interviews Margaret and shown on stage as a television program.*

Anyone who is interested, please audition. The best thing about this suspenseful mystery is that all the characters are NUTS in their own special way. Great opportunity for a serious, dramatic role which cannot help but be a blast for the actor to perform.

## SETTING THE STAGE by John Eberhard

Musings on Politics, Politics

TLP is set up with a Board of Directors headed by a chairman.

At times in the past, we have had chairmen who did not understand the difference between a chairman and a president. Let's explore the difference.

A chairman, according to [dictionary.com](http://dictionary.com), is "the presiding officer of a meeting, committee, board, etc."  
 A president, on the other hand, most commonly refers to an official with executive powers.

To follow this a bit further: A chairman runs the meetings wherein the Board makes the decisions. A president makes the decisions. Remember President George Bush's famous quote, "I am The Decider"?

An illustration of the difference is that the Speaker of the House of Representatives is a chairman: he runs the meetings, but doesn't make the decisions. The President of the United States is, well, a president, and he makes policy decisions. See the difference?

The Bylaws of TLP were set up so that the membership makes the major decisions while the Board of Directors takes care of the day to day business of the group. Just as we have had chairmen who thought they should be the decision-makers, we have at times had Boards who thought it was their function to take care of all business and policy decision-making instead of just the day-to-day business.

Having a president, as our country does, is a perfectly functional way of running things. Having a Board of Directors that takes care of virtually all business and policy decisions is another perfectly functional way of running things. However, these are not the way our group was set up. Until that framework is officially changed, we need to be vigilant to work within that framework. The new bylaws do not change that framework.

There is an interesting dichotomy here. I think usually the membership doesn't want to be bothered by the everyday minor business decisions that have to be made in order to keep things running. The membership, by and large, is much more focused on doing productions. I think the flip side is that the membership does not want one person or a small group of people making major decisions on large expenditures or overall directions in which the group should go. As Stacy so properly pointed out in one of his Chairman letters last year, we are a member-driven organization.

No doubt there are shades of gray in where the boundaries lie, but from time to time we need to remind ourselves that there are in fact boundaries, and that we need to work within them. As Cindy noted when she was Chairman, "If we are going to have by-laws, we need to follow them."



I recognize the need for the people who are in there doing the most, putting in the most time and effort, to have the loudest voice to speak on what they are needing in order to move ahead with getting things done. However, at the same time, they need to keep in mind that they do not have the only voice. Our bylaws use the Board formulating policies and the membership approving them as a check and as a balance.

Twin Lakes Playhouse is now opening a bohemian-type coffee house featuring live entertainment, called ON THE BOARDS CAFÉ. The concept includes showcasing all kinds of local talent, such as musicians, singers, poets, improvisation, dance, and comedy. The show will be the first weekend after our latest show closes, usually on a Saturday night. The first show is scheduled for Saturday, March 24, at 7:00p.m. and will run approximately two hours with a short intermission.

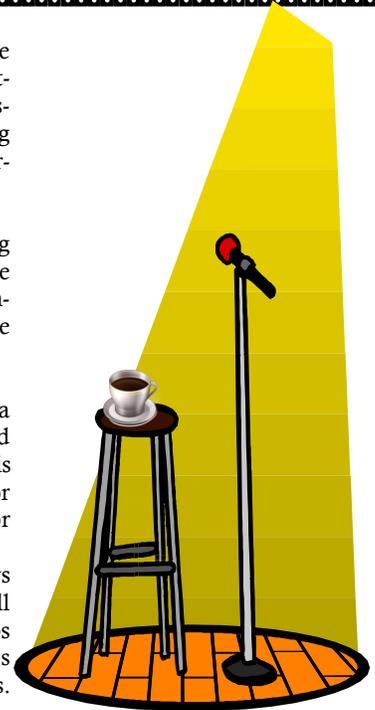
## ON THE BOARDS CAFÉ

The setting is a traditional beatnik coffee shop, less the smoke, where some lucky audience members will be part of the entertainment. There will be a second stage on top of our existing stage with bistro tables and chairs on the stage surrounding the second stage. The customers of the café will interact with the emcee and stage entertainment. The audience sitting in the house will watch the show, too, and feel the great electricity of live music and entertainment," comments Anne Johnson-Loftis, producer of the first show.

