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Pec Playhouse Theatre Quarterly Newsletter

WHAT'S UP WITH THE NEW THEATER?

Glen Wiegert, Brad Keyes, and Brian Pauley met with Steve Howlett (Our Architect - PG Design + Build) and Dave Zimmerman (General Contractor – DPI Construction) on August 23rd. This is the first meeting Pec Playhouse has had with Steve since finalizing the contract with DPI. Leading up to this meeting, Arnie Ames has put in countless hours creating floor plan drawings of the new space.

We want to personally thank Arnie for this work and want everyone to know what an asset he has been in this early planning phase. These drawings have been presented to Steve and we believe they will help move this first phase along at a quicker pace. Steve will take Arnie's input and come back to Pec Playhouse with a street view drawing and a rough layout of the interior of the space. We estimate that we will have this finished work back to us around the middle of October. Once we have this work back to us, we will have the asset committee review it and make a recommendation to the full board. At the same time that these come back and are reviewed by the asset committee, the Capital Campaign will use these to begin the first phase of our fund-raising efforts.

Pec Playhouse has made an application to the Village of Pecatonica for a special use permit to allow us to operate as a theater in the new space. The zoning board committee will take up a review of our application at their next meeting on September 12th.

We have emptied the shed and granary of all of our materials and are exploring options in regard to terminating our ownership of the granary and adjoining lot. We will keep everyone posted on any developments in this area.



IN FOND MEMORY OF JIM CROW January 6, 1946-September 4, 2024

By Michael Dice

A mighty lion of Northern Illinois Theater left the stage for the final time.

James L. Crow passed away on Wednesday, September 4th, at the age of 78.

Mr. Crow was my college teacher and mentor. I always called him Mr. Crow. He was first and foremost an educator. He taught at Auburn High and Wilson Middle School where he helped establish the Creative Arts and Performing Academy (CAPA). He also taught at East, Eisenhower and Lincoln Middle Schools, and most recently, Maria Montessori School.

Mr. Crow directed many of us in productions across the Stateline. A few of his actors and crew went onto many greater stages. Robert Greenblatt went on to become the Chair of NBC, Jodie Benson became the voice of *The Little Mermaid*, Sharon Sachs went on to do a National Tour of *Wicked*, and Joe Mantello went on to star on stage and screen, along with becoming a Broadway director of *Wicked*, as well as numerous other Broadway productions. Mr. Crow's legend will live on through these people as well as through us who still toil in lesser, but important venues.

At Pec Playhouse, Mr. Crow directed *Addams Family*, *The Musical* in 2015, *Sugar* in 2016, *Nun-crackers* in 2018 and *Mamma Mia* in 2019. He served as our Children's Camp Director in 2003. He also stole the show as Hysterium in *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum* in 2006.

Kevin Stites, a noted Musical Director for numerous Broadway shows and tours, as well as being a Pecatonica native, sent me this note: "Jim brought fun AND professionalism to Starlight Theater, both as an actor and director. I've worked with him IN shows as an actor, and have served as a Musical Director with him at the helm. He was amazing with kids, and directed two ALL-AREA School Musicals when the Rockford Public Schools cut all Arts Programs."

Mr. Crow leaves behind a daughter, Cory, as well as a son, Andrew, and three grandchildren. He also leaves many of us who were amazed, enlightened, honored, entertained, and yes, sometimes frightened by him. Please keep a good thought in your heart for "Poppy", and for those of us who miss him.

The mighty lion sleeps tonight. May he roar in peace.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT—BRIAN PAULEY

**What is your name and where do you live?**

My name is Brian Pauley and I live in the village of Winnebago with my wife Donna, our dog Rosie, and our cat Lucky.

When did you first volunteer at PPT?

My connection with PPT began in 2002 .

How did you become involved at PPT?

