



Backstage

Fall 2020

Pierre Players Community Theatre

Pandemic Will Not Stop Pierre Players

By Alisa Bousa, PPCT President



While COVID caused Pierre Players to delay "Native Gardens" by three months and postpone "Man of La Mancha" until next summer, we are not going to let it shut down our 2020-2021 season.

"Native Gardens" was several weeks into production when we made the decision to halt practices in March. Pierre Players Board of

Governors continued to meet via Zoom as we had to decide what to do with the remainder of our 2019-2020 season and when and how we could safely reopen our doors.

Our Board of Governors rose to the challenge and decided that we had to take that next step in reopening our doors, despite possibly losing money on staging "Native Gardens" this past summer. We figured out how to make social distancing work in our small theater, required masks at all performances and purchased hand sanitizer stands for the theater.

During a three-month hiatus from rehearsing, several people stepped away from "Native Gardens" due to scheduling conflicts or uncertainties about doing a show during COVID. But we found others willing to step in and take their places—people who strongly felt that it was important to provide our community with some much-needed entertainment.

It is with this same determination that Pierre Players is committed to bringing our patrons a lineup of five outstanding productions this next season. ■

Past Season's Perfect Escapes

A huge thank you to everyone who supported Pierre Players' 2019-2020 season. We loved sharing our evenings and Sunday afternoons with you and look forward to entertaining you in the coming year.

Between the classic comedy "Arsenic & Old Lace" and biting humor of "Vanities," the gothic horror of "Dracula" and side-splitting reality of "Native Gardens," we hope you found a little something that was simply the perfect escape.

During Pierre Players' virtual annual membership kickoff on Aug. 25, we invited you to vote for your favorites from the past season. Here are the results:

- **Favorite Actor:** Matt McQuiston Jr.—Dracula in "Dracula"
- **Favorite Actress:** Jennifer Bieser—Kathy in "Vanities"
- **Favorite Supporting Actor:** Andrew Yaeger—Renfield in "Dracula"
- **Favorite Supporting Actress:** Lydia Kanz—Van Helsing in "Dracula"
- **Favorite Costumes:** Cindy Joseph, Roxanne Smith and Joshua Penrod—"Dracula"
- **Favorite Light Design:** Aaron Siebersma—"Dracula"
- **Favorite Sound Design:** Joseph Peskey—"Dracula"
- **Favorite Set Design:** Peter Kleinpass—"Dracula"
- **Favorite Show:** "Dracula" ■

2019-2020 Board of Governors

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New PPCT Volunteers

Our volunteers are what make our organization great! Please give a big thank you to and welcome Pierre Players' new volunteers:

Monte Amende
Anna Bennett
Shelby Bergeson
Amanda Demory
Christina Ford
Joyce Gilkerson
Sister Harker
Brigid Hoffman
Sister Kropf
Scott Lee
Robert Louder
Nick Lowrey
John Malfero
Chad Muntefering
Tonya Ness
Angel Nunez Ceron
Joseph Peskey
LaTrisha Schindler
Autumn Seeley
Lila Seeley
Tyler Seeley
Melissa Snow
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PPCT Awards Scholarships

Pierre Players has awarded 2020 scholarships to three students. AJ Holland of Pierre, Angela Guthmiller of Onida and Shantay Werdel of Highmore all received a \$500 Pierre Players Scholarship toward their continued education. These students have demonstrated excellence in, growth through and dedication to the fine arts.

