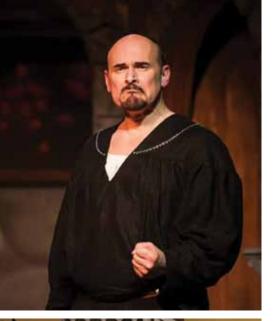
# S\*U\*N\*S\*E\*T PLAYHOUSE

# 2013-2014 Annual Report







# S\*U\*N\*S\*E\*T PLAYHOUSE

# Vision Statement

The Sunset Playhouse is a permanent center for quality entertainment and education in the performing arts for our community of all ages.

# Mission Statement

The Sunset Playhouse is a not for profit performing arts organization which produces quality live theatre and entertainment for our community. Our School for the Arts educates children and adults, developing their talents in all aspects of theatre arts.

# Value Statement

We believe in a quality experience, in all areas of The Playhouse, in an atmosphere of integrity and mutual respect.

Terms we associate with our Values are:

INTEGRITY

RESPECT

QUALITY

JOY

NURTURE

### *Managing Director* Marla Eichman



I am extremely pleased to report that our 2013-14 season was the best we have had in decades! This is because of a tremendous amount of work, support, and focus. Thank you to everyone who helped us fulfill our mission to produce quality live theater, both community and

professional, and outstanding theater education within our School for the Arts. All five of Sunset revenue sources did well. These include the Furlan Auditorium main stage plays and musicals, the professional Musical MainStage concert series, our professional SideNotes Cabaret series, Sunset's original **bug in a rug** Children's Theater, and The School For The Arts.

Additional revenue sources include facility rentals for productions such as Theater Red and Four Guyz in Dinner Jackets, as well as private users. We have sought and obtained sponsors for some productions and continue to look for additional sponsors and advertisers.

Seventy-five percent of our revenue comes from ticket sales. The other 25% comes from contributions and grants. We could not provide this great community entertainment and education without you! During the 2013–14 season, we received a donation of \$30,000, in addition to donations from over 500 total contributors. Your continued support is what energizes and sustains the Playhouse.

Volunteers, staff, patrons, and contributors are all part of the "Sunset Playhouse family." Our 14-member Board of Directors, Sunset staff led by Nancy Visintainer-Armstrong, and our 600+ volunteers are essential to the success of the Playhouse.

We have entitled our 2014-15 season ACT:

- A for our need to increase the awareness of Sunset
- C for cultivating our donor universe
- **T** for transitioning Sunset to the major entertainment center of the west side

Thank you for a great season. I look forward to continuing the 2014-15 season with a smile on my face. This Annual Report provides a glimpse back at our successful 2013-14 season and an exciting preview of our 2014-15 season.

See you at the Playhouse!

Marto J Cichmann

## Community Board of Directors 2014/2015

#### Marla Eichman – President

BS degree University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee MBA Degree University of Michigan Leadership America Class of 1995 AT&T Numerous mid to executive level positions over 30 years Covad Communications – V.P. of Operations Board of Directors – Woman's Clubs of Wisconsin

#### Spencer Mather – Vice President

Attended Citadel Theatre School – Canada 12 years of professional acting experience in radio, television and other theatrical productions Securant Bank & Trust and 13 years of employment in financial industry

#### Paul Armstrong – Treasurer

BFA degree in Theatre from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Graduate work in business at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Owner of Best Electric Service Inc.

#### **Richard Katschke – Secretary**

BS Journalism Northern Illinois University MA Communications Theory and Performing Arts Northeastern Illinois University Associate Vice President of Public Affairs – Medical College of Wisconsin Board of Directors Skylight Theatre Board of Directors Milwaukee Chamber Theatre Budget allocation and workplace giving committee UPAF

#### Bob Dude – Member at Large

BA in Economics Lawrence University MBA and MS in Accounting University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee 21 years in U.S. Naval Intelligence Office 22 years Executive VP and CFO for Family Health Systems Member Senior Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) Board Member and Treasurer Historic Milwaukee Faculty, Learning in Retirement

#### Mary Gensler – Member at Large

BBA degree in Marketing from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee US Bank for 37 years currently Wealth Management Division

#### Donald Rolfs – Member at Large

BS degree Iowa State University MBA Marquette University Alcoa 14 years Wisconsin Electric Power 27 years Elm Brook Little League BOD and Commissioner President Kiwanis Club of Elm Grove

#### Sharon Rise – Member at Large

BA and MA – Communications degree in Theatre and Communication from Marquette University VP Development Next Door Foundation VP Development Blood Center of Wisconsin Association of Fund Raising Executives Association of Marquette University Women

#### **Richard Schilffarth**

BBA degree University of Wisconsin-Madison Graduate work in Business University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Received Money Management Institute's "Pioneer Award" for structuring investment consulting and creating the Wrap Fee alternative to commissions in Financial Services Industry Lectured at Wharton School of Business and Graduate School of Business at University of Wisconsin-Madison

Board positions - Friends of Art, Culinary Institute of America, Skylight Theatre

#### Lee Szczepanski – Member at Large

Graduated Waukesha Area Technical College Machinist at K.H.S. America Journeyman Board – Gill and Wing Club

#### Nora Werra – Member at Large

BA degree University of Wisconsin-Madison SPHR certification as Senior Professional in Human Resources Management Human Resources Institute Certified Management Consultant 25 years in HR management Trustee Mary Finnigan Art Endowment Fund Board – St. Catherine's Residence Friends

David DeAngelis – Ex Office Member Manager Village of Elm Grove

#### **Nancy Visintainer-Armstrong**

Artistic Director – Sunset Playhouse

### Artistic Director Nancy Visintainer-Armstrong



The 2013-14 Sunset Playhouse season has proved to be both an artistic and a financial success.

