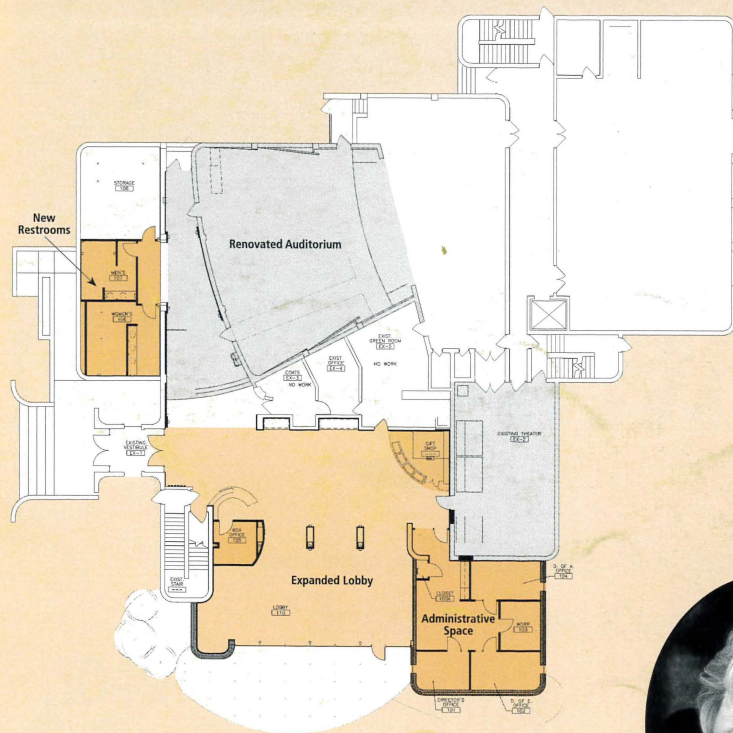


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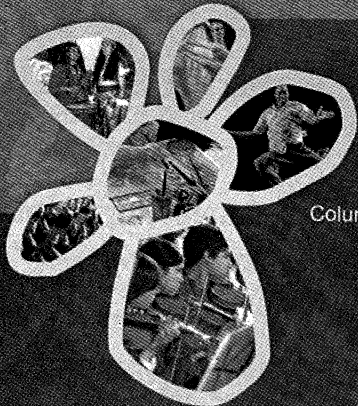
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From Our Executive Director

Setting the Stage for the Future

(Below are excerpts from John Hedges' remarks at Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic's press conference on August 6, 2008 announcing Weather vane's Capital Campaign – Setting the Stage for the Future)

Today, we are announcing an initiative that will boldly move Weather vane Playhouse into the future and signal the beginning of a dynamic new era in this theater's long and distinguished history.

We are announcing a nearly \$1 million Capital Expansion and Renovation Project designed to better enable this organization to fulfill its strategic objectives as we move into the next stage of Weather vane's growth and development.

This initiative is a direct outgrowth of our desire to make a significant contribution to Akron, Ohio artistically and economically, as well as to be a leader in the education and development of our most precious resource – our young people. It is an important part of our planning and an integral element to our future viability as we chart the course for the next 75 years. In conceiving this project we have taken inspiration from our leaders as well as from other organizations in our community that are putting Akron 'on the map.' We have been inspired by the notion that Akron is a place for innovation by projects like the dynamic expansion of The University of Akron, Canal Park, Lock 3, the amazing Akron Art Museum and many others that are all making a contribution. We look to join them.

What this project really reflects is matching physically the design of this building with the vibrancy of human expression that we foster and support here inside this building on a daily basis.

In our season brochure we assert that Life is Believing. This newly renovated and expanded facility will stand as testament to the power of belief -- the belief that our founders had 73 years ago to begin such an enterprise, the belief of the visionaries who purchased this land and built this theater nearly 40 years ago and the belief of the community leaders who came together to expand this building and increase our theater producing capabilities eight years ago. We look to harness that same spirit of belief once again in order that we may step up and make a contribution to Akron, Ohio.