My daughters, Elizabeth and Abigail, were responsible for my involvement at PPT and I want to expound on that. When Elizabeth was 4 years old, we discovered that she had significant hearing losses in both ears. We decided that theater would be a good activity for her because it requires pronunciation and would help improve her speech. When we first learned of PPT, we had Eli and Abby audition and get parts for Oliver in 2002 . Eli was passionate about theater and continued to pursue it as a career. She studied drama at Interlochen Arts Academy for her junior and senior years of high school while following that up by earning a B.A. in Theater from Rutgers University and, finally, receiving an M.F.A. in Acting from Yale University. She recently completed a fellowship from Julliard and is currently assistant directing a show there . Abby went on to spend her senior year of high school living in Belgium through the Rotary International program. She received a B.A. and M.F.A. in Linguistics from Boston University in four years. After graduation she spent a year backpacking through Asia and currently is employed in Costa Rica. She has now lived in or visited six continents and speaks five languages. I mention this because I believe that the girls derived a great benefit from acting in their early years. I believe that theater is an excellent activity for young people as they learn to be responsible, interact with others, become comfortable in front of audiences, and develop confidence. The skills the girls honed at PPT have served them well as adults. PPT will always represent fond memories for Donna and myself and we are thankful our girls had the opportunity to perform here. I am in a position at this point in my life where I can give more time to PPT, and I do that out of thanks.

What jobs/positions have you had at PPT?

I have performed in several shows at PPT and more recently became a member of the board.

What are you currently working on for PPT?

As a board member I am right in the middle of our building project. I chair the Asset Committee. I serve on the Finance Committee, and I am on the Capital Campaign Committee. I am involved in just about every facet of the process of building a new theater.

What is your favorite PPT production and what (if any) role did you have in it?

I have been fortunate to have been part of several shows that were both fun and rewarding, so it is difficult to single out one show or role. I had great lead roles in "Doubt", "Proof", and "Don' t Drink the Water". I enjoyed the challenge that each one presented. I had the unique opportunity to be in a show with each of my daughters. I was Mr. Kraler in the "Diary of Anne Frank" with Elizabeth playing the role of Anne Frank. I was Judge Henry X . Harper in "Miracle on 34th Street" with Abby playing the role of Susan Walker. These shows will always be special. I fondly remember the chemistry of the cast in "Twelve Angry Men" and being in the role of Candy in "Of Mice and Men" gave me the chance to explore a wider range of emotions of any character I played.

Brian's Production History at PPT

2002—Set Construction
 2002—Judge Henry Harper in *Miracle on 34th Street*
 2003—Mr. Kraler in *The Diary of Anne Frank*
 2003—Reverend Hopkins in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*
 2010—Father Drobney—*Don't Frink the Water*
 2010—Foreman in *Twelve Angry Men* and Set Construction
 2011—Father Brendan Flynn in *Doubt*
 2016—Robert in *Proof*
 2018—Candy in *Of Mice and Men* and Set *Construction*

2024 UPCOMING EVENTS & SHOWS

KITCHEN WITCHES



Isobel Lomax and Dolly Biddle are two “mature” cable-access cooking show hostesses who have hated each other for thirty years, ever since Larry Biddle dated one and married the other. When circumstances put them together on a TV show called The Kitchen Witches, the insults are flung harder than the food! Dolly’s long-suffering TV-producer son, Stephen, tries to keep them on track, but as long as Dolly’s dressing room is one inch closer to the set than Isobel’s, it’s a losing battle, and the show becomes a ratings smash as Dolly and Isobel top both Martha Stewart and Jerry Springer!

CAST:

Jennifer Thompson as Dolly Biddle
Rosemary Million as Isobel Lomax
Stephan Whitmore as Stephen Biddle
Ti Kelly as Rob

SHOW DATES:

Friday Sept 13 @ 8:00 PM, Saturday Sept 14 @ 8:00 PM, Sunday Sept 15 @ 2:00 PM
Friday Sept 20 @ 8:00 PM, Saturday Sept 21 @ 8:00 PM, Sunday Sept 22 @ 2:00 PM

This show will be performed at Pecatonica United Methodist Church, 528 Washington St., Pecatonica, Illinois

For tickets, [visit our website](https://pecplayhouse.org/) (https://pecplayhouse.org/) or call our box office at 815-239-1210

Directed by Michelle Bonzi

MATRIMONY, MOONSHINE & MURDER

An interactive wedding murder mystery dinner

Willie Nelson has a problem (yes, named after THE Willie Nelson). He’s getting’ hitched next Saturday to Bobbie Sue Bodine (who’s hoping the fourth time’s a charm!), but Willie’s tuneless (and mostly toothless!) barbershop quartet – the Moonshine Mooners - have unexpectedly made it into the Mississippi state finals scheduled for the same day. In harmony since childhood – Willie can’t leave his fellow mooners exposed! (After all Bobbie Sue knows what to do. She’s been down this aisle before!) When it appears that Bobbie Sue has been jilted at the altar, why does Willie’s grumpy spinster Memaw Mille Nelson, who is always out of tune with matrimony, give a snort and an evil snaggle tooth grin?

