

From the President

My Fellow Footlighters,

I know that somewhere, some time in the near future, Spring finally is going to get here. Then the chill in the air, and the chill in the theater, finally will subside. So, too, our high utility bills. My jaw dropped when I saw the January Cinergy bill for over \$1,300. Yes, the Stained Glass Theatre is a major financial challenge to our organization. Aside from the bricks and mortar, we are budgeting \$11,500 out of every show we do to cover all the monthly expenses and to pay for things such as broken light lenses, broken wireless mics and other equipment maintenance. Sometimes, when an emergency falls in there, too, it can be a bit overwhelming.

But I wouldn't trade it for the world. We all know what a jewel we have in this historic landmark. With Samuel Hannaford-designed churches dropping like flies all over the Tristate, our facility becomes even more valuable. To that end, we are about to embark on a campaign that will not only fix what we have but raise our facility to the next level. A number of you have come to me, wanting to help in this endeavor, which will lead us to form a committee to oversee this project.

One of the things that many of us noticed during the winter run of "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change" was the number of people who said they were in our theater for the first time. They were impressed with our facility and the quality of our production. Observations like these have prompted the Board to hold a special retreat in April to determine what caused that audience shift, how to maintain it and to find ways to improve our marketing strategy. I guess you could call it another "building" project.

My final reference to "building" is on relationships. We at Footlighters are known for opening our doors and sharing with others. Costumes, props and donations of tickets to many worthy causes, just to name a few. In some cases, it's just opening our doors. Which is why we have a scheduling calendar for the theater. Need a place to hold a meeting or rehearsal? Then contact Lynne Aronson, (513) 624-8665, or me (513) 791-4041, and we'll make sure there are no conflicts.

The Stained Glass Theatre belongs to all of us, and, as they say at Motel 6, "we'll leave the light on." (Just remember to turn the thermostat down when you leave.)

Sincerely,

Caryl A. Hefley
President

We Changed, We Loved It, and It Was Perfect!

Awkward dates, family division, relationships old and new, and what happens in the bedroom – all good reasons to laugh along and identify with Footlighters' successful winter show.

The roaring success of "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change," brought new people into our theater with a community-wide buzz that this was a "must-see" show. With a bumpy start – and a big boulder thrown in mid-show – the cast, crew and producers rallied to create an exciting, memorable performance run.

Bumpy start: Love/Perfect/Change was our second choice, selected quickly in the fall when difficulties arose with original winter show, "Smokey Joe's Café."

Big bump: Actress Allison Collins-Elfline downed after the first week of shows by an emergency appendectomy. To the rescue – Choreographer Amy Grace Shelton, who learned the role in two days and performed four shows until Allison's return the final week. That's live theater!

Audiences for Love/Perfect/Change were noticeably more mixed in gender and age than typical and were enthusiastic in post-show comments about Footlighters' choice. Sold out on Fridays and Saturdays, the show almost filled the house other nights and was a financial success.

Director Mark Femia, described the show as "a great vehicle for Footlighters. I feel that Footlighters does itself a great service when it embraces different types of shows – the classics as well as new, untried shows.

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Pictured above (R to L):
Gary Rogers,
Ken Goldhoff,
Jim Curtis



Pictured at left
(R to L):
Rebecca Rogers,
Allison Collins-Elfline,
Sarah Martin

'Help Wanted' Sign Posted in Box Office

Who's the most popular person on show nights, the one who people stand in line to greet and hand money? The ever-so-necessary Box Office Manager.

That popularity can be a little overwhelming, especially when packaged with the responsibility of handling ticket orders in the weeks prior to show dates and the demands of a day job.

Bottom line: Joel Lind, our "Ticket Master," needs some assistance for the 2005-06 season.

Lind took over ticket sales last spring for the 2004-05 season, when Gary Wettengel stepped down. There were not a lot of people clamoring for the job, Lind notes. A member of the Footlighters'

Board, Lind committed to handling tickets for one season.

A year later, Lind is winded and looking for help. If someone wants to take over the full ticketing job, he'll hand it over.

Absent that, Lind is willing to continue as chairman of ticket sales for next season with some assistance, such as people working the box office on most show nights and someone taking over ticket sales for specific shows.

Some relief in the ticket-selling department is in the works. Coming soon to a computer terminal near you: Online ticket sales.

Interested in helping with Footlighters' ticket sales next season? Contact Lind (e-mail: jslind@aol.com) or any Board member.

Board Votes To Showcase At Southwest Regional

Citing financial concerns, Footlighters' Board of Directors voted in March to remove the troupe from consideration for state competition.

The Board voted 6-5, with three Board members absent, to register for a "showcase" performance only rather than to "excerpt" at this year's Southwest Regional OCTAFEST in June. That means the Footlighters' troupe will not be in the running for state competition when they perform a 30-minute excerpt of a show from this season. Only theater companies that select to officially excerpt can be chosen for state competition.

Footlighters, which will decide in May which 2004-05 show to perform at the regional event, still will be critiqued by judges for the showcase performance.

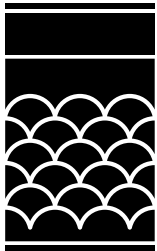
"This was a tough decision – one based primarily on the cost to take a show on the road," said Caryl Hefley, the Board's president.

For its last three appearances at state competition, Footlighters has spent about \$1,000 each time, mainly to transport the set. The Board majority felt the group should take a break this year. This year's state convention will be held in Toledo in September.

"While there certainly is no guarantee we would be selected again this year to compete at state convention, the majority felt it would be in our best interest to spend the money on things in our building that need to be repaired and replaced," Hefley said.

ACTing UP!

ACT-Cincinnati Continues Half-Century Celebration



The celebration of ACT-Cincinnati's 50th anniversary rolls on, commemorating 50 years of making magic happen in and around the Tristate theater community.