John Hedges, Executive Director



Weather vane
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74th Season -- 2008-2009 -- Production #534
September 4 - 21, 2008

— THE — **RAINMAKER**

Romantic Comedy
by N. Richard Nash

Directed by **Bob Belfance**

Stage Manager
RICHARD WORSWICK

Lighting Designer
ERIN KATZ FORD

Properties Co-Designers
KAREN BURRIDGE & ROBYN COOPER

Costume Designer
NANCY HUMES

Sound Designer
JOYCE STADLER

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The Rainmaker is produced by special arrangement with Samuel French,
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About the Play and Playwright

Weather vane Playhouse first produced *The Rainmaker* during the 1955-1956 season (in its former Copley Road facility) in a production directed by Bill VanNostran.

The Rainmaker's New York premiere was at New York's Cort Theatre on Oct. 28, 1954. The original Broadway cast featured four-time Tony nominee and Oscar-winner Geraldine Page as Lizzie and a young Darren McGavin as Starbuck (decades before filming what would become perhaps his most familiar role: the hapless father in *A Christmas Story*, portions of which were filmed in Cleveland). In its Broadway outing, *The Rainmaker* ran for 125 performances, closing on Feb. 12, 1955. The show then crossed the Atlantic, with Page remaining as Lizzie, and opened in London in May 1956, where its box office take doubled that of its New York run.

Hollywood soon came calling and playwright Nash adapted his own script for the 1956 film adaptation, which starred Katherine Hepburn and Burt Lancaster and received two Oscar nominations (for Hepburn and composer Alex North's score). A 1982 made-for-TV adaptation (again penned by its playwright) starred Tuesday Weld and Tommy Lee Jones. New York's Roundabout Theatre Company revived the play on Broadway in a 1999 production whose Starbuck was played by Woody Harrelson (of the classic NBC-TV series *Cheers*); it played for 74 performances and earned Jayne Atkinson a Tony Award nomination for her portrayal of Lizzie.

The Rainmaker even inspired its own musical version, *110 in the Shade*. Harvey Schmidt and Tom Jones (the musical-theater duo behind *The Fantasticks* and *I Do! I Do!*) collaborated to create *110 in the Shade*, which opened at New York's Broadhurst Theatre on Oct. 23, 1963 and went on to play for 330 performances. Nash wrote the book for this musical version of his play, and legendary producer David Merrick hired Joseph Anthony – the director of the original 1954 source material – to direct it. The show earned four Tony Award nominations during the 1963-1964 Broadway season (including one for actor Will Geer, the musical's H.C., who years later would gain even wider fame as Grandpa on the long-running CBS-TV series *The Waltons*).

About the Playwright

N. Richard Nash was born as Nathan Richard Nasbaum in Philadelphia in 1913. In his youth, he trained as a boxer but then studied English and philosophy at the University of Philadelphia. Nash made his mark as a prolific playwright, screenwriter and novelist. His Broadway debut came in a 1946 play about Shakespeare, *The Second Best Bed*. With *The Rainmaker*, Nash enjoyed a triple-run hit thanks to its 1954 Broadway production, the 1956 film adaptation and its 1963 musical version. The show emerged as his widest and most enduring success. "I tried to tell a simple story about droughts that happen to people, and about faith," he wrote in *The New York Times* in 1956. His adaptation for the film version of the play earned him a Writers Guild of America Award. His other screenplays include *Helen of Troy* in 1956 and the 1959 film version of *Porgy and Bess*. He wrote the books for the Broadway musicals *The Happy Time* (1968) and *Wildcat* (1961), the latter of which was a star vehicle for Lucille Ball. Between 1968 and 1969, he wrote 26 episodes of the ABC-TV series *Here Come the Brides*. His works of fiction include *East Wind, Rain*, published in 1977, which concerns the Dec. 7, 1941, bombing of Pearl Harbor. In 1956, he married his third wife, Katherine Copeland, who survived Nash when he died at the age of 87 in Manhattan on Dec. 11, 2000.



The Rainmaker -- Cast

Lizzie Curry.....	Holly Humes
Bill Starbuck	Dane Lee
H.C. Curry	John C. Fazio
Noah Curry	Vince Richards
Jim Curry	Jason Davis
File	Jim Fippin
Sheriff Thomas	Bob Kenderes

The play takes place in a western state on a summer day in a time of drought.

