



WACT News

December 2002

Platteville Chosen To Host State AACTFest 2003



The Wisconsin Association of Community Theatre (WACT) is excited to announce The Platteville Community Theatre will be hosting the Wisconsin AACTFest 2003 on March 7, 8 and 9, 2003. The Platteville Community Theatre has entered the festival previously and is anxiously preparing to host this coming festival.

AACTFest is open to any community theatre in the State of Wisconsin that is governed by a board of directors from the community and has been in existence for at least two years. The production to be entered can be anything the company decides. It can be a one act, a cutting of a longer work, or an original script. Musicals, comedies and dramas are all acceptable. The production, as presented, must be no longer than sixty minutes. (If producing a cutting you must obtain permission to do so from the licensing agent) Additionally productions have a ten minute set up and ten minute strike. Each production is adjudicated by a panel of three judges immediately following the company's strike. Adjudication is open to the public as well as the producing company.

WACT is hoping to have at least ten entries at this year's festival. With ten entries Wisconsin is entitled to send two shows to the Region III Festival. This would be a first for Wisconsin and can be especially exciting as Wisconsin is also hosting the Region III AACTFest in Fort Atkinson, WI, on April 11, 12 & 13, 2003. The winning entry at the regional festival will continue on to the national AACTFest 2003 in Torrington, Connecticut, June 25 - 28, 2003.

WACT invites all community theaters in Wisconsin to participate in this exciting and educational festival. However, if you feel your group is not ready to enter a production you are encouraged to register members of your group to be a part of the audience and cheer on their favorite production. After attending you might just decide, "Gee, our group can do better than that," and begin making plans to enter the next festival in 2005.

In past years groups from Wauwatosa, Platteville, La Crosse, Madison and Fond du Lac

have represented Wisconsin at the Regional festival. Madison, Fond du Lac and La Crosse have gone on to represent our region at national and international festivals.

If you would like further information you can check our web site at www.wact.org, e-mail us at info@plattevilletheatre.org or contact Cindy Voigts at (608) 348-5669. Note that there is a festival handbook, published by AACT, which contains a full set of rules that everyone is expected to follow (copies may be downloaded from the AACT website - www.aact.org). Please consider entering this festival. You will find it fun, exciting, and very educational. Better yet! Register now. A registration blank is enclosed with this newsletter.

La Crosse Community Theatre to Host WACT 2004 Convention



The Wisconsin Association of Community Theatre is also pleased to announce The La Crosse Community Theatre has volunteered to host a theatre convention in March 2004. This convention is still very much in the beginning stages of organizing but they would like to model it after the Sheboygan Mock Festival, which was held in March 2002. Productions, workshops, training sessions, panel discussions and a lot of sharing will be a part of this convention. As the convention is still in the planning stages the La Crosse Community Theatre is open to suggestions for workshops, panels and performances. Perhaps you have something you'd love to learn about theatre. Maybe you've got a portion of a show you'd love to present. This could be your chance! Make a suggestion!

For further information or to make suggestions you can contact WACT at info@wact.org.

Call to Host Future WACT Festivals or Conventions

With AACTFest 2003 and the 2004 Convention all set, you may feel there is no need to look to 2005 and beyond. This could not be further from the truth. WACT is already pursuing groups

who would be willing to host the next AACTFest in 2005 or a convention. It is a good opportunity to show off what your group can do and can be a good fundraiser at the same time. So often when we start contacting groups their one major excuse is they needed more lead-time. Here you have the opportunity to volunteer well in advance of the event. WACT has a brochure that provides guidelines for hosting a festival or convention. The brochure includes what the hosting groups need to do, how WACT will assist them, sample budgets, and answers to frequently asked questions. WACT board members are also willing to come and speak with your board to answer questions and provide further information. Why not? Your group is as good as any community theatre in Wisconsin. You have plenty of time to plan. So talk to your board and get them thinking now! Who knows? You could be hosting a future AACTFest or WACT Convention!



Dues Due



The time has come for you membership renewal. Memberships actually ended in August, but invoices won't be sent out until right after the first of the year. You can save WACT the postage by sending your dues before that time to: WACT Membership, P. O. Box 1852, La Crosse, WI 54602. Dues will remain the same for the 2002 - 2003 year. Individual memberships remain at \$15.00 and Organizational memberships remain at \$50.00. Show your support for the state community theatre organization and renew your membership today. Better yet, get a friend or other community theatre lover to join. Or get a membership as a gift for that hard to buy for person for Christmas, New Years, Ground Hogs Day or Valentines Day.