These scholarships are made possible by concessions purchases made at Pierre Players' performances. Thank you for your generosity in helping to make these scholarships possible. ■

Pierre Players Loses Longtime Friend—Barry Le Beau

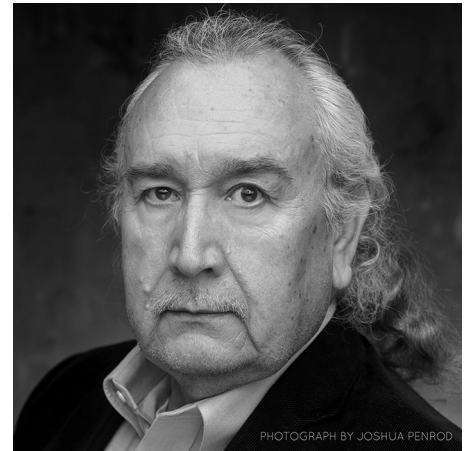
It is with sadness and fond memories that Pierre Players remembers our longtime colleague and friend, Barry Le Beau, who passed away unexpectedly at his Pierre residence in late March of this year.

A Pierre native, Barry was a musician, grant writer, program administrator and lobbyist, but we remember him primarily as an actor who created a plethora of memorable roles in Pierre Players productions over a "career" spanning 30-plus years. During the formative years of the organization, Barry was a staple, some seasons performing in back-to-back productions. He appeared in shows as diverse as Neil Simon comedies like "The Star Spangled Girl" and "Last of the Red Hot Lovers" to classic dramas such as Tennessee Williams' "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" and Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman."

Career opportunities eventually took Barry from Pierre; however, he remained active in theater wherever he happened to be, performing often with Sioux Falls Community Playhouse, Black Hills Playhouse and occasionally with companies in Minneapolis and California. Barry often found a way to return to Pierre to appear in "just one more" Pierre Players' production such as Miller's "The Crucible."

In the early 2000s, Barry moved home permanently to care for his aging mother and once again became actively involved with community theater. Over the last 15 years, he often graced the Pierre Players' stage. Local audiences may remember him in "Our Town," "The Lion in Winter," "All My Sons" and "The Clean House," some of the shows in which he had major roles.

Over the course of the last couple decades, Barry used his skills as an actor to create professional work as a voice talent for documentaries and



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSHUA PENROD

television commercials. He was the narrator for the feature length films "America's Great Indian Leaders" and "America's Great Indian Nations" and the award-winning short film "Ghost Dance." Other film credits include Charles Nauman's "Yes, I am not Iktomi," Andrew Kightlinger's "Dust of War" and Molli Cameron's "Lakota Girls."

Barry will also be remembered as a strong arts advocate, serving many years as an arts lobbyist during the state legislative sessions, but more importantly as someone who simply was always there when the argument needed to be made about the importance of the arts in South Dakota. That advocacy often dovetailed with his advocacy for Native American issues. He worked as an Indian affairs lobbyist, a tribal affairs consultant and speaker, and a longtime program administrator for the United Sioux Tribes. Barry was instrumental in helping Maestro Delta David Gier, conductor of the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra, develop the groundbreaking Lakota Music Project (LMP) and served as the emcee for most LMP performances.

Rest in peace, Barry. We'll miss your performances, wit, big voice and hearty laugh. Pierre Players is a better organization and the arts in South Dakota are stronger because of your involvement. ■



Little Players Offers Children's Theater, Workshops, Drama Club



Little Players Children's Workshop

Little Players Children's Theatre started out last year undertaking Shakespeare in the third to fifth grade workshop. Twenty students learned about Shakespeare's life and four of his most famous plays: "Macbeth," "A Midsummer's Night Dream," "Hamlet" and "Romeo and Juliet." The students all learned the "To be or not to be" scene from "Hamlet," learned medieval language and insults, and did skits with costumes in preparation to perform a condensed version of "Macbeth" for their family and friends.

Keeping with a theme of biographies, the kindergarten to second grade workshop was "Theater on the Prairie." Of the 13 students, 11 were new to Little Players. They learned about Laura Ingalls Wilder and toured the Grand Opera House. Improv games taught them about the theater and developed their acting skills. The students acted out one of the stories from the books, "Dance at Grandpa's (Little House Prequel)" for friends and family.