We're celebrating next with a staged reading of Sondheim's *Follies* on July 15, 16 and 17. The performances will be in the new Fairfield Arts Center. The purpose is two-fold: raise money and, more importantly, involve as many ACT members as possible. Please come audition on May 16 or May 17 and be a part of this splendid production. Audition information comes out soon.

ACT/OCTA is working hard to make this year's SW Regional Convention great. Your invitation should arrive soon. For the first time, you can register online with the option to charge your registration. There will be a small fee for charging online, but you still have the option to pay with a check. Footlighters has chosen to Showcase for this year's Convention, but the final decision on which show will be performed won't be made until On Golden

Pond opens in May. OCTA will sell \$5 raffle tickets for a theater trip to New York, with the drawing at the State Convention over Labor Day weekend.

The "ACT All Night" returns August 5 and 6 at Dunham Recreation Center. Once again, Dennis Murphy is chairing this really fun event. Look for more information about this frantic two-day marathon, where a full-length play is written, rehearsed and performed for you. The more people who are part of the "creators" the better, but we also need a big audience because this is a fundraiser for the ACT Brochure. Last year's "ACT All Night" was a blast, and the audience received quite a treat. Please mark your calendars.

ACT's Historian & Librarian, Ms. Linda Roll, encourages everyone to take advantage of the ACT Script Library. She also is looking for contributions of scripts. Even duplicates are welcome. As well as scripts, Linda is looking for books on acting, directing, tech, etc.

If you have suggestions, questions or comments you want brought to the ACT Board, please don't hesitate to pass them along.

Lynne Aronson, Footlighters' ACT Representative

Ohio Community Theater Association News



The following are tidbits from the March OCTA Board meeting:

The new "10-minute rule" was amended to read: Each theater will be given ten minutes for set up. When the set up is completed, the excerpt may start. Each theater should provide prior notification as to how long it will take them to set up on their entry form. This does not apply to State conference.

AACTFest was held February 25 in Cincinnati with four good excerpts. Thanks to Robert Weidle and his committee for a great weekend of fun. Emerald City Players' "The Laramie Project" will

represent Ohio at the Region III AACTFest April 8-10 in Grosse Pointe, Michigan. National AACTFest is June 14-18 in Kalamazoo.

A nonprofit environmental organization is looking for nonprofit organizations interested in receiving free paint. This paint is unsold because it was tinted the wrong color or discontinued. E-mail Marv Goodman (marvgoodman@comcast.net) for a list of participating retailers in your area.

Steve Simon, with Theatreconnection.com, is interested in attending regional conventions to talk about online ticket sales. Contact him at (513) 256-4000.

Theaters are encouraged to send a brief history to OCTA Historian Fred Wise at wiseguytwo@earthlink.net.

We Changed, We Loved It, and It Was Perfect!

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There's no better way to build a stronger base of talent, and to strengthen and expand audiences."

"Looking back, it truly was a blessing in disguise that we lost the rights to "Smokey Joe's Café," because I couldn't have asked for a better show, a better cast, or a better experience," Femia said. "We truly were lucky to have such a great group of people involved – from the stellar cast to the top-notch production crew."

Love/Perfect/Change was Femia's directing debut in the Cincinnati area. "I truly am thankful and ecstatic that the show was well received and looked on a success – both artistically and

financially," Femia said. "You can't get any better than that!"

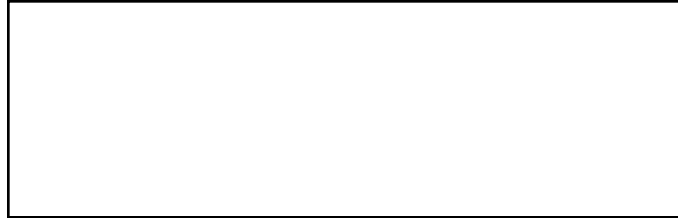
Getting the set ready was a fun, though challenging, experience, Co-Producer Jim Racster said. Color photographic murals of Cincinnati city scenes formed the backdrop. Getting the murals hung took team effort. The pictures, scanned into a computer, were blown up to giant size, then printed on 9-inch by 11-inch paper. These were carefully glued to the walls – and re-glued and re-glued as the theater's chilliness wreaked havoc.

A dry-ice fog machine was built for this production; it will be around for future shows.

the footlighters, inc.

THE STAINED GLASS THEATRE
802 York Street
Newport, KY 41071

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 45
Newport, KY



Footlighter Footnotes

A big "thank you" to Cardiology Associates of Cincinnati, Inc. for their donation to Footlighters of 42 heavy-duty storage boxes, valued at \$1,200. We'll use them for costume and prop storage. Thanks, too, to **Linda Young** for selling her bosses on the idea.

Congratulations to **Katy Hackney** and **Zac Huffman** on their engagement and upcoming November wedding. And, thanks, too, to these loyal Footlighters, who willingly climbed on stage to repeat the proposal and added a wonderful real-life touch to a performance of "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change."

Cincinnati Music Theatre's production of Chicago, running April 29 - May 7,

includes several Footlighters: **Tom Sanders** as Master of Ceremonies, **Pamela Kay Day** as Velma Kelly, **Laurie Brinkman** as Roxie Hart, **Brian Berendts** as Sgt. Fogarty, **Forrest Fairley** as Amos Hart, **Katy Hackney** as Mona, **Marcie Brooks** as the Matron, **Wayne Wright** as Billy Flynn, and **Zac Huffman** as Aaron. Reservations may be made by phoning 513.621.2787 or online www.cincinnatiarts.org

Footlighters, let us know when you are in a show or have news to share.

Send to:

cwolff99@yahoo.com



*The***Libretto** STAFF

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