Financial Report

WACT ended its fiscal year in the black. At a recent meeting of the board of directors, Treasurer Sandi Weber reported that WACT ended its fiscal year on July 31, 2002 with a net income of \$2,397.35. WACT still has an outstanding debit that we will be able to retire and still be in a stable financial position. WACT is now in the process of finalizing its application for 501(c)(3) nonprofit status and getting proper insurance. The budget passed for 2002 - 2003 calls for income of \$2,360.00 and total expenses of \$2,805. Although this budget reflects a deficit, the cash on hand should keep WACT in the black.



Volunteer to Be a WACT Board Member



As with any theatre association, the organization is only as strong as its board of directors. They serve as the driving force behind the movement and growth of the association. Presently the Wisconsin Association of Community Theatre is governed by a board of four people. This leaves a lot of the work to very few people. Perhaps you have something special you could offer or just have a desire to serve your state community theatre organization. On the other hand, you may know someone who would be a great asset to the board and needs a bit of coaxing to serve. Often just asking is all that is needed to get people to serve. The WACT Board needs to expand its membership to include members from the various regions of the state. Think about it! Additional board member and replacement board member will need to be added at the 2003 festival. Now is a good time to come forward and serve community theaters from all over the state.

Region 3 AACTFest Schedule

February 21-23, 2003

Ohio State Festival
Tiffin

March 7-9, 2003

Wisconsin State Festival
Platteville

March 21-23, 2003

Michigan State Festival
Grand Rapids

March 28-30, 2003

Indiana State Festival
Indianapolis

April 10-13, 2003

Region 3 Festival
Ft. Atkinson, Wisconsin

(No Illinois State Festival)

Thank You To The Sheboygan Theatre Company



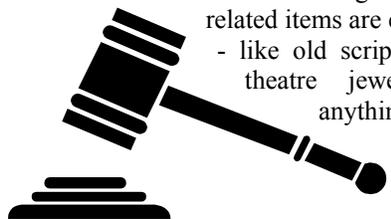
WACT would like to thank the Sheboygan Theatre Company and its director, Ralph Maffongelli for their donation of \$770.00. The

Sheboygan Theatre Company was able to realize a profit as a result of the 2002 mock festival it sponsored in March of 2002. They generously donated the profits from the conference to help WACT. This show of support for a statewide community theatre organization is greatly appreciated. WACT wishes to thank Ralph and everyone at the Sheboygan Theatre Company.

Silent Auction

In conjunction with Wisconsin AACTFest 2003 to be held in Platteville and the Region III AACTFest to be held in Fort Atkinson, WACT will be sponsoring a Silent Auction fundraiser. This is a great opportunity to donate unwanted items for a good cause. Theatre

related items are especially useful - like old scripts, unique props, theatre jewelry, CD's, or anything unique, fun and interesting. If you have something you'd like to donate bring it to the festival and give it to Sandi Weber or mail it to her ahead of time clearly marked for WACT Silent Auction (PO Box 1852, La Crosse, WI 54602). Then continue to help WACT by bidding often on items at these silent auctions. All profits will be used to help WACT with its programming and growth



Send In The Clowns

While most familiar to theatre people as a song from *A Little Night Music*, the phrase has its origins in a different performance medium, the circus. "Send in the clowns" is the traditional act when a great tragedy happens at a circus performance. Because no matter how the company feels or how much emotional pain they may be feeling, the show must go on.

On August 21st, community theatre in Wisconsin suffered its own tragedy. Dawn Ender, only 44 years old passed away from cancer. Dawn's official title at the La Crosse Community Theatre was that of Costume Designer. In addition to official duties, she had unofficial duties



that went with being married to the Artistic/Managing Director. But Dawn was much more, she was a goodwill ambassador to the world. Anyone who met her would never forget her beaming smile, it could and would light up a room. An AACTFest fan, she and Morrie became familiar faces throughout the state and region with their award winning performances of *Cotton Patch Gospel* and the *Angels of Lemnos*. Theatre took her beyond the bounds of the United States allowing her to make friends from Germany to Japan.

One of Dawn's last bit of advice was to "Follow Dreams", a philosophy that she lived. A philosophy that is appropriate for theatre people everywhere. In her honor the La Crosse Community Theatre has established the Dawn M. Enders New Theatre Building Fund, looking towards the day when one of her dreams, a new theatre for the group, is ready to become a reality.

Dawn's passing should certainly generate a cry of "send in the clowns" from Wisconsin community theatre. And if clowns can come from heaven, Dawn will send them (in gorgeous costumes).