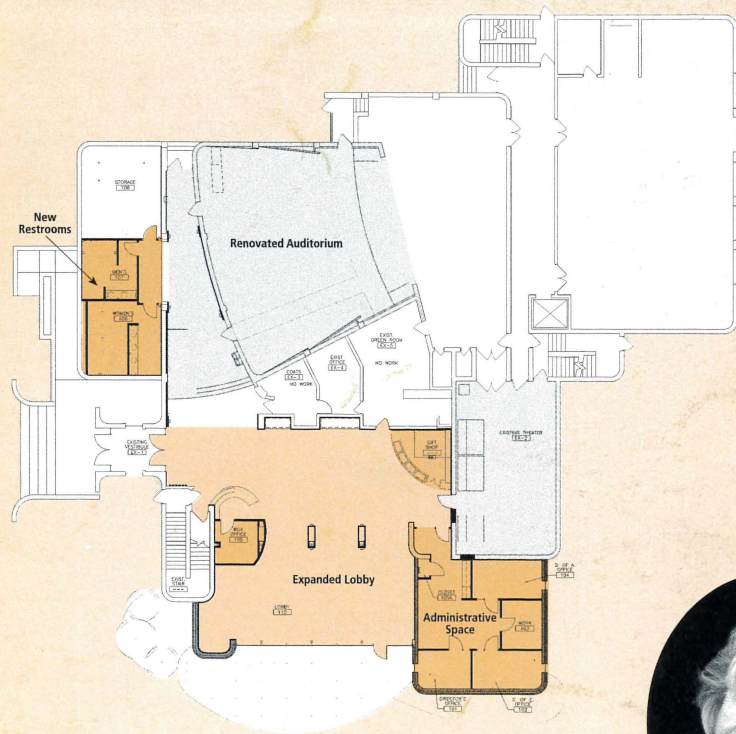


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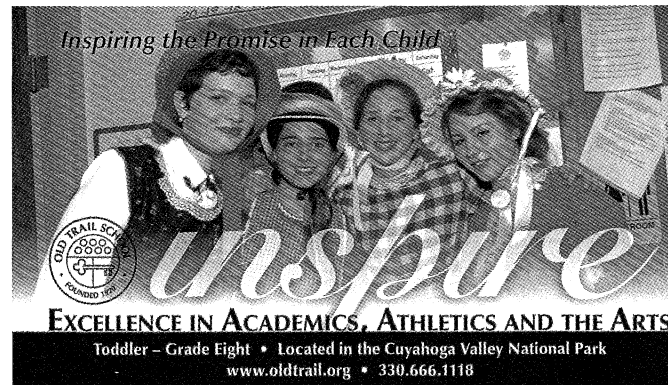
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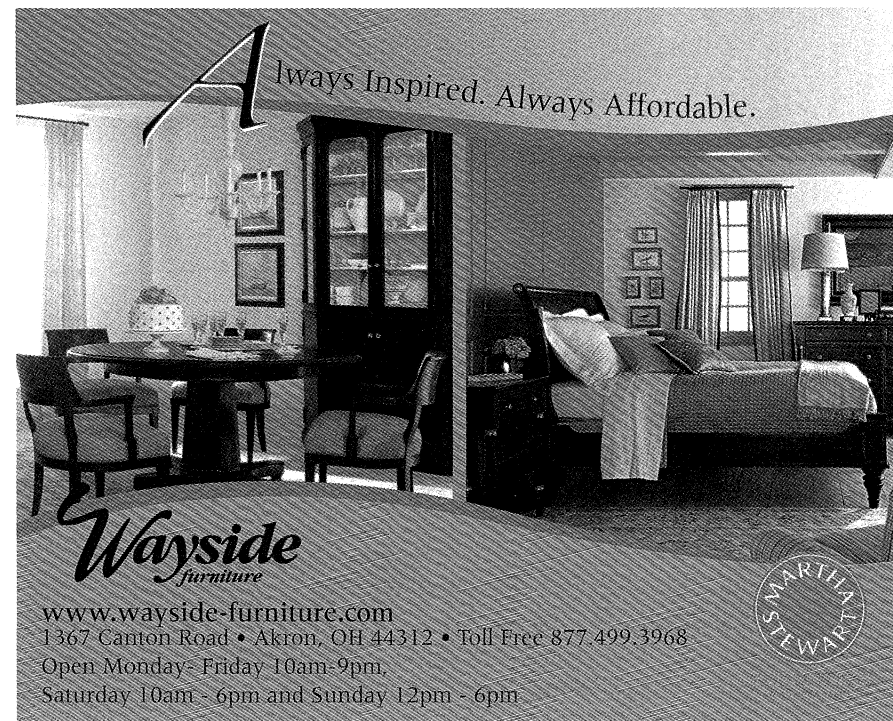
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A Brief History of Weathervane Playhouse

From the "barn" to Copley Road to the Valley...