Middle School Drama Club

Little Players' Middle School Drama Club was packed with Pierre Players involvement this past year. Fourteen participants met once a month from September through March to discuss plays they had watched or in which they participated. They helped clean the costume storage space, watched lines during rehearsal for "Arsenic and Old Lace" and helped usher for performances before the pandemic limited attendance.

The pandemic canceled Little Players' summer camp and Drama Club field trip.

For the 2020-2021 season, Little Players is beginning with a Murder Mystery Party for the Drama Club. The third to fifth grade workshop is Pigs and Wolves, involving two versions retelling the classic "The Three Little Pigs," in which the students will build their own set and costumes. Kindergarten through second graders will learn about theater and pirates in January. In August, we plan to do a full-length performance of "Charlotte's Web." ■

Spectacular Sponsors

Pierre Players' season sponsors help in our mission to bring community theater to central South Dakota. Please give the following 2019-2020 season sponsors a great thank you by shopping at their businesses or using their services.

Star Sponsors:

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Fischer Rounds & Associates
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Miracle Mile Laundry
RedRossa Italian Grille
ServiceMaster
Slumberland of Pierre

And support from:



PPCT Annual Membership Meeting

Pierre Players will hold its Annual Membership Meeting on Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020, 6 p.m., at the Grand Opera House.

Season membership holders are encouraged to attend the meeting to learn about the state of the organization and the plans for the future. ■



What to Watch for in Pierre Players 2020-2021 Season

Two on the Aisle, Three in a Van

Directed by Jennifer Kanz



"Two on the Aisle, Three in a Van." No matter how many times I say it, I STILL have to double check to make sure I got it right!

This show was written by Mary Lynn Dobson, a Jersey girl who has worked in the theater as a director, actor and playwright. This backstage comedy was performed in the New York International Fringe Festival (FringeNYC), garnering the Summer Theatre Citation for Outstanding New Play as well as being awarded Best Ensemble Cast. The play was also the winner of Northern Kentucky University's Y.E.S. Festival. In 2009 it won the Talkin' Broadway 2009 Summer Theatre Citation, Outstanding New Play award.

This 90-minute, up-beat comedy takes place at the Neighborhood Actors Summerfun Repertory Theatre, a friendly little playhouse where, due to a lack of wing space, the company spends their downtime in the parking lot around an aging hippie/now turned techie's van. Anyone who's ever seen a show may recognize some familiar characters: a stressed-out artistic director grappling for funding, a wanna-be diva who's realizing her ingenue expiration date has just about passed, a board member's nephew vying to direct the musicals with a Tarantino spin, and the "I'm no chorus boy" chorus boy who thinks every show should have a kick line—including "The Glass Menagerie." These are just some of the egos and obstacles that fall into the lap of Mike, a nice-guy director who ends up with far more than he bargained for.

These unsung heroes who call the show, man the spotlights, sew the costumes, count the tickets and suffer through every flubbed line, forgotten prop and missed cue will give you a celebratory peek at what goes on behind the scenes of a community theater production.

I am looking forward to directing such a fun show and have no doubt you will enjoy it, too!
(Some language and situations may be unsuitable for young audiences.)

Same Time, Next Year

Directed by Leah Hilsabeck-Lowrey



"Same Time, Next Year" tells the story of Doris and George, two people who meet over dinner at a cozy resort restaurant

and quickly find themselves in love—despite both being married to other people. Each unable to imagine a life without the other, the two agree to meet up the same weekend each year.

This story has been a part of my life since I was a little girl. I grew up watching my mother's old video cassette starring Alan Alda and Ellen Burstyn over and over in my living room. I learned to play the theme song on the piano when I was 12, and I memorized the better part of the script for acting classes in college.

It's the type of story that gets under your skin. An affair that somehow comes out feeling pure and true. Over 25 years, we grapple through joy and grief and guilt and compassion. We watch Doris and George grow and change and find themselves again and again. Be prepared to laugh until you cry, and then laugh as you cry, as you rediscover what it truly means to love.