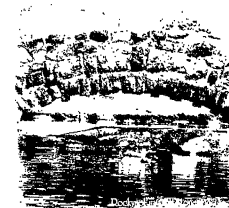
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- ♦ As a courtesy to fellow audience members, please make sure that cell phones and pagers are turned off during the performance.
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— Frank Lloyd Wright



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About Our Director

Bob Belfance (AEA, AFRTRA, SAG)

Bob is directing his 192nd production at Weathervane. In April he directed our very successful production of *Enchanted April*. Last October, Bob directed a well-received production of *Brooklyn Boy* at the Shaw Jewish Community Center. Bob left Broadway for Akron in 1961. In New York, Lee Strasberg invited Bob, then a fledgling director, to become an observer at the famous Actors Studio. When Bob became Weathervane's first Managing Director, he said his goal was to build a new state-of-the-art theater for Akron audiences. In 1970 Weathervane opened its season in this theater. Bob had been responsible for transforming Weathervane into one of Ohio's leading non-professional theaters. Bob wrote, produced and directed several award-winning films for Omnibus Film Productions (as one of 6 co-owners) and also owned and operated the Priscilla Beach Summer Theater. In 2002 Bob's life-long contribution to his art was recognized when he was inducted into the Ohio Community Theater Hall of Fame. Bob and his multitalented, award-winning-actress wife Carol (who appeared on our stage as Mrs. Graves in *Enchanted April*), have been seen and heard on TV and radio commercials all over the United States. For 10 years they owned and operated the Outback Inn Bed and Breakfast. They co-authored *Beds, Breakfasts and Broadcasts*, a very entertaining book about inn keeping and for four years were featured on *Breakfast at the Outback*, a radio talk show they broadcast from their B&B. Bob and Carol enjoy visiting with Bob's children: Leslie, who is the Executive Director of the Rockynol Retirement Community; Eve, an Akron Municipal Court Judge; Mark, a partner at Ernst & Young; and Carol's son, Jason, a Network Systems Engineer at Summa Health System. Between them they have produced six grandchildren, all of whom are happily spoiled by their adoring grandparents.

In Our Gallery -- Quilts of Dorthella (Sally) L. Griffin

Sally Griffin earned a BA of Fine Arts degree late in life. She had always been interested in painting still lifes, portraits and landscapes in oil, acrylics and water colors. She was also an antique dealer and took a liking to some of the quilts she encountered at antique shows and studied the patterns and techniques used to craft them. When lung disease made it impossible for her to continue working with volatile paints, she turned her artistic talents toward quilt making, took numerous classes to learn the techniques and traditional designs and set about imprinting her own style upon them. Always fascinated by color, she collected fabrics that intrigued her and then sought to find a quilt design into which she could incorporate them. Each quilt she made used classic designs modified to produce a vibrancy that she considered her trademark.

Given the time frame of *The Rainmaker* and the character of Lizzie Curry, quilts made by a strong, independent woman, seemed to be a good tie-in to the show. This is a tribute exhibit. Sadly, Sally Griffin passed away a few months after I discussed having a show featuring her work at the theater. I wish to thank her family for helping me make this exhibit possible.

Marci Paolucci
Gallery Director



Biographies

HOLLY HUMES (Lizzie Curry) Holly was last seen on Weathervane's stage as Rose Arnott in *Enchanted April*. Prior to that show, she has also been seen on other local stages, including Coach House and Dobama. Her favorite roles include Poppy in *Noises Off!*, Catherine in *Proof*, Mae in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, Yelena in *Uncle Vanya*, various roles in *The Laramie Project*, Dawn in *Song of Survival*, and Lil in *V-E Day*. Holly is a graduate of Kent State University, with a bachelor's degree in Russian Language and Soviet/East European Studies. She works as a chiropractic assistant at Fairlawn Family Chiropractic Center, and as an assistant speech coach at Wooster High School. She would like to thank her husband, Scott Custer, for all of his love and support.