Weathervane Community Playhouse began its run as a live theater in 1935. Four artistically talented Woman's City Club members -- Grace Hower Crawford, Muriel MacLachlan, Laurine Schwan, Helen Troesch -- and a core of charter members rented the empty carriage house belonging to Akron's Senator Charles Dick. Their goal was to present a wide spectrum of plays: classics, dramas, comedies, new works -- even opera -- with casting open to anyone who fit a part.

Their first problem was money to pay the rent and to cover production costs. Money was in short supply in 1935 so the women chose a carnival as their fundraiser. Despite a drenching downpour, they raised \$60 which encouraged them to continue. They named their space Weathervane after the rooster on the barn's cupola. After cleaning their new home, scrounging for seats, a curtain and a coffee pot, Weathervane opened its first season. During that summer of 1935 the group presented seven fully costumed and staged plays. In 1936, Muriel MacLachlan with the other founders offered classes to children and adults, beginning a tradition that has become today's Education Department. In 1938 a Women's Board was formed to offer volunteer financial assistance. It, too, continues to this day.

The "barn" was home until it was sold. In 1951 the Playhouse purchased a cement block building at 1471 Copley Road and renovated it for a theater with seating capacity of 125. The all-volunteer organization hired its first employee, Nora Scott, as custodian/ticket manager. Actual management of the Playhouse was handled by the Operating Board, which reported to the Board of Trustees. Because there were fewer and fewer people willing to commit to directing a play, the Board hired Bob Belfance as full-time Manager/Director. Belfance held the position from 1961-69 and again from 1974-92. During the Copley Road days, plays were presented six days a week. Because of their popularity, not everyone who wanted to see a show could be accommodated. A new home was planned. During the 1960s the membership planned, plotted and raised funds. It all came together in June 1970 with the opening of *Dark of the Moon*. There was ample space and a mortgage. Longtime friend and founder Grace Hower Crawford died in 1971, remembering the Playhouse in her will. Her money enabled the Board to pare down the mortgage and set up an Endowment Fund. The last mortgage payment was made in 1974 through a contribution of the Women's Board. Two major additions to the facility followed; these included first-floor restrooms, classrooms, a costume shop, fly gallery and elevator. The former scene shop in 2005 became the John L. Dietz Studio/Theater/Classroom, where experimental productions are presented.

Weathervane Playhouse now looks forward to a third expansion and a 75th anniversary.



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From Our Executive Director

"The Messiah is One of You"

This seems like an appropriate time to tell this story. With a nod to Benjamin Zander from his book, *The Art of Possibility*, I give you *The Monks' Story*:

A monastery has fallen on hard times. It was once part of a great order, but due to religious persecution in the 17th and 18th centuries, it had lost all its branches. In fact, there were only the Abbot and four other monks left in the mother house, all of whom were over 70. Clearly it was a dying order.

One day, the Abbot visited a nearby Rabbi to see if he could offer any advice that might save the monastery. The Rabbi commiserated saying, "I know how it is, the spirit has gone out of people." "Have you any advice that might save the monastery?" the Abbot asked. "No, I am sorry," the Rabbi replied, "I have no advice to give. The only thing I can tell you is that the Messiah is one of you."

The Abbot returned to the monastery downhearted and bewildered. The monks wondered to themselves what possible significance the Rabbi's words might have. Did he mean the Messiah is the Abbot who's been our leader for so long? Or did he mean Brother Thomas, who is a very holy man? Surely, he couldn't have meant Brother Phillip – he's too passive. But then he's always there when you need him. Or Brother Elrod – he's so crotchety. But then Elrod is very wise. Of course he didn't mean me – yet supposing he did?

As they contemplated in this manner, the old monks began to treat each other with extraordinary respect, on the off chance that one of them might be the Messiah. And on the off-off chance that each monk himself might be the Messiah, they began to treat themselves with extraordinary respect.