A Little Piece of Heaven

Directed by Kathy Riedy



As a director, I have always been drawn to, and look for, shows that are funny and heartwarming. And so I brought "A Little Piece of

Heaven" to Pierre Players Season Select Committee last fall. At the time, with a lot of discord in the world, I said I just wanted to do a "happy little show." Little did we know of the chaos to come.

This play is about people finding something they have lost, about relationships and learning to trust each other. It's also about how we choose to cope with what life hands us, expected or not. It's my sincere hope that "A Little Piece of Heaven" helps us all find a little bit of calm, a little bit of happy and a whole lot of enjoyment.

Radium Girls

Directed by Joshua Penrod



I love shows that inspire, educate and entertain audiences. "Radium Girls" fits that criteria perfectly.

Inspired by true events in the 1920s, the production follows the "Radium Girls," real women who worked as dial painters. Each dial painter falls ill from the dangers of the radium paint used in their work—dangers their employer, U.S. Radium Corp., kept secret from them.

It is up to the Radium Girls to take their former employer to court. Time does not seem to be on their side, and U.S. Radium Corp.

Continued on next page



knows this. The brave dial painters must fight against time in order to get justice.

What makes this production most exciting is the true events used to create it. There are real people and places being put on the stage to tell an inspiring story. We are very fortunate that there are records available to assist the production in depicting everything with as much justice as possible.

I think everyone involved with the production will be inspired by what they learn while being involved. The hope is that this will also inspire our audiences when they see the play.

Man of La Mancha

Directed by Jennifer Kanz

"Man of La Mancha" was originally written by Dan Wasserman as a non-musical tele-play in 1959. It was later turned



into a musical making its Broadway debut in 1965 where it ran for 2,328 performances and won five Tony Awards including Best Musical. The characters, as well as segments of the storyline, were based on the world-renowned classic novel "Don Quixote." Written by Don Miguel Cervantes in 1615, it continues to hold the honor of being the second-greatest-selling book in world history

In "Man of La Mancha," Cervantes has been thrown into prison during the Spanish Inquisition. The inmates put him "on trial" in their own fashion, and as Cervantes pleads his defense by telling the story of Don Quixote, a play begins within "the play" as fellow inmates begin to participate in the story itself.

This play urges one to ask, "Do I believe what I see or do I see what I believe?"

One of the characters, Sancho, makes the remark, "There's no use blaming my eye. It doesn't make the world, it only sees it."

And yet in another place Don Quixote declares, "Facts are the enemy of truth."

It begs us to ask ourselves if it is better to face the world, in all its bleakness, and see it for what it is? The pervading question is that of idealism versus realism and in the story itself, a case for both can be made.

Audience members will not only be touched and enlightened by this expertly-woven tale, but thoroughly entertained and enchanted by the endearing musical score that has produced some of theaters most beloved songs like "I, Don Quixote," "Dulcinea" and "The Impossible Dream." ■

Pierre Players Receives Crucial Funding from SD Arts Council



Pierre Players is the recipient of two grants through the South Dakota Arts Council, which will provide us with some much-needed funding this next year.

Pierre Players was awarded a \$5,199 Arts Challenge Grant, which provides general operating support to South Dakota's eligible nonprofit arts organizations in presenting a season of activities that serve the general public.

Grant funding is designed to create and sustain partnerships with South Dakota arts organizations that share the public values and support the long-range goals of the South Dakota Arts Council, recognize and assist arts programming and services that contribute to the quality of life in the applicant's

community or region, reward arts organizations that produce creative and innovative arts activities, and encourage long-range planning efforts of nonprofit arts organizations.