DANE LEE (Bill Starbuck) is a Senior Exercise Specialist Major/Theatre Minor at Kent State University. His most recent works include Francisco in Ohio Shakespeare Festival's *Hamlet* and the Clown from *Othello*. This is Dane's second production at Weathervane, and he is once again thrilled for a fantastic opportunity such as this. He thanks his friends (both on and off stage) and his family, whose support he will forever be grateful for. ("Cry out, let daring word be spoken / from the stage, the silence broken. / Unbound, in lights, we freely live. / Then truth be voiced, and freely give."

JOHN C. FAZIO (H. C. Curry) is an attorney having practiced in the Cleveland area for 40 years and in the Akron area for three years. He has spent the last two of those years trying to retire! John has been active in community theater since 1971. You may remember him in the 1972 WCP production of *Death of a Salesman* directed by Larry Moran. Other acting credits include *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *Private Lives*, *Rashomon*, *Seascape*, *That Championship Season* and *Toys in the Attic*. John has also directed several productions and has written a full-length play, *Tightrope*, which has had

a couple of staged readings. He lives in Akron with his wife, Mary, who is retired after a career in public relations. He has five children, she has two. All seven have left the nest.

VINCE RICHARDS (Noah Curry) is an Ohio native who is new to theater (unless you count his high school drama experience). For the past 20 years, he has worked in the transportation industry. He has many interests (maybe too many?) including, but not limited to, music, movies, books, computers and motorcycles. While this marks Vince's first appearance on the Weathervane mainstage, it is actually his second play; having performed backstage running sound and providing the voice for the Announcer in *And the Winner Is*. He wishes to thank Bob Belfance, John Hedges and the casts & crews of *And the Winner Is* and *The Rainmaker* for all of their support. He also thanks his family and friends for always believing in him.

JASON DAVIS (Jim Curry) is a student at Kent State University. You might have seen him as Algernon in our Young Actor production *The Importance of Being Earnest* last spring, or as Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* or as Philip in last fall's mainstage production of *The Lion in Winter*. Jason is a graduate of Firestone High School and has also performed at the Solon Center for the Arts.

JIM FIPPIN (File) has been acting, directing and otherwise engaged in theater in Northeast Ohio for more than 20 years. He has appeared on stage at Porthouse Theatre, WCP, Coach House Theatre, The Players Guild of Canton and with the Ohio Shakespeare Festival. His resume includes roles in *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet*, *The Lion in Winter*, *The Odd Couple*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Real Thing* and *Custer*. As Artistic Director of Coach House Theatre, Jim staged *Chapter Two*, *Betrayal*, *Art*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* among others. In 2005, he was recognized by the Akron Area Arts Alliance as the area's



Biographies - continued

outstanding Theatre Artist. Jim earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Theatre from Otterbein College, where he met his wife, Elaine. Together, they live in Wadsworth with their daughter, Emelie.

BOB KENDERES (Sheriff Thomas) is happy to return to Weathervane. Since his appearance here in *The Full Monty*, Bob has played roles in *West Side Story* for Huntington Playhouse, *Blooms of Steel* and *ART* for TrueNorth Cultural Arts, *Drowning Sorrows* at Coach House Theatre, *Don't Drink the Water* at Strongsville Community Theater and *Damn Yankees* and *And Then There Was None* for Royalton Players. In 2005 he won a Best Actor award for his role of Otto Frank in the Royalton Players' production of *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

RICHARD WORSWICK (Stage Manager) was most recently in Weathervane's Dietz production of *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*. Also for Weathervane he 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 Reuben Malter. Richard chaired Weathervane's Gala in 2005. This is his first turn as Stage Manager.

NANCY HUMES (Costume Designer) is designing for the first time for her daughter, Holly, who plays Lizzie. Previous credits here include *The Frog Prince* and *And the Winner Is*. Nancy's "costume designing" career began in 1970 making a devil costume for her six-month old son. Since then she has costumed many children and adults for holidays and school and church plays. Her most challenging costume assignment — dressing 100 first graders for \$50! Nancy earned her Bachelor's degree in General Studies from KSU and continued her education at Vanderbilt in Nashville, where she earned her Master of Divinity in 2004 and was ordained as a minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Nancy's love of theater began while at KSU. Holly, a frequent Northeast Ohio performer, has

been instrumental in keeping it alive. A native of Michigan, she and her family now call Wadsworth home.