Because the monastery was situated in a beautiful forest, people often came to visit. When they did, they began to sense this aura of extraordinary respect that permeated the atmosphere. As a result, their visits became more and more frequent, eventually bringing friends, and their friends brought their friends. After a while, some of the younger men, drawn to this enormously positive energy, asked if they might join. Miraculously, within a few years, the monastery became a thriving order once again, and – thanks to the Rabbi's gift – a vibrant community of light and love.

With my deep respect,

John Hedges
Executive Director



Weatherwane
— PLAYHOUSE —

74th Season -- 2008-2009 -- Dietz Production #9
October 30 - November 15, 2008

Love! Valour! Compassion!

Comic drama by
Terrence McNally

Directed by **JIM FIPPIN**

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Dances staged by **PIERRE BRAULT**

Note: Originally produced by the Manhattan Theatre Club with funds provided by AT&T: On Stage on November 1, 1994.

Love! Valour! Compassion! is produced by special arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 440 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016.



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About the Play and Playwright

About the Play

Playwright Terrence McNally's *Love! Valour! Compassion!* depicts one pivotal summer's ups and downs for a close yet fragile group of friends. Eight gay men escape the heat of New York City and retreat two hours north to the remote country home of a celebrated choreographer/dancer.

Gregory Mitchell opens his beautiful Dutchess County home to his New York friends during a time of great personal challenge: his body is wracked with pain due to years of strenuous dance, and he fears his lover, Bobby Brahms, may be slipping away from him.

Into the mix come attorney Perry Sellars and accountant Arthur Pape, longtime partners who have settled into a comfortable complacency. Another houseguest is the frenetic Buzz Hauser, a costume designer obsessed with musical theater and arcane bits of trivia. Also rounding out the guest list are John and James Jeckyll, twin brothers who could not be more different, and Ramon Fornos, a beautiful young dancer and "evil twin" John's latest paramour.

Over the course of three summer-holiday weekends, the men hash out their fears, resentments and their passions. At turns witty, rueful and wry, McNally's heartfelt drama reveals how a common tie can forge the fiercest and most loyal of friendships.

In his 1995 review of the play, Vincent Canby of *The New York Times* described the play as one whose "roots are in old-fashioned Broadway theater, specifically in the house-party comedy, brought up to date and to brand-new life." Canby added that "Mr. McNally hasn't written a play about gay people living straight lives. It's a comedy about some comparatively privileged gay people in a world whose problems are ultimately shared by everyone. Though particular, as all good plays are, it's not parochial."

Love! Valour! Compassion! premiered at Manhattan Theatre Club in New York City in October 1994. The show ran for 72 performances before transferring to Broadway in January 1995, where it played at the Walter Kerr Theatre for a total of 248 performances. The play won the 1994-1995 OBIE Award for Playwriting, the 1995 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Play and the 1995 Tony Award for Best Play. For his performance as twins John and James, John Glover won the 1995 Tony Award for Best Featured Actor in a Play. The 1997 film adaptation (penned by the playwright) reunited six of the seven original cast members. The role of Buzz – played on stage by Nathan Lane, who won the 1995 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Featured Actor in a Play – was played on screen by Jason Alexander (best known as George on NBC-TV's *Seinfeld*).

About the Playwright

Terrence McNally is a Florida-born, Texas-reared, New York-based writer whose many works have graced the theatrical stage as well as the screens of movie theaters and televisions. His best-known plays include *The Ritz*, *The Lisbon Traviata*, *A Perfect Ganesh*, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, *Master Class*, *Corpus Christi* and *Lips Together, Teeth Apart*. Last year, he was represented on Broadway with two plays: a new drama, *Deuce* (starring Angela Lansbury and Marian Seldes), and a revival of his 1975 farce, *The Ritz*. For musical theater, McNally wrote the books for such musicals as *The Rink*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Ragtime*, *The Full Monty* and *A Man of No Importance*. In addition to his plays and books for musicals, McNally also wrote the libretto for an opera version of the 1995 film *Dead Man Walking*, which San Francisco Opera premiered in 1999. He is the recipient of two Guggenheim Fellowships and a Rockefeller Grant. He is a four-time Tony winner: two for Best Play (1995's *Love! Valour! Compassion!* and 1996's *Master Class*) and two for Best Book of a Musical (for *Kiss of the Spider Woman* in 1993 and *Ragtime* in 1998). He wrote the screenplays for three film adaptations of his plays – *Love! Valour! Compassion!* (1997), *Frankie and Johnny* (1991) and *The Ritz* (1976) – and his screenplay for the 1990 made-for-TV movie *Andre's Mother* won him an Emmy Award for Outstanding Writing in a Miniseries or a Special. He lives in New York City.