In addition, Pierre Players was awarded a \$5,000 Emergency Assistance Grant from the South Dakota Arts Council. The grant is being distributed with support from the National Endowment for the Arts through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act to help secure jobs and keep nonprofit organizations in South Dakota's statewide arts community operational in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

Established in 1966 and funded by the South Dakota Legislature and National Endowment for the Arts, the South Dakota Arts Council serves South Dakotans and their communities through the arts. ■

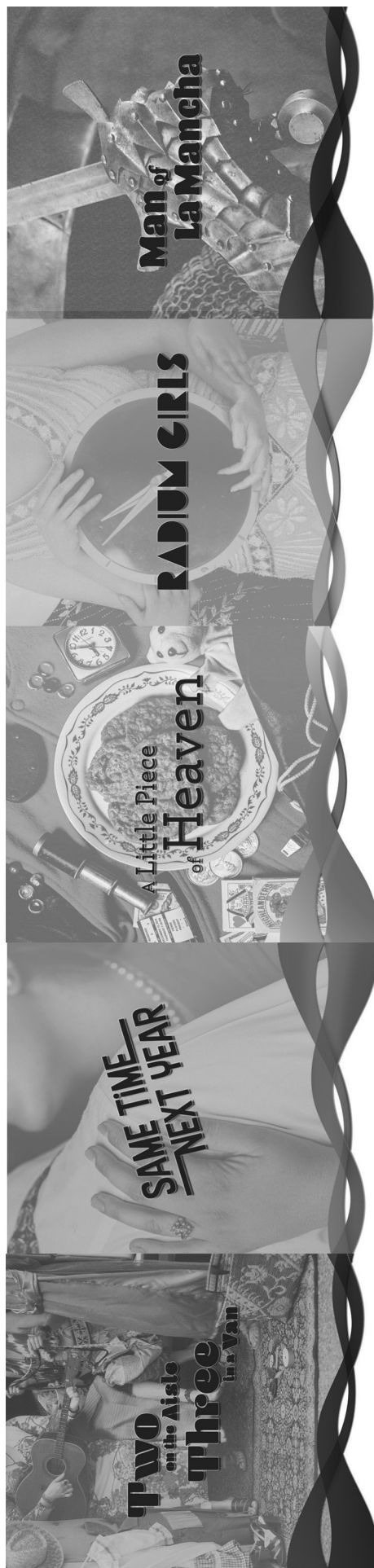
Make a Donation

Pierre Players Community Theatre remains dedicated to its mission of enriching, educating and entertaining central South Dakota by engaging volunteers and audience members in the process and product of quality theater.

You can support Pierre Players in this mission through making a Charitable Giving Tax Deduction, which we will use to help cover the monthly costs to keep our doors open during this pandemic.

The Charitable Giving Tax Deduction is an "above-the-line" or universal charitable giving incentive for contributions made in 2020 of up to \$300. This provision will now allow all non-itemizer taxpayers to deduct charitable contributions from their tax return. Additionally, the stimulus legislation lifts the existing cap on annual contributions for itemizers from 60% of adjusted gross income (AGI) to 100% of AGI for contributions made in 2020.

To make a donation, visit www.pierreplayers.com/donate. ■



Two on the Aisle Three in a Van

Comedy by Mary Lynn
Dobson
Directed by Jennifer Kanz

SAME TIME NEXT YEAR

Comedy by Bernard Slade
Directed by Leah Hilsabeck-
Lowrey

A Little Piece of Heaven

Dramatic Comedy by
Matthew Carlin
Directed by Kathy Riedy

RADIUM GIRLS

Drama by D.W. Gregory
Directed by Joshua Penrod

Man of La Mancha

Musical written by Dale
Wasserman, music by Mitch
Leigh, lyrics by Joe Darion
Directed by Jennifer Kanz

October 2-4*, 2020
(Fri, Sat, Sun*)

October 8-10, 2020
(Thu, Fri, Sat)

Grand Opera House,
Pierre, SD

Tickets on Sale: Sept. 21

Preview Sep. 30, 7:30
p.m. Preview tickets are
\$5 at the door.

Auditions: August 10,
7 p.m. at the Grand
Opera House. There are
roles for six males and
four females.

Presented by special
arrangement with Samuel French.