ERIN KATZ FORD (Lighting Designer) is a dedicated, backstage volunteer at Weathervane who can be found in the Scene Shop many evenings after work. She is an educator for Congregation Bethaynu and is working on her Masters degree in Jewish Education and hopes to graduate in the spring. Erin designed lights for our productions of *The Lion in Winter*, *The Chosen* and *The Sisters Rosensweig*.

JOYCE STADLER (Sound Designer) is a recent addition to our designing volunteers. This past season, she designed sound for our production of *Enchanted April*. When not at Weathervane, she works in Credit Customer Service for Sterling Jewelers. Joyce has a Bachelors degree in Film Science from Full Sail Real World Education.

KAREN BURRIDGE (Properties Co-Designer) is a former Women's Board president. Most recently, she co-designed costumes for *Enchanted April* and, also last season, designed costumes for *Moon Over Buffalo* and 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.

ROBYN COOPER (Properties Co-Designer) has been quite busy since joining Weathervane's backstage team. Most recently (July), she was sound designer for *Go, Dog. Go! / Disney's The Aristocats Kids!*. In 2007, Robyn was sound designer for *The Frog Prince* and *Joseph*, properties designer for *I Do! I Do!*, stage manager for *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* and costume co-designer/properties designer for *String of Pearls*. She also designed properties for the Coach House production of *Drowning Sorrows*.



Production Team

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

SET CONSTRUCTION

Ruth Richardson
Tom Marshall
Kevin Ford
Erin Katz Ford
Jay Fishman
Judy Willemssen
Todd Dieringer
Justyn Jaymes
Sandy Horvath
Gary Getz

COSTUMES

Holly Custer
Heather Errante
June Bretzin
Jasen Smith
John Catlos

LIGHTS

Scott Custer
Jennifer Draher
Kevin Ford
David Ruggles

PROPERTIES

John Grafton
Dan Levan
Russ Rafferty
M.J. Coulson
Sylvia Collier
Eric Knuth
J.J. McAdams
Pam Parks Costa

SOUND

Gilbert Stadler
Lois Bennett
Cheryl Stadler

Music Credits

Instrumental impressions of American music used in the play and at pre-show and intermission was performed by Jay Ungar, Molly Mason, Eric Weissberg, Norman Blake, Nancy Blake, John Sebastian, Bill Keith, Brian Keane, Lorraine Lee, Tony Trischka, John Doan, Peter Blue, Ken Kosek, Stacy Phillips, Alan Feldman, John Sholle and John Whelan. Instruments played include fiddles, mandolins, acoustic guitar, autoharp, harp guitar, acoustic bass, banjo, Harlow resonator guitar, cello, dobro, 5 string banjo, accordion, and solo harmonica.

Thanks to Our Hard-Working Volunteers

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

Susan Baker	G.G. Glenn	Barbara O'Connor	Lois Simmons
Patrice Bechtol	Marilyn Heagerty	John O'Neill	Sue Smith
Mary Blazewicz	Dave Heltebran	Marci Paolucci	Barbie Trotter
Shannon Brown	Chuck Kelades	Bess Raines	Helen Vari
Gail & Leonard Cheslock	Leslie & Richard Lund	Ruth Richardson	Linda Waite
Thelma Coss	Nancy Mahoney	Nancy Schafer	Michelle Williams
Helen Fleming	Lois Murray	Diantha Seibert	Mary Wolfman
Janis Gallagher	Pat Obenour	Pearl Sentelik	

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As you probably know, earned income accounts for only 60% of our total expenses. The plain fact is, if each Weathervane patron gave just \$1 extra this season, we would be able to meet our goal for Individual Contributions! Won't you show your appreciation of this performance with a "Thank You Dollar" after the show?

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John Hedges
Executive Director

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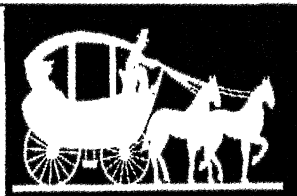
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