Flavored coffee drinks will be available for those sitting on the stage and to everyone during intermission. The cover charge is \$5 for each person. An extra \$5 will be charged for those who would like to be part of the show, sit on stage, and drink coffee throughout the performances. The latter tickets should be reserved as seating is limited. This is already up on the website.

"Twin Lakes Playhouse has been considering ways to promote our local talent and this is a great venue. Hopefully the café setting will attract teens and college students. And we would love to have children participate, too! The only restrictions for the acts is to keep it clean- this is for families and individuals to have fun without worrying about questionable language or adult situations. And, all acts must be safe. We don't want to endanger our audiences or facility."

Auditions for the first show held March 14-15 at 6:30pm. at the playhouse. They will always be open to anyone in the Twin Lakes Area. All acts need to own their equipment. We will provide 1 or 2 microphones and lighting. All other instruments: piano, drums, and props need to be provided by the musicians. Active TLP members will have access to our props and costumes. Please contact Anne Johnson-Loftis at 870-321-6980 with further questions.



### SOLILOQUY *by Deb Smith*

Another play has opened— this time for the benefit of the membership. Even though this has been an extremely expensive play to produce, with royalties and rental books and music, it will make us a good deal of money when all is said and done.

Audiences have compared it to a Broadway show; someone said he had seen this play 3 times before and this was by far the best version; others left singing the songs; and, all felt the energy from the stage through to the back of the house. At Sunday's performance, some of the audience members wouldn't let the ladies the ladies leave the stage. They wanted to hear "just one more song."

As a director, it always makes me so proud of my cast (and in this case, my musicians, too) to see audiences respond so positively to a performance. My crew worked their butts off., too. This was truly a group effort.

The Board is diligently working on finding a replacement for our opening show of the 2012-2013 season. I'm sure they would be open to suggestions and submittals. The season needs to start with a bang— either a very well-known play, a musical, or a hilarious comedy. If nothing comes up, they will have to move around some of the plays already scheduled and hope another director will step up to the plate later on in the year.

We have worked so hard to raise our standards and we fortunately have more directors than normal. Some are first-time directors. Hopefully their efforts will prove as successful as last year's first time directors, Stacy Tiffin and Mike Baker, who had hits their first time out. Directing is not easy but it is extremely rewarding. We need to take care of our directors and respect the work they do. Without them, we wouldn't have any shows to produce. So, if you're a director with a play on the shelf that you are just dying to share, speak to a Board member and submit the play.

## The Pros and Cons of Producing a Broadway Musical by Debra Fendrich Executive Editor Pioneer Drama Service, Inc.

Last week, my husband and I had the distinct pleasure of watching two different high school productions of classic American musical theatre — *Guys and Dolls* and *Oklahoma!* I'll be the first to admit... I love these shows. The recognizable music, the well-known story lines and the familiar characters swathed me like a cozy afghan on a winter night. I remember first discovering these gems in my youth, and it delights me to know that a whole new generation of young people is still enjoying them.

Yes, I realize my feelings are incongruous with being the executive editor at Pioneer Drama Service, where we pride ourselves on offering alternatives to these big name shows. As I tapped my toe and hummed along to "Surrey with the Fringe on Top," I asked myself, am I being hypocritical? My answer, in my own defense, is no. There IS a time and a place for producing one of these icons of musical theatre. On the other hand, there are also plenty of instances where it is not the best choice for a school or performing group.



Let's start with good reasons to put on a Broadway musical. Certainly, there's an educational component in ensuring that your drama students have the cultural literacy of knowing these shows. Though he denies it, our 18-year old son is awesome at our family game of "Name That Show" based on hearing just a few bars of a song such as "Adelaide's Lament." And for Adelaide or for Sarah Brown or for Nathan Detroit, there are some great songs. Face it, these shows are star vehicles, and if your school has the stars with ambitions to pursue a theatre major in college, as their drama teacher, you owe it to them to help build their résumés with these juicy roles.