December 4-6*, 2020
(Fri, Sat, Sun*)

December 10-12, 2020
(Thu, Fri, Sat)

Grand Opera House,
Pierre, SD

Tickets On Sale: Nov. 23

Preview Dec. 2, 7:30
p.m. Preview tickets are
\$5 at the door.

Auditions: October 12, 7
p.m. at the Grand Opera
House. There are roles for
one male and one fe-
male.

Presented by special
arrangement with Samuel French.

February 26-28*, 2021
(Fri, Sat, Sun*)

March 4-6, 2021
(Thu, Fri, Sat)

Grand Opera House,
Pierre, SD

Tickets On Sale: Feb. 15

Preview Feb. 24, 7:30
p.m. Preview tickets are
\$5 at the door.

Auditions: December 14,
7 p.m. at the Grand
Opera House. There are
roles for seven males,
eight females, and one
male or female.

Presented by special
arrangement with Heuer
Publishing.

April 30-May 2*, 2021
(Fri, Sat, Sun*)

May 6-8, 2021
(Thu, Fri, Sat)

Grand Opera House,
Pierre, SD

Tickets On Sale: April 19

Preview April 28, 7:30
p.m. Preview tickets are
\$5 at the door.

Auditions: March 1, 7
p.m. at the Grand Opera
House. There are roles for
four to five males and
five females.

Presented by special
arrangement with Dramatic
Publishing.

July 16-18*, 2021
(Fri, Sat, Sun*)

July 22-25*, 2021
Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun*)

Grand Opera House,
Pierre, SD

Tickets On Sale: July 5

Preview July 13, 7:30
p.m. Preview tickets are
\$5 at the door.

Auditions: May 16, May
17, & May 18, 7 p.m.
There are roles for
six male and five female
principals and numerous
supporting and ensem-
ble roles.

Presented by special
arrangement with Tams-Witmark.

Pierre Players Community Theatre | **605.224.7826** | P.O. Box 933 | Grand Opera House | 109 S. Pierre St | Pierre, SD 57501



www.Pierreplayers.com



Pierre Players 2020-2021 Season Membership

To pay by credit card through our secure online portal, please visit:

<https://pierreplayers.com/involvement/seasonmembership/>.

Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

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Select	Type	Tickets Per Show	Name in Program	Price
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Associate Producer Single	1	Yes	\$60
<input type="checkbox"/>	General Membership	2	No	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/>	General Membership Single	1	No	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior (62+)	2	No	\$70
<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior Single/Student	1	No	\$35

Please send check to Pierre Players, PO Box 933, Pierre, SD 57501.





PIERRE PLAYERS COMMUNITY THEATRE

PO Box 933
Pierre, SD 57501



PIERRE PLAYERS COMMUNITY THEATRE

PIERRE PLAYERS

at the Grand Opera House

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109 S. Pierre St.
Pierre, SD 57501

605.224.7826
info@pierreplayers.com
www.pierreplayers.com

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Pierre Players Could Not Exist Without Our Season Members

Thank you for supporting Pierre Players Community Theatre and attending our performances! We ask that you continue to show your support of Pierre Players, especially during these new and changing times, by purchasing your 2020-2021 season membership.

A Pierre Players membership is still one of the best deals in town. You get more than tickets to the season performances—you get a theater experience that you won't soon forget.

Purchasing a season membership benefits both Pierre Players and our patrons. Pierre Players benefits because we have a secure income base for our upcoming season and expenses.

Patrons benefit because a season membership provides a discount of about 33% versus the price of individual tickets. Patrons who purchase their season memberships before the start of "Two on the Aisle, Three in a Van" on Oct. 2 will also receive a free ticket to bring along a friend or family member.

In addition, season members receive a membership card and a postcard reminder of each show prior to the Box Office opening.

New this year, you can purchase your membership online and pay via credit card at www.pierreplayers.com/involvement/membership. Or complete the membership form in this newsletter and mail it with a check. ■