

THE BACKSTAGE PASS

MAMMA MIA! OPENS 2022-2023 SEASON



Players Workshop opens its new season with the popular musical comedy *Mamma Mia!* by Bjorn Ulvaeus & Benny Andersson (music/lyrics) and Catherine Johnson (book), on Sept. 23, 2022.

Featuring the music of ABBA and set on a Greek island, the story of the young girl searching for her biological father so he can “walk her down the aisle” has been wildly popular on both stage and screen, and this big budget musical is just the thing to get the Workshop off to a great 90th year start.

The cast, as announced, is as follows: Nicolette Critser plays the free-spirited Donna, who would just as soon have her romantic past forgotten, and Kennedy Schuff is her daughter Sophie, who is just as determined to find her biological father before she marries her fiancé Skye, played by Jeremy Henman. Jason Hale, Lee Franklin, and Cody Flietner play Bill, Sam, and Harry, respectively, the 3 would-be dads, and Amanda Mansheim and Njeri Patric, portray Tonya and Rosie, Donna’s 2 best friends and fellow members of “Donna and the Dynamos.”

Dale Kurth is the priest, Tyler Boelter plays Pepper, Jacob Welch is Eddie, Corrine Keenan is Lisa, and Addison Anderson is Ali.

Members of the chorus include Hadley Flener, Shelly Morton, Carley Petersen, Phoebe Hicke, Renee Zaiser, Karen Cahill, Anika Morton, Nancy Roed, Dave Roed, Steve Poling, Kaitlyn Hicke, Mallie Rodeffer, Marcia Dick, Linda Baker, Haley Vahle, Makaylie Wertenberger, Kady Dewey, Amanda Marsden, Audrey Sawyer, and Greyson Burnham.

Director is Matt Poling, Scott Teater is music director, Kent Lewis is assistant director, Bobbi Huebner is choreographer, and Robbin Poling is producer.

Other members of the production staff are Linda Garwood, stage manager; Robbin Poling, props; Randy Wischmeier light/set design,; Gretchen Lewis and Cyndy

Fabel, costumers; Cheryl Bean, hair/make-up; Brittany Gerst, light/sound technician; Randy Wischmeier, Kent Lewis, Steve Poling, Bill Ell, & Al Fabel, set construction.

Mamma Mia! will run 3 weekends--Sept. 23-25, Sept 30-Oct. 2, & Oct. 6-9, 2022, at the Workshop, 1431 Grove St., Burlington. All performances are at 7:30 p.m., with the exception of 2:00 p.m. Sun. matinees on Sept. 25, Oct. 2, and Oct. 9.

Mamma Mia! is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI), and all authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.

For more information go to the PW Facebook page or to www.playersworkshoptheater.com.



LOST (AND FOUND) IN IKEA

PW will hold open auditions for the Gary Ray Stapp comedy/drama *Lost (and Found) in IKEA* on Sun., Oct. 9, and Mon., Oct. 10, at 7:00 p.m. at the Workshop, 1431 Grove St., Burlington.

Parts are available for 5 men and 5 women, ages 30’s and up. The characters are husband and wife, a homeless man, an IKEA customer, a single woman, her brother (who is dead), a widower, the widower’s wife (who is also dead), the IKEA security guard, and a crazy lady. No special requirements are needed to audition.

For more information on auditions, contact director Libba Flores at 319-750-3533; audition information will also be available on the Players Workshop Facebook page and the PW website www.playersworkshoptheater.com.

Show performances are set for Dec. 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, and 11, 2022. (Presented by special arrangement with Heuer Publishing).

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, contact Gretchen Lewis (753-0470 or kwlawyer@msn.com) to have your name removed from the mailing list. (Prefer an email version? Contact pw6623@gmail.com, to have the newsletter converted to electronic format.)



transferring my tables for the Garage Sale to the theater and back home after. This was a big job and I couldn't have held the sale without their help!! Thanks!!" Libba

SUPPORTING CAST: 2022-2023

Here is your chance to support Players Workshop with a one-time financial gift as a member of PW's Supporting Cast for 2022-23.