Love! Valour! Compassion! -- Cast

Gregory Mitchell	Richard Worswick
Buzz Hauser	Zac Hudak
Ramon Fornos	Pierre Brault
John/James Jeckyll	Scott Shriner
Perry Sellars	John Haller
Bobby Brahms	Gregg Stickney
Arthur Pape	Jason J. Smith

Setting: A remote house and wooded grounds by a lake in Dutchess County, two hours north of New York City. The present. Memorial Day, 4th of July and Labor Day weekends, respectively.

The play is performed with two 10-minute intermissions.

In the John L. Dietz Theater

Once Weathervane had a theater to call its own on Copley Road in the 1950s, the wish/need for another smaller "black box" theater surfaced. Through the Capital Campaign of 2000, new classroom space became a reality as well as an elevator and the installation of a fly system. One of the classrooms was sponsored by Margaret J. Dietz and named in memory of her son, John L. Dietz. This space became the "black box" theater so long awaited. John was a sixth-grader at Akron's Rankin School and was 12 years old at the time of his death in 1971 following an auto accident. A darling boy with a passion, even at that age, for play-acting, he had just finished playing a clown in a youth theater production of *Aesop's Fables*.

Angels in America: Millennium Approaches was the Dietz theater's inaugural presentation running from January 23 through February 5, 2005. The Pulitzer Prize-winning play was directed by Sean McConaha. Since then, we have presented:

Parallel Lives: The Kathy and Mo Show (2005)
Angels in America: Millennium Approaches (remount 2005)
Angels in America: Perestroika (2006)
Fat Men in Skirts (2006)
The Last Five Years (2006)
String of Pearls (2007)
Someone Who'll Watch Over Me (2007)
And the Winner Is (2008)

For Your Safety...

- We request that you remain seated until the house lights have come up at intermission and after the curtain call.
- The use of cameras, recording equipment and laser pointers is forbidden during this performance.
- As a courtesy to fellow audience members, please make sure that cell phones and pagers are turned off during the performance.
- Please do not bring food or drink into the auditorium.
- NOTE: In case of an emergency in which the performance cannot continue, Calamity Vouchers will be issued for a future performance. Thank you.



About Our Director

Jim Fippin -- Director

Jim has been acting, directing and otherwise engaged in theatre in Northeast Ohio for more than 20 years. He has appeared on stage at Porthouse Theatre, Weathervane Playhouse, Coach House Theatre, The Players Guild of Canton and with the Ohio Shakespeare Festival. His resume includes roles in *King Lear*, *Twelfth Night*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Another Antigone*, *The Lion in Winter*, *The Odd Couple*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Real Thing* and *Custer*. As the Artistic Director of Coach House Theatre (2000-2007), Jim staged productions of *Chapter Two*, *Betrayal*, *Last of the Red Hot Lovers*, *Art*, *Private Lives*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and *A Life in the Theatre*. Last season, he directed the critically acclaimed *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* for Weathervane's Dietz Theater. In 2005, Jim was recognized by the Akron Area Arts Alliance as the area's outstanding theatre Artist. Jim earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in theatre from Otterbein College, where he met his wife, Elaine (in the scene shop, no less!). Together they live in Wadsworth with their daughter, Emelie.

Director's Notes

"Will we be naked?" was the question I kept hearing. The guys (understandably) wanted to know. Some of them sounded skittish – some of them eager. "As naked as you want to be," I'd reply, not really thinking that the nudity was the most important element of *Love! Valour! Compassion!* But, as we moved forward in rehearsal, I came to see it as a metaphor for the play's action – the stripping down to naked souls -- facing life's assault and battery uncovered, unmasked, unashamed, vulnerable and noble. So, even though you do not see everybody disrobe, you will see them laid bare. Life, like acting, is not an undertaking for the timid, shy or easily embarrassed. We cannot be sure what brings us into this world, and we can only guess at our destiny. The only thing we can do is muster up as much (here comes the restating of the play's title as a theme) love, valour and compassion as we can, and face life head on. Add a little grace (both kinds) and an audience, and you get theatre. It has been my privilege to work with Terrence McNally's words and this company of theatre artists to create the world of this play. I invite you to share it with us. Thank you, and enjoy!