Over 31,000 patrons enjoyed performances in our Furlan Auditorium Productions, Musical MainStage Concert Series, SideNotes Cabaret series, and

**bug in a rug** Children's Theater Series. The Sunset Playhouse School for the Arts brought a record-number of students through our doors and offered classes, camps, and workshops including improvisation, acting, musical theater, and stage combat. Going forward, we expect these numbers to increase as awareness of Sunset Playhouse continues to grow.

Three of our shows: INHERIT THE WIND, IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE, AND I HATE HAMLET were produced with the benefit of Corporate Sponsors and over 250 donors contributed \$170,000 to the Playhouse operations and capital improvement funds. We are also very proud to be a UPAF Affiliate organization.

The heart of the Sunset is, of course, our volunteers. Over 500 dedicated people have contributed to the success of the Playhouse by donating more than 25,000 volunteer hours during the 2013-14 season. We will actively seek and welcome new volunteers during the 2014-15 Season as we continue to grow and prosper.

Janey Vicintainer - anotiony

# Sunset Playhouse Staff

Nancy Visintainer-Armstrong Artistic Director

Kristen Kraklow Production Volunteer Coordinator

Erika Navin Director of Education

**Stephanie Rejman-Staufenbeil** Box Office Manager

Michelle Tucker Operations Manager

Ann Thoppil Lead House Manager

# Volunteers

Ben Adickes Teresa Drews Conni Aehl Diana Alioto Zoe Drews MaryAnn Dude Bob Dude Jennifer Allen Sailor Ames Rvan Dudlev Sean Duncar Sara Ames Laura Anderle Marguerite Dunn Randall Anderson Sophia Eckdale-Dudley Kathy Andrews James Anschutz Chloe Eckdale-Dudley Nicole Eckdale-Dudley Carol Anschutz Timothy E. Ecklor Erica Edquist Paul Armstrong Ruth Arnell Marla Eichmann Ronald Au Teri Eisenhauer Barbara Auer Jan Endries Pam Erdmann Beverly Ayers Jackie Bach Geri Eserkaln Dave Falcon Carolyn Fasse lake Badovski Catherine Baerwald Richard Ballard Hannah Fedor Joyce Ballard Lily Baranowski Barbara Figi Grace Fischer Audrey Barr Nicole Fische Evelyn Barta Jeff Barta Tom Flanagan Tom Flynn Melissa Barta Pat Flynn Gary Foss Diane Foss Libby Barthe Nora Barton Rebecca Beaudoin Jane Foster Dana Fralick Robert Renish Belva Benish Ralph Frattura Susan Freedy Linda Berger Emily Berge Tamra Fricke Susan Bickler Mark Frohna Charlotte Binkowski Sue Fromm Carol Fuchs Donald Birschel Karen Fuchs Beverly Fula Dee Birschel Mary Bivens Beth Bland Mary Gabrhel John Blaszał Thomas Gale Jan Blaszak John Galobich Jennifer Boettcher Lauren Gantenbein Jim Bojar Paula Garcia Katie Boia Ralph Garcia Calyn Bolton Jared Bonow Colleen Geddes Mary Gensler Jasmine Bonow Rick Borger Tim Gensler Elizabeth Gersonde Emma Borkowski Carrie Gray Meg Borkowski Pam Gray Margues Bradford Marguerite Greinke Jessica Gromacki Breanne Brennan Jim Brill Linda Grunau Jerry Broitzman Carolann Grzybowski Erin Brophy John Brotherhood Jim Handlos Connie Handlos Laurene Harschutz Mary Brozynski Michael Bruening Donna Hart Elaine Brushafer Dana Brzezinski Mia Hartounian Natalie Hartwig Danielle Buianovich Pat Hasenzah Dick Bulgrin Mary Bullamore Brandon Haut Janice Hector Charlie Burbach Lauri Henning Rayven Burdette Elaine Herro Paul Burkard Janice Camus Molly Hess Peggy Heuler Lucy Hilgendorf Bill Hitt Bud Caprioli Len Carini Laura Hoefakker Sharon Carini Betty Hoffmann Alexi Carlson Ed Carroll Ashley Hohnsteir Beverly Carroll Alexandra Hollander Cohl Carter-Wright Kylie Homar Alvssa Casarez Karissa Homar Jean Casey Thom Cauley Barb Horder Ozzy Houck Charