

Beyond the Stage Door

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PATRON HIGHLIGHT: Clark and Madeleine Middleton

By Debby Stanuch

Introducing Twin Lakes Playhouse members and patrons, Clark and Madeleine Middleton....

Clark Middleton was first introduced to acting over 40 years ago when a friend suggested he audition for a role in a movie being filmed in his hometown, Dallas, Texas. He hired an agent and was cast in three movies, ACORN PEOPLE with Lamar Burton and Cloris Leachman, CRISIS AT CENTRAL HIGH with Joanne Woodward and Charles Durning (the true story of the court-ordered integration of Little Rock's Central High School in 1957) and a third whose title he can't recall. "The title was changed 3 times," laughs Clark. "I don't think it ever made it to the screen."

From this professional acting debut grew a love of community theater with Clark performing onstage in the Dallas area before retiring to Peeler in NW Marion County where he and his wife, Madeleine, were introduced to The Lyric Theater in Harrison by a neighbor.

Clark was introduced to TLP while performing in a Jones, Hope, Wooten play at The Lyric with Karen McKaig. She suggested he audition for the show, GOOD OLD-FASHIONED REDNECK COUNTRY



CHRISTMAS, directed by Deb Smith. He was later cast in another JHW comedy, CHRISTMAS BELLES and in DEARLY DEPARTED by Jessie Jones of JHW.

Two of Clark's favorite roles are from REDNECK COUNTRY CHRISTMAS and DEARLY DEPARTED. "I love doing comedy and making people laugh," he says. "When I'm onstage I can let my inner child come out to play."

Community theater and educational programs like those offered at TLP are important to children, according to Clark. "When a kid is on stage it improves their self-esteem and gives them joy and a sense of accomplishment. They can also learn how to build sets and the technical side of theater, like sound and lighting."

In a small town like Mountain Home, Clark feels community theater is important because it allows

local community members to bring live entertainment to their hometown. "I enjoy being on a small stage because it brings the audience up close and personal."

Clark and Madeleine also volunteer at TLP and he worked with Stacy Tiffin on the theater's renovation. "One drawback of small theaters like Twin Lakes Playhouse is getting the word out about the theater and bringing in volunteers."

The Middletons remain involved at The Lyric where Clark has worn lots of hats. He serves on the theater's board of directors as President, has directed productions, hosted their annual awards show, built sets and done tech.

Madeleine, a former music teacher in Dallas loves doing children's musicals. At The Lyric she has been musical director for pro-

ductions of THE KING & I, SHENANDOAH, SOUTH PACIFIC and was assistant director of SWEENEY TODD. She has also written and directed veteran's shows for the Lyric to honor her husband's military service.

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A PLAY DOES NOT EXIST

Until it is on the stage

-Tennessee Williams



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Judge Wise Woman— Dianne
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JANUARY 2021 VIRTUAL ACTING WORKSHOP

We thought we would share the picture sent by Amy Johnson, Youth Services Librarian at the Baxter County Library where the workshop was held this year. These are 10 of the 12 kids that participated in the workshop. Unfortunately, one pre-teen traveled the second weekend of the workshop and had no phone reception in that area. Another young lady was having trouble with her internet connection and was also unable to participate. But next time, they will get to do the entire workshop!!

But, these kids definitely gave their all and did a great job! Part of the workshop was working on a performance. Dianne Pankau put together a great little package that included costume ideas for their characters. We had the 3 Little Pigs (Oh-Nay, T'woah, and Three), Big Bad, the wolf, Little Red Riding Hood, the Boy Who Cried Wolf, The Evil Stepmother, Grandmother Hood, Bill Woodcutter, and the Shepard. Can you guess who is who?

MEMBER FOCUS: Meet Anne Johnson

by Deb Smith

It astounds me how many people you meet in your lifetime and some of them become great friends because you both share a common interest. That's how it is with Anne. She and I belonged to the same women's sorority in California even though we had never met we transferred to Mountain Home, at different times, and ended up in the same chapter here in Arkansas. One of the requirements of our sorority is that each of the members are asked to share an interest or an experience we treasure with our chapter group. Bet you can't guess what mine is!

Anyway, our chapter members knew I was volunteering at the Twin Lakes Playhouse, acting and serving on the Board of Directors. One night, my program was sharing the experience of directing my first show, "A Christmas Carol" in 2006. I shared what I was learning to do, how much fun I was having, and invited members to talk to me privately if they were interested in helping out at the playhouse. Anne approached me after the meeting and said she would love to get involved. I knew Anne was a painter, I had seen one of her murals on a friend's patio wall, and I said I had a great opportunity for her. She showed up that week and ended up painting the set to make it look more realistic, giving it depth and age, and making it far more interesting. It was just what I wanted. We became fast friends and have continued to work together on plays throughout the years.

Anne not only painted sets for me but, after seeing her spectacular work, other directors asked if she would paint their sets, too. Which she does to this day. Anne also ran for the Board of Directors as Treasurer, moving to Chairman the next term, and she is again Treasurer this term. TLP even hired her for a year as office manager.

But, what really surprised us was when she said she wanted to try her hand at directing a show. She took the Director's Workshop with Carol Eberhard and, knowing some of her interests, I suggested the play, "Blithe Spirit" as her first show. She fell in love with the play., and in 2017, she made her directorial debut.

Anne is extremely creative. So, she set "Blithe Spirit" by Noel Coward in the roaring 1920's era, giving her a great opportunity to create beautiful costume ensembles, furniture, and props. She did a bright and beautiful art deco set and all the actors looked fabulous! She had so much fun she chose to direct again, choosing an all-women cast, and "Savannah Sipping Society" opened in 2018. Anne followed it with another Jones-Hope-Wooten play, "The Wild Women of Winedale" in 2020. Right now, she hopes to direct a Christmas show, "Dashing Through The Snow" in 2021 and "Steel Magnolias" in 2022. And, Anne has been cast in 3 shows, too. Her first was "Life With Father", followed by "Wind In The Willows 2019" and "Wild Women of Winedale".

Theatre and Art are not Anne's only interests. She is an herbalist, traveler, reader, animal lover, designer, cook, baker, and so much more!

Anne sums up her goals: Living life to the fullest, enjoying the health and physical abilities she still retain, keep feeling young and have a purpose to life.. "I refuse to be just another "OLD" Lady. Too much junk in the past, time to make up for it and have fun being who I truly am meant to be. Life is my journey, jump on and we'll take a wild ride!"



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ACTING WORKSHOPS



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**Even though our stage
is temporarily closed,
your membership
dues are still needed
for this year. There
are bills to pay and re-
pairs to be made. So, if
you can, please submit
your dues to help out.**

Thank you!

COMING ATTRACTIONS

- ◆ **MARCH BOARD MTG**
3/8/2021 at 6PM
- ◆ **MARCH MEMBERS MTG** 3/15/2021 @ 6PM
Discussion on new Season strategy
- ◆ **SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK, Summer 2021**

Featuring a script written by Olivia Wolfe based on Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet"

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Waiting for a performance date.

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