Jim Fippin, Director

In Our Gallery

James Porterfield (PT, MA, ATC) is a remarkable physical therapist, owner and director of the Rehabilitation and Health Center (One Park West Blvd. in Akron) and an accomplished photographer. His photographs comprise The James Allen Collection. With each passing glance, the Collection stirs one's imagination with something new to discover -- a dewdrop, a shadow, or a new vibrant color contrast. James photographed his travels and displayed his artwork throughout his clinics. Over time, his staff observed the positive influence that color had on their patients.

James works in conjunction with Photo Imaging Lab, headed by Sarah Monasterio. The lab prints his photographs in sizes 8 x 10 through 20 x 30. Please inquire at the Weathervane Box Office for details if you wish to purchase one of his prints.

Marci Paolucci
Gallery Director



Biographies

RICHARD WORSWICK (Gregory Mitchell) recently stage managed our production of *The Rainmaker*. Last season he performed in the Dietz Theater production, *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*. At Weathervane he has also played roles in *The Sisters Rosensweig*, *Noises Off*, *The Dinner Party*, *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, *The Laramie Project* and *The Chosen*, for which he won a Best Actor Chanticleer for his role of Reuven Malter. Richard also works in the Box Office on Friday mornings.

ZAC HUDAK (Buzz Hauser) is thrilled to be making his Weathervane debut in such an important piece. Northeast Ohio audiences may remember productions at The Players Guild, Beck Center, Cassidy Theatre, Huntington Playhouse and Theatre 8:15. He recently made his NYC debut with Jennifer Danielle's sell-out comedy *Shucked* as Zac, a role written based on himself. Special thanks to Alli, Douglas and Mom. He dedicates his performance to Bradley, Chris, Luke, Mark, Mark, Danny and Ray, his own Manderley.

PIERRE BRAULT (Ramon Fornos) is a 2001 graduate of Baldwin-Wallace College's Music Theatre Department and is the Co-Founder of Mercury Summer Stock. He has directed countless shows, ranging from full-scale musicals to lesser-known plays. His favorite directing credit is the critically acclaimed musical *Honk!* As an actor, Pierre has worked with Broadway legends Donna McKechnie and Pamela Myers and has assisted some of today's top directors and choreographers, including Cleveland's own Victoria Bussert. Favorite roles include the Emcee in *Cabaret* and Joseph in *Joseph*. Pierre's work has been seen locally at Cain Park, Willoughby Fine Arts, Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, Geauga Lyric Theatre Guild and Great Lakes Theater Festival. He directed the Cleveland theatre premiere of *High School Musical*, the highest grossing production ever staged at Heights Youth Theatre.

SCOTT SHRINER (John Jeckyll/James Jeckyll) last appeared in the Dietz Theatre as Joe Pitt in *Angels in America: Perestroika*.

He has won Chanticleer Awards for Weathervane's recent mainstage productions of *Lend Me a Tenor*, *Three Days of Rain*, *Moon Over Buffalo* and *All My Sons*. His favorite role here is Nick Cristano in *Over the River and Through the Woods* in 2005. He has performed with Ohio Shakespeare Festival, The Bang and the Clatter Theatre Company, Coach House and Actors' Summit.

JOHN D. HALLER (Perry Sellers) A graduate of the University of Northern Colorado, John has a degree in directing and more than 20 years of experience in theatre. He appeared as Reuben Soady in Jeff Daniels' hilariously twisted comedy, *Escanaba in da Moonlight* and as the dysfunctional husband and son, Junior, in the drop-dead comedy, *Dearly Departed*. He has appeared as Mayor Rufus Poindexter and in drag as Miss Wulla Jean, the original proprietress of *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, as Pops in the nostalgic musical, *1940's Radio Hour* and as the provincial Mr. Stanley in one of the most enduring comedies in American theater by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*.

GREGG STICKNEY (Bobby Brahms) is a graduate of Baldwin-Wallace College and holds a Bachelor's degree in Theater Arts. He played Harold in Weathervane's production of *The Full Monty*. Also locally, he was in *Is There Life after High School?* for Cassidy Theatre, *Chicago* for Huntington Playhouse and *The Will Rogers Follies* for Berea Summer Theatre.

JASEN J. SMITH (Arthur Pape) is very excited to be making his Weathervane debut. He has been seen recently as Mr. Fezziwig in *A Christmas Carol* at the Firehouse Theatre, Barney Benson in *Kiss or Make-Up* at Theatre 8:15. Other Roles include Roy in *Nice People Dancing to Good Country Music*, Durdles in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, Joe in *Lovers*. When not on stage, Jasen is the Costume Shop Manager/Resident Costume Designer for Weathervane Playhouse as well as Adjunct Professor at Case Western Reserve University Teaching Costume Design and Construction and Designing for its theatre season.