But what if you don't have many stars, especially males? In watching both these shows, I was amazed at the number of talented male soloists and male chorus members these schools came up with, but I wonder how many schools really have this depth. *Guys and Dolls* requires FIVE males with solo quality voices, and *Oklahoma!* is close behind. Both these shows also require huge male choruses... choruses that can dance as well as sing. From Havana to the sewers of "Luck Be a Lady," from "Kansas City" to the friendship between the farmer and the cowman, the guys were kicking up their heels constantly both nights. Whew! At least in *Oklahoma!* there was an equal size female chorus, which is better than I can say for *Guys and Dolls*. That school valiantly placed additional girls as female gamblers, but between you and me, it really didn't work. But what else could they do? They had a ton of girls who wanted to be in the school musical, and there are only so many missionaries or Hot Box dancers a show can handle.

Between the stars and the choruses, however, I noticed that both these shows were very thin. The stars each have four or more songs (Curly has six!) and of course there are chorus numbers, but there's not much in between. Secondary characters don't get much in terms of a moment in the spotlight, especially since the plots primarily center around the romantic entanglements of the main characters. Perhaps this is just as well, for I also noted that the vocal ranges for these songs were clearly not written for student voices, unlike Pioneer Drama shows. Even the stars struggled with some of the lower and higher notes.

As impressed as I was with the students playing Nathan Detroit, Curly and Ado Annie, I also felt a bit sorry for these kids. Sure they memorized their lines and delivered great performances, but they didn't get to act in the true sense of creating a character. No, all they were doing was copying a character they've previously seen. The closer they came to mimicking the exact characteristics of what was already in each audience member's mind, the "better" their performance. For instance, everybody pictures how Tevye or how Annie should be played, so there's no escaping comparisons to those character-defining performances. But then is this acting or merely imitating? With lesser known musicals, actors have a chance to truly create and develop their own characters, because the audience doesn't have any pre-conceived notions regarding how a particular role should be played.

There were plenty of other differences I noticed between attending these shows and our Pioneer Drama musicals, and they weren't necessarily positive.

- You should have heard the principal's announcement before *Oklahoma*. Absolutely no pictures. Absolutely no videos. And believe me, these kids will never have the fun of posting their favorite musical number on YouTube. It's really too bad for the kids, their parents and especially their out-of-town grandparents. With Pioneer Drama Service, pic-

tures and videos are always welcome, and we encourage posting on YouTube — that's half the fun!

- Both these schools used a pit orchestra, which is great. That's how I got my start in musical theatre back in high school. But what if a school doesn't have the luxury of a band to rehearse for weeks after school with the cast? Pioneer Drama Service has production/rehearsal CD sets available for every single large musical. It's great fun to burn copies of the vocal CD for each student (Yes, we allow you to copy the CDs for this purpose!), and tell them in two weeks you're having a karaoke contest with the instrumental CD to see who's learned the lyrics best.
- At two to two and a half hours, not including the intermission, these shows are generally about 30 minutes longer than ours. That can be a nice evening of entertainment, but if you're thinking about your cast members' younger siblings sitting through the musical or you're a harried director with never enough rehearsal time as it is, taking on a 150 minute show with 13-15 songs might not be your best option. Directors at schools doing these huge shows generally have a lot of additional support from vocal coaches, choreographers, costume designers, set builders, etc., to keep them from going crazy.
- And oh, the snickers at some of the more dated comments! Honestly, who wants to be cast these days as "just a girl who can't say no"? Not only the language, but the music is dated and old-fashioned. The sad reality is that there is little new in Broadway theatre for high schools. You're not going to find a school edition of *Spring Awakening* or *Book of Mormon, Jr.* And there's no way your school board will ever approve of you staging *Spiderman!* So if you want to do something fresh and different that has contemporary, up-to-date music, it's the smaller publishers like Pioneer Drama Service that come out with several new musicals each year that reflect popular musical trends.
- Requirements to apply for rights months in advance (and risk of being denied), restrictive staging, limitations on changing the script in any way, logo usage restraints, pre-defined rental periods — all of these are also hassles that I know these noble directors had to tolerate as part of the price they pay for doing a Broadway musical.

Speaking of price, this is probably one of the biggest reasons why some organizations should not take on a Broadway musical. Pioneer Drama royalties for full-length musicals are fixed at \$90 for the first performance and \$80 for each additional. Our materials for a large cast will run around \$540 total, and the scripts are yours to keep. Think these schools got to perform their big name musicals five times for only \$950 total, including materials? Ha! The school producing *Oklahoma!* paid over \$4800 for their rental and five performances! That's why they needed to charge \$7 or \$10 per ticket, which sadly kept away much of the student body. The audiences were packed with family members, but whatever happened to students attending their own school musical? The feedback we heard is that students gladly come see their friends in shows when tickets are only \$2 or \$3. But with the income the schools need to cover the cost of doing a Broadway show, they have no choice but to double and triple their admission fees. To me, it ruins the point of doing a school musical, no matter how famous and wonderful it is, if ticket prices prevent the bulk of your student body from attending.

As much as I love classic musical theatre, I am proud that we offer alternative full length musicals. While some high schools can and should be producing Broadway shows, not every school has the resources — be it time, space, talent or especially money — to do it well. For these groups, rather than setting up the cast and crew to fall short of the audience's pre-conceived notions of what the show should look and sound like, let them thrive by putting on an outstanding production of a musical custom designed for success at the school level, even if it doesn't have a recognizable title.

### YOUTH ACTING WORKSHOPS

**ACTING I (ages 8-12)** May 26, 9:00-4:00 May 26

**ACTING II (ages 8-12)** June 2, 9:00-4:00

**ACTING I (ages 13-18)** June 9, 9:00-4:00

**ACTING II (ages 13-18)** June 16, 9:00-4:00

### ADULT WORKSHOPS

**ACTING III-** March 24, 1:00-4:00 **POSTPONED**

**IMPROVISATION WORKSHOP-** (16+) March 31

## Education/Outreach Program



**PLEASE NOTE THE ADULT ACTING WORKSHOP III HAS BEEN POSTPONED ON MARCH 24TH DUE TO THE OPENING OF "ON THE BOARDS CAFÉ."**

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### VICE CHAIRMAN

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Andrew Kibbe  
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Shirley Spitzer  
Anne Johnson-Loftis

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### CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

John Eberhard

### WEBSITE WEBMASTER

Michael Johnson



## TIPS FROM AACT

### **Lights On**

Many theaters have hallways that lead from the dressing rooms or green room to the stage. During performance, the hall lights are turned off, often making the journey a hazardous one for actors in a hurry between costume changes. A simple way to light the path is the use of photoelectric night lights. These plug into any wall outlet and turn on automatically when the other lights are turned off. These lights also are useful in other places where ambient lighting is likely to dim during performance.

### **Going Off-Center**

If you find your set design is too symmetrical--a problem that plagues less experienced designers--here's a trick that may help in an emergency. Take the ground plan and turn it slightly so that the center line of the design crosses the center line of the stage at an angle. By doing so you increase visual tension, often with an improvement of dramatic quality.

### **Marketing Know-How**

If you are in charge of marketing or publicizing your shows be sure to read the plays in question and talk about them with the directors. Surprisingly, many people in these positions never do this. Yet no one would argue that it's difficult to sell something to someone else when you don't really know the product. Knowing the play and the director's concept can suggest story ideas and poster designs. It will also prepare you to answer questions from the media.

### **Light Colors**

When working with lighting gels, remember that certain colors cancel each other out and some complement others--especially darker colors. Most colors are not pure--for example, purple has blue and red elements, and green may contain a lot of blue. These elements will affect how the color looks when projected on people, costumes and sets.

### **Shady Costumes**

Costumes may be shaded or highlighted in order to give the garments more dimension and increase their sculpted effect--just as makeup is used for the same purpose on the actor's face. Shading may be done lightly and realistically so that the garments look completely natural, or with strong contrasts for a more stylized look. Some costumers use spray leather dyes, usually in brown or gray. Others use liquid fabric dyes in a spray bottle or atomizer. In small areas, you can use a brush or sponge, blending carefully for a subtle effect.

### **It's the Law**

If you plan to design a new theater, note that laws may restrict your ability to borrow ideas from another theater or building. Architectural designs embodied in buildings qualify for protection under U.S. copyright law, which went into effect December 1, 1990, explicitly adding architectural works to the type of works protected by the Copyright Act. The little-known law explicitly entitles the owner of a copyright in original building plans--usually the architect or firm that designed the plans--to enjoin and recover damages from anyone who designs a building that is identical or substantially similar to a copyrighted design.



## MEETING TIMES

**Board Meeting, March 12, 2012 6:00 P.M.**

**Members' Meeting, March 19, 2012 7:00 P.M.**

**Board Meeting, April 9, 2012 6:00 P.M.**

**Members' Meeting, April 16, 2012 7:00 P.M.**