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Players Close 85th Season with *Father of the Bride*

by Bob McLaughlin

This September, Sally Parry and I will have been married for twenty-seven years. There are many reasons for the longevity of our marriage, among them a conclusion we came to early on: having planned one wedding, we knew it would be easier to stay married than to plan another. That's an interesting way to think of weddings: a deterrent to divorce.

I imagine that most people who have gotten married and had a wedding have faced similar problems: negotiating with the minister, priest, or rabbi about the ceremony; choosing the music; finding a place for the reception; open bar?; what kind of champagne?; how much food?; what kind of cake?; how do you refrain from killing the photographer?; choosing the groomsmen and bridesmaids; what will they wear?; can all the bridesmaids fit in their dresses?; what kind of gown for the bride?; gratefully accepting "help" from your relatives; where to put up people coming in from out of town? And most important: How many people to invite? And who gets an invitation and who doesn't? In short, no matter how many brides' magazines tell you that it's *your* wedding, by the time wedding day arrives, the production has gotten pretty much out of control.

The universality of the wedding-day experience accounts for the ongoing popularity of *Father of the Bride*, the story of a simple wedding that becomes an extravaganza and a naive man who learns that his conviction that he has some control over his life and family is a delusion. *Father of the Bride* began life in 1949 as a novel by Edward Streeter, with delightful illustrations by Gluyas Williams. It begins with Kay Banks, daughter of Stanley and Ellie Banks,

announcing her plan to marry Buckley Dunstan and follows the tortuous path to the big event. In 1950 the novel was adapted for the movies, with Elizabeth Taylor as the bride and Spencer Tracy and Joan Bennett as her parents. The next year, the same cast reprised their roles in *Father's Little Dividend*, with Stanley facing the birth of his first grandchild. An inevitable remake, with Steve Martin and Diane Keaton, reached screens in 1991, with the equally inevitable *Father of the Bride Part II* following in 1995. In between the two big-screen treatments, there was a one-season TV series, starring Leon Ames and Ruth Warrick.

Given the timeless popularity of this story, it's not surprising that there is a stage version of *Father of the Bride*, written in 1951 by Caroline Francke. The play focuses on the Banks home and the confusion into which it is thrown by the upcoming wedding: too many presents arrive; the names of too many guests keep showing up in the card file; too many bills threaten financial ruin. Poor Buckley has to overcome his fear of being on display and learn what the real point of a wedding is. And poor Stanley reluctantly has to face the fact that his little girl has grown up and he is growing old.



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May - June 2008

Board Meetings

May 13, 6:00 p.m.
June 10, 6:00 p.m.
Community Players Theatre

Father of the Bride

Preview: May 1
Shows: May 2-4, 8-11, 15-17

High School Musical

Auditions: May 17, May 20
Preview: July 9
Shows: July 10-13, 17-20, 24-27

Tickets can be ordered online at
www.communityplayers.org.
Click on "Online Ticket Sales."



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Newsletter Committee

Jim Kalmbach
Barb Lemmon
John Lieder
Bob McLaughlin

We are always looking for
writers, artists, designers and
story ideas. Send comments and
suggestions to lieder78@yahoo.com

Curtain Calls is published six
times a year for the voting mem-
bers of Community Players.

For information about joining us,
please contact our membership
chair, Barb Lemmon at
barb.lemmon@comcast.net.

Back issues of *Curtain Calls*
are available on the Commu-
nity Players web site. Click on
"Newsletter Archive."

High School Musical Auditions Gearing Up

Community Players is pleased to announce auditions for its summer production of Disney's *High School Musical*. The production team includes Director **Matt Drat**, Choreographer **Whitney Spencer**, Music Directors **Kyle Fressen** and **Jessica Stiller** and Producers **Cathy Sutliff** and **Kameron Cox**. The show will run July 10-13, 17-20, 24-27, 2008. There is a possibility that the run could be extended to July 31- August 2.



Based on the highly successful Disney television film, this modern retelling of Romeo and Juliet focuses on the captain of the basketball team and a shy transfer student who get the lead parts in their high school musical and, as a result, divide the school. Resisting peer pressure and rivalry, they inspire others not to "stick with the status quo."

The cast includes principle roles for 5 males and 5 females with supporting and ensemble roles numbering over 50. The primary age range for this production is 12 to 24 years old. There are also two older adult roles.

The audition process being used for *High School Musical* is different from past productions. There are three specific audition sessions: Saturday, May 17, 2008 from 9 am to Noon and 1 pm-4 pm and Tuesday, May 20, 2008 from 7-10 pm. Those interested in auditioning must pre-register for one of these sessions. Full audition information and audition packets can be downloaded at the Community Players website by clicking **Learn More** about *High School Musical* at our homepage.



New Board Members Elected

At 2008 Community Players Member-
ship meeting on Tuesday, April 22, the
following people were elected to two
years terms on the Board of Governors:

Jason Wiggins, Treasurer
Brian Artman, Theatre Tech
Barb Lemmon, Membership
John Lieder, House and Grounds

The election was particularly exciting
as Barb Lemmon and Herb Reichelt tied
in the initial balloting for membership
chair, necessitating the first ever Board
of Governors runoff election. Hillary
and Barak have nothing on Community
Players!

Other members of the Board of Gover-
nors, effective June 1, 2008, include:

Cathy Sutliff, President
Deb Smith, Vice President
Jean Lieder, Secretary
Eddy Arteman, Theatre Craft
Sally Parry, Play Reading
Kameron Cox, Box Office
Elizabeth Aronson, Marketing
Bruce Parrish, Historian
Carolyn Beyer, Emeritus

We would like to thank Roland Spies for
his excellent work as membership chair
and welcome Elizabeth Aronson who
was recently appointed to complete a
term as Marketing Chair.