There are six donor levels:

- Usher \$25-\$99
- Stage Crew \$100-\$249
- Supporting Cast \$250-\$499
- Star \$500-599
- Director \$1000-\$2499
- Producer \$2500+

The following have already joined:

Producer

Barb Bonnett (George Bonnett Memorial)

Supporting Actor

H. Eugene & Joy Anderson
Bonnie Downes
Eva Ann Elmer (in memory of Jim Elmer)
Mary Fox
Jayne & Kevin Gobble

Stage Crew

Betty L. Harter
Donna & Jan Logan
Marlis Robberts
Earl & Peggy Stott
Olive Sullivan

Usher

Russ Fry
Lori Moore
Morning Sun Community Volunteers
Mary Saye
Kay Wilson

Your gift will be acknowledged in each newsletter and play program of 2022-23 and will also be listed on the PW website.

You may join by filling out the form at the end of this newsletter or the brochure included in your play program; or, for more information, go to the Workshop's website at www.playersworkshoptheater.com.

PW THANKS ITS DONORS

Players Workshop expresses its thanks to the following, who have made financial donations since the last issue of this newsletter: Susan Cohoon, Barbara Hahn, and Fred & Martha Wetzell. All gifts are gratefully appreciated and help PW to continue to bring live theater to the Burlington area.

FROM LIBBA FLORES: "I forgot to add a huge THANK YOU to Duane and Kayleigh Hartman for

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT PLAYERS WORKSHOP



The Lobby Committee is looking for volunteers to help with the 2022-2023 season—specifically, they are looking for people who are interested in being ushers at a show performance (you get to see the show for free!), and people who would like to work the concession stand during intermission.

There is no previous experience required, as Lobby Committee Chairperson Karla Mundt will gratefully train volunteers. Interested parties can call her at 319-752-0010 or at 319-750-9338, or they can email her at iowadabblers@gmail.com. On behalf of the Lobby Committee, thank you.



UPDATE ON 90TH YEAR EVENTS

PW's 90th year open house began with a fall clean-up on Aug. 6, so that the theater was ready for the Aug. 14 open house. Coordinator Merry Wiseman, assisted by Building & Grounds Chair Gene Anderson and Pres. Kent Lewis, divided the workshop into "zones," each of which was assigned a leader, who worked with a crew, to transform the theater for the open house.

Thanks to all who helped with clean-up day: Merry Wiseman, Gene Anderson, Kent Lewis, Bill Ell, Marlene Holsteen, Jayne & Kevin Gobble, Robbin & Steve Poling, Mary Fox, Carol Hinkle, Karla Mundt, Mary O'Brien, Starr, Emerson & Hadley Sattler, Rod Reeves, Al & Cyndy Fabel, Libba Flores, JoJo Arms & Kellum Johnson, Brittany Gerst, and Linda Garwood.

The 90th Year Celebration Open House was a Triumph! Ninety-eight enthusiastic people were on hand, to be treated to backstage tours, presentations on how to produce a play and run the theater, two youth skits, (directed by Carol Hinkle), and, of course, birthday cake!

Event coordinator Merry Wiseman reported that 33 NEW Season Tickets were sold and 4 NEW active memberships resulted from the event!

Attendees also registered for 3 possible door prizes, which were won by the following: First prize went to Linda Heater who won two (2) 2022-2023 season tickets, a \$50 gift certificate to The Drake Restaurant

(donated by The Drake Restaurant), and preferential seating at *Mamma Mia!*; second prize went to Richard Link, who won two (2) 2022-2023 season tickets; and third prize went to Rollan Simonson who won two (2) tickets to *Mamma Mia!*, with the right to call in and reserve seats before tickets go on sale online (usually reserved for season ticket holders). All were thrilled with their prizes.

Workshoppers helping with the event were Merry Wiseman, Brittany Gerst, Kent & Gretchen Lewis, Jean Ballinger, Jayne & Kevin Gobble, Mary Fox, Robbin & Steve Poling, Matt & Sue Poling, David Beckman, Starr Sattler, Colleen & Wayne Heibner, Al & Cyndy Fabel, Rod Reeves, Mary O'Brien, Bill Ell, Scott Teater, Gene Anderson, Libba Flores, Marlene Holsteen, Karla Mundt, Carole Hinkle, Nikki Critser, and Duane Hartman.