Biographies - continued

NICHOLE M. STRONG (Stage Manager) is a student at The University of Akron majoring in Musical Theater. She stage managed our production of *Crowns* several seasons ago and, most recently, was seen as Sarah's friend in last season's *Ragtime*. Nichole also enjoys singing in the choir for Gospel Meets Symphony here in Akron.

ALAN SCOTT FERRALL (Scenic Designer) is in his 12th year as Weathervane's Resident Scenic Designer/Technical Director. He recently designed properties for *Children of Eden*. Scott began his association with Weathervane as a backstage volunteer under the tutelage of the late John R. Thomas. He has earned five Chanticleer Awards – one as stage manager for *Fences*, and the others for his lighting designs for *The Laramie Project* and *A Lesson Before Dying* and lighting co-designs for *A Man for All Seasons* and *The Full Monty*. Scott takes great pleasure in writing the end-of-the-season revue for the Not-Ready-for-Mainstage Players, who appear at the annual Chanticleer Awards banquet.

KAREN BURRIDGE (Costume Designer) is a former Women's Board president. Most recently, she designed properties for *The Rainmaker*. Last season, Karen designed costumes for *Enchanted April* and *Moon Over Buffalo* as well as properties for *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. She is retired from the U.S. Postal Service and now works at the Tallmadge Curves and answers telephones for The Sunday Oldies Jukebox on 88.9 WSTB-FM. She and husband Pat live in Brimfield.

JOHN GRAFTON (Properties Designer) is a retired marketing manager from The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. and is happy

to have re-joined the backstage team of volunteers at Weathervane. He was a dresser for *The Mystery of Irma Vep* and recently assisted with props for *The Rainmaker*. He enjoyed that so much he volunteered for *Love! Valour! Compassion!* John's forte is as a household handyman, but securing the varied necessities to make a successful show is a fun challenge. He has served on the Weathervane Building and Grounds Committee and has enjoyed volunteering as bartender at many WCP events. John thanks his partner, Richard, for his guidance in making this such a successful experience.

JUDY WILLEMSSEN (Sound Designer) heads our Stage Manager Department on Production Board and was stage manager for last season's production of *Children of a Lesser God*. Judy has been volunteering at Weathervane for more than 20 years. We have seen her onstage as well as backstage. She designed sound for several Young Actor productions and won Chanticleers for her sound designs of Mainstage productions including *Translations*, *The Piano Lesson*, *My Three Angels* and *The Full Monty*. She also has Chanticleers for stage managing *Harvey* and *The Laramie Project*.

ADAM NELSON (Lighting Designer) holds a Bachelors degree in Theater Arts from The University of Akron and works as an Assistant Stage Manager at Carousel Dinner Theatre. Carousel shows include *Damn Yankees* and *The Wizard of Oz*. Adam has also designed lights for several productions at The Bang and the Clatter Theatre Company including *Betty's Summer Vacation*, *Bug*, *Defender of the Faith* and *Some Girls*.

Want to get involved?
Call Barbara Trotter, Coordinator of Volunteers
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Production Team

Alan Scott Ferrall -- Technical Director
 Kathy Kohl -- Assistant Technical Director

SET CONSTRUCTION

Ruth Richardson
 Tom Marshall
 Todd Dieringer
 Kevin Ford
 Erin Katz Ford
 John Grafton
 Richard Worswick
 Dan Levan
 Len Cheslock

COSTUMES

John S. Catlos
 Jasen J. Smith
 Helen Vari
 Judy Adamson
 Ethel Soudry
 Paulette Lark
 Scott Davis

LIGHTS

Brian Tillinger

SOUND

Tom C. Barnes
 Lois Bennett

PROPERTIES

Scott Davis
 M.J. Coulson

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Roger Read Jon Fiume
 Ron Meinen Janis Harcar
 Steven Schmidt Jasen J. Smith (special thanks from Karen)

Thanks to Our Hard-Working Volunteers

The following are the dedicated volunteers who have assisted us recently.

Linda Algie	Mitzi Mild
Patrice Bechtol	Marlene Miller
Mary Blazewicz	Sheila Motter
Nancy Bosshard	Lois Murray
June Bretzin	Pat Obenour
Drea Brown	Barbara O'Connor
Shannon Brown	John O'Neill
Ken Carder	Marci Paolucci
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