Board Spotlight: Box Office Chair

by John Lieder

Editor's Note: This article resumes our series spotlighting positions on the Board of Governors.

There is an old adage about a theatre's Jack-of-all-trades who does "everything except sell tickets." In the case of Kameron Cox, Community Players' Box Office Chair, the adage would need to be changed to "everything *and* sell tickets."

A veteran actor with the Rantoul Theatre Group as well as here at Community Players, Kameron is currently working on CP's next production, *Father of the Bride*, as Assistant Director, and preparing to co-produce this summer's production of *High School Musical*. He recently was able to take some time to discuss the duties of the Box Office Chair.

Cox was named to the Box Office chair by President Deb Smith last fall when Tom Smith resigned. The 2008-2009 season will be his first full season. He is currently learning the ropes on the computerized ticketing program from Treasurer Jason Wiggins, and will soon be selling tickets for our 86th season and fielding inquiries for season ticket purchases.

Before each production, Cox must make sure that the Box Office is sufficiently staffed to handle ticket sales



Kameron Cox, 2008 Box Office Chair.

and to fill season ticket vouchers. He also must provide the Marketing Chair with complimentary tickets to help with sales promotion. Daily (or nearly daily) duties are required to keep the Box Office running smoothly. These include verifying that the Box Office server is operational, checking that there are sufficient supplies, and touching base with the staff to discuss Box Office issues. Cox attends all monthly Board of Governors meetings and reports on the status of the Box Office. The Box Office Chair must also verify that Box Office receipts are promptly and accurately deposited, and he is a member of Finance Committee.

The Box Office is currently staffed by Ted and Joan Ichniowski, Maggie Veselack, and Caroline Beyer. Cox states, "The staff I have currently are great and I want them to know that I would be completely lost if not for them and they are encouraged to stay on staff for as long as they are able. I would not trade them for the world." On the other hand, Kameron would like to have a couple more volunteers so the current folks don't need to work quite so much. If you are interest in volunteering to work at the box office, you can contact Cox at future400@yahoo.com.

Kameron says he really enjoys the interactions with the staff and public. "The times I have manned the Box Office for a show were fun and interesting. The most rewarding part was the expression on a little girl's face when I was able to work in two chairs for her and her mother to see the magician we hosted as a fundraiser. They were very happy that I could find them a space, and I was glad I could do it for them."

Cox says that the job is not as overwhelming as one might expect, but "if I found Aladdin's lamp and made one wish regarding the Community Players' Box Office, it would have to be that the Box Office was more organized and flowing for a conducive work environment. I do plan to one day go in and thoroughly clean the box office and organize the wires to the server and all the electronic devices. I also will be doing my best to make the Box Office more productive by changing the layout of the work area and maximizing what little free space there is."

Outside the theatre, Cox works at Illinois State University in the University College Testing Services Office where

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... *Father of the Bride* Preview continued from page 1.

Director **Marcia Weiss** has assembled a cast eager to bring all this chaos to life. Kay, the bride, is played by newcomer **Meg Nally**. Buckley, the diffident fiancé, is played by **Brian Artman**. **Reena Rhoda** plays Ellie Banks, the calm at the center of the nuptial storm. **Matt Stroh** plays Ben Banks and **Keaton Richard** plays Tommy Banks, Kay's younger brothers. **Cathy Sutliff** plays Delilah, the Banks' sentimental maid. **Joe Strupek** plays Mr. Massoula, the flamboyant caterer. **Dave Lemmon** tackles the double role of Mr. Bellamy, Stanley's longtime assistant who tries to manage the guest list, and Joe, Massoula's circulation expert. **Emma Blyth** plays Peggy, Ben's fiancée, and **Hope Nash** (making her Community Players premiere) plays Tommy's best friend Buzz. **Diana Nelson** plays dressmaker Mrs. Pulitzki, **Diane Smith** plays one of Joe's movers, and **Carissa Haning** (another Community Players premiere) plays the florist. I play Stanley.



Judy Stroh, Bob McLaughlin, Meg Nally, Keaton Richard, and Reena Rhoda as the Banks family react to the news that 472 people will be invited to the wedding.



Co-producers **Jean Lieder** and **Sally Parry** have enlisted the following outstanding staff: Choreographer **Sherise Kirvan** (don't close your eyes between scenes); Master Builders **John Brittingham** and **Anita Corso**; Costume Designers **Opal Virtue, Sherry Bradshaw, and Carolyn Beyer**; Lighting and Sound Effects Designer **Dan Virtue**; Sound Designer **Rich Plotkin**; Property Master **Dorothy Mundy**; Assistant Director **Kameron Cox**; Stage Manager **Judy Stroh**.

Father of the Bride kicks off with a Pay-What-You-Can Preview Performance on Thursday, May 1. Performances continue May 2-4, 8-11, and 15-17. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evening performances begin at 7:30. Sunday matinees begin at 2:30.

As a special Mother's Day promotion, on Sunday May 11, if you buy a ticket to the show, your mother gets in free!



... Box Office Spotlight continued from page 3.

he has been since August 2005. Prior to that position he was working in the DeGarmo Rapid Print Office (part of the Printing Services Department at ISU). He lives in Normal and enjoys spending his free time with his girlfriend, Barb, and other friends and family. He is a huge *Star Trek* and *Stargate* fan and finds all other things Science Fiction related "ok." Thanks, Kameron, for all you do to keep the Box Office clicking and ... "live long and prosper."



Alan Wilson, Penny Wilson, and Mariano Tolentino celebrate the opening night of *A Catered Affair* on Broadway. This new musical, the latest Broadway show in which Mariano has invested, opened to strong reviews on April 17. It has already been nominated for best new musical by the Drama League, the first of what are certain to be many nominations this award season.