Appearing in the youth skits, were Kayleigh Hartman, Abigail Ritter, Brady Lenahan, Aurora Critser, Madigan Kennedy, Emerson Sattler, Hadley Sattler, and Regina Critser.

Congratulations to all on a job well done!



MEET YOUR BOARD MEMBERS

Kent Lewis, newly elected President of the Players Workshop Board of Directors, has been involved with the organization since the 1984-85 season when he appeared as The Dentist in *On Golden Pond*.

Originally from Cedar Rapids, he has been involved in live theater since the age of 12, some 60 years. Kent has lived most of his adult life in Burlington, where he is a retired lawyer and is in his second stint as President of the Board.

He is unsure exactly how long he has been on the Board, but figures “around 30 years,” because he wanted to “help make decisions on the future of the theater and to see that we produced quality shows.”

He has previously served on the former production committee, and has been on the house and grounds committee for most of his board tenure. He says, “Keeping the theater running is a challenge that, while it doesn’t entail notoriety or recognition like producing shows, it is a job that must be done, and I spend a great deal of time . . . keeping things repaired as a helper to Gene Anderson.” Now, as President, he is an ex-officio member of all committees and wants “to see us produce a balanced season that attracts new patrons.” Also, during this 90th year season, he is “committed to seeing that we get our profile before as many people as we can.”

As a theater buff, he enjoys all aspects of producing quality shows. “It would be hard to say whether

I get more enjoyment/satisfaction out of directing or acting or scene design. Each one has its own set of challenges and satisfactions.” At PW he has directed 22 plays and musicals and has appeared in 28 others; he has served in most backstage jobs, at one time or another, except costume design, saying “That I leave to my brilliant wife Gretchen.”

When not involved with the Workshop, Kent enjoys attending theater productions in other places, whenever possible, golf, woodworking, and reading fiction.

One thing he really enjoyed was the 3 or 4 years (pre-pandemic) “when we were sponsoring a drama club at Edward Stone Middle School and introducing their students to live theater.” That is one reason he hopes PW continues their outreach “to the youth of our community so that our legacy will continue for many years to come.”

ADDRESS CHANGE HELP

PLEASE! If your address changes, **please** contact Gretchen Lewis (319-753-0470 or kwlawyer@msn.com) and let her know; every time PW gets a newsletter returned as non-deliverable or every time PW has to forward a newsletter, it costs us money—and it adds up fast. The post office does NOT forward newsletters (bulk mail), so please help us with this—and THANK YOU!



JOIN THE FAMILY!

For those of you who volunteer (or would like to) at Players Workshop by acting, directing, working the reservation call line, ushering, working on clean-up days, and doing the myriad of other tasks necessary to operate a theater, why not become an **ACTIVE MEMBER** (or continue being one) by paying your annual \$20 active membership fee? Active membership dues are now being taken for the 2022-2023 season.

For more information and to fill out your “I am willing to help with . . .” list, go to the website at www.playersworkshoptheater.com, click on the “About” link, and then click on “Get Involved.” There is a link in the text to the PW membership brochure, which explains it all.

We hope to welcome you into the Players Workshop family!

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HONORARY SUPPORTING CAST DONATION FORM

Join the **Honorary Supporting Cast** and make a one-time donation for the 2022-2023 season.

Six Donor Levels Available:

Usher \$25-\$99 Stage Crew \$100-\$249 Supporting Cast \$250-\$499
Star \$500-599 Director \$1000-\$2499 Producer \$2500 +

Name _____

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Phone _____ **Email** _____

Donation Amount _____

I prefer my gift remain anonymous. _____

I wish to make a donation but do not wish to be listed in the Honorary Supporting Cast. _____

Send completed form to Players Workshop, POB 793, Burlington, IA 52601
You may also contribute by clicking on the DONATE button at the top of the PW website
(playersworkshoptheater.com) or using the link on the PW Facebook page.

Players Workshop is a 501(c)3 organization.