Meanwhile, ex-husband Big Daddy, still wants to make beautiful music with Bobbie Sue, who can neither confirm nor deny that he’s the baby daddy to quadruplets - Eenie, Meenie, Miney and Mo. It’s curtains for someone as the big day unfolds! You are cordially invited to join us in holy matrimony and mayhem

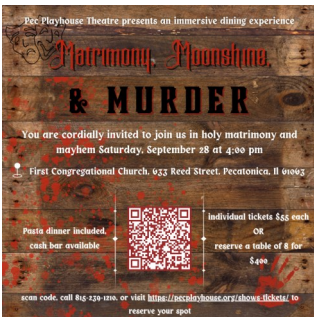
WHEN: Saturday September 28, 2024 @ 4:00 PM

WHERE: First Congregational Church located at 633 Reed Street, Pecatonica, Illinois

DINNER: Includes a full pasta dinner with salad, rolls, coffee and dessert. There will be a cash bar for beer and wine.

Tickets are \$55 each or \$400 for a table of 8. We will have a silent auction, wine pull, booze cooler raffle, 50/50 raffle and a whole lot of fun!

For tickets, [visit our website](https://pecplayhouse.org/) (https://pecplayhouse.org/) or call our box office at 815-239-1210



LOOKING FOR SILENT AUCTION ITEMS

Matrimony, Moonshine and Murder is the major fundraiser for PPT. in 2024 You can help! Donate a basket for the silent auction or a good bottle of wine for the wine pull. Call or text Laurie Miller at 815-871-7042 if you can make a donation by Thursday, September 26, 2024. Thank you for your continued support.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter. We welcome your input. Please address any comments, suggestions, requests or corrections to secretary@pecplayhouse.org.

WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?

BARN DANCE

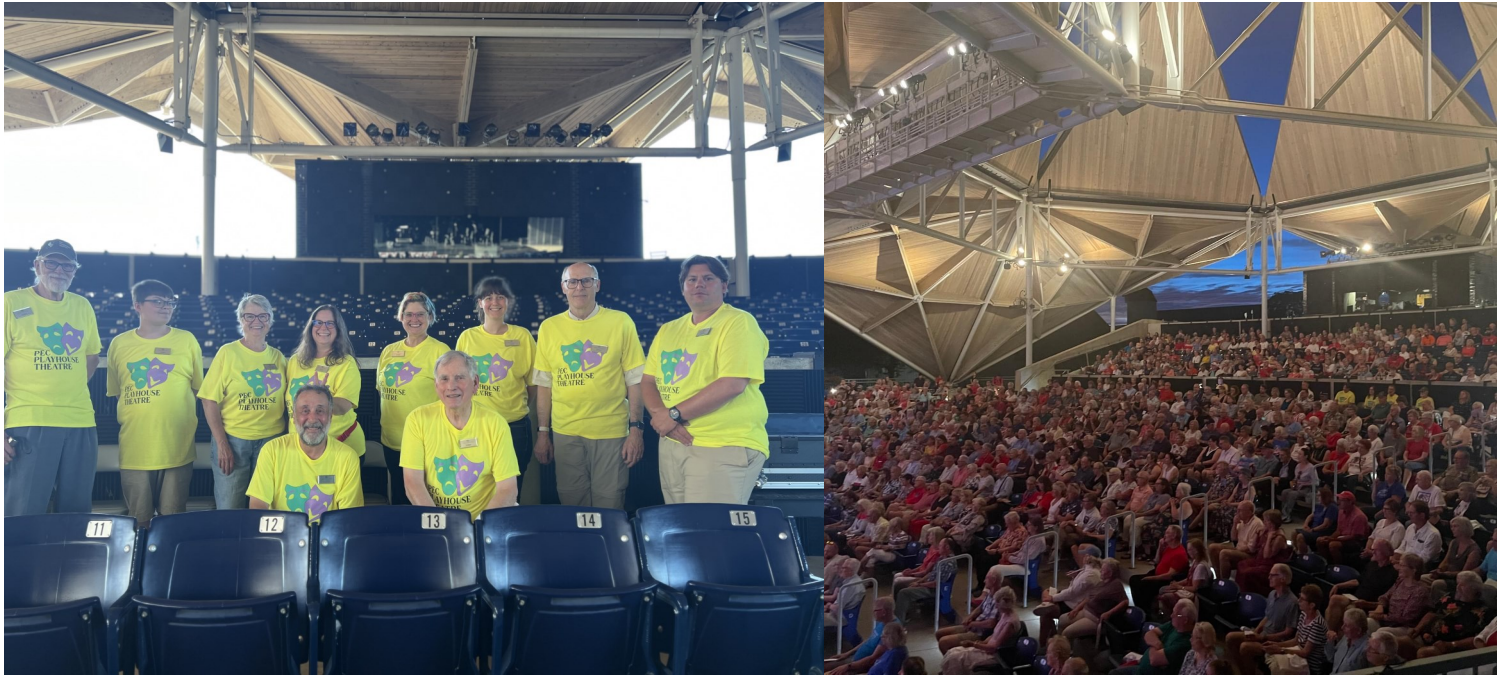
On June 22, 2024 we held our first fundraiser of 2024 at Happily Ever After Wedding Barn



WHERE HAVE WE BEEN ? (cont.)

ROCKFORD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

On July 3, 2024, we supplied ushers for Rockford Symphony Orchestra's Star Spangled Spectacular at Starlight Theatre, directed by Pecatonica's own, Kevin Stites.



PECATONICA LABOR DAY FEST

In Saturday August 31, PPT had a booth outside Pec Pharmacy .



JUST THE FACTS

As PPT pushes forward toward our new theater, let's glance backward at some facts since we started on August 8, 1991 with *Out of the Frying Pan*.

In 1998, PPT increased our production capabilities to staging a season of five shows annually. A pattern developed for producing a comedy, a high school show, a musical, a drama, and a holiday show. Fall shows were consistently slated as a comedy or drama. Here are some facts behind PPT fall productions from 1991 to today.

7, 9 and 3

The number of comedies (7), dramas (9), and musicals (3) staged at PPT in September and October since our founding 1991. The other month of autumn, November, has usually been reserved for holiday shows to capitalize on the start of the wintery season and avoid competition with busy December schedules.

Arsenic and Old Lace

The only play performed twice as a fall production, first in 1992 and again in 2019. This popular show was also produced by PPT in April 1999. The three stagings of *Arsenic and Old Lace* were directed by David Zumdahl (1992), Amy Ter Hark (1999), and Suzanne Wiegert (2019).

80%

The average percent of tickets sold for PPT fall shows, based on ticket data captured from 2011 until today is 80%. The average percentage of tickets sold for all PPT productions is 79%. Amongst the fall shows, it's no surprise that the award for highest ticket sales goes to a musical, *All Shook Up* at 94% -- the fourth best seller on our list of all shows since 2011..

What are the 5 best-selling shows by percentage of available seats sold since 2011? (Answer at the bottom of the page)

CONTACT US

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PUBLICITY CHAIR

PPT is looking for someone to take over as chairperson of our Publicity Committee. The chairperson will work with the PPT Publicity Committee to promote PPT's events. This will include designing posters, making programs, and working with social and local media outlets to make people aware of PPT, it's performances and the upcoming fundraising campaign for the new theater. If you are interested, please email our secretary, Lenny Adrignola (secretary@pecplayhouse.org)

Pec Playhouse Theatre Board of Directors

President: Glen Wiegert (president@pecplayhouse.org)
Vice President: Brian Pauley (vicepresident@pecplayhouse.org)
Secretary: Lenny Adrignola (secretary@pecplayhouse.org)
Treasurer: Laurie Miller (treasurer@pecplayhouse.org)

EXTERNAL PERFORMANCES

In addition to performing for our patrons, PPT also is available to perform for your organization. For example, on October 12, we will be performing **TERROR IN TV LAND**, a Murder Mystery Dinner for the SM & SF Club. If you would like to work with us for an event your organization is holding, please contact Michael Dice (Programming@pecplayhouse.org)

2024 Remaining Board Meetings

Oct 9 Nov 13 Dec 11

BEST SELLING SHOWS

1. The Addams Family	2015	97.46%
2. Waste Mismanagement	2012	96.83%
3. Sugar	2016	95.40%
4. All Shook Up	2013	94.13%
5. Run For Your Wife	2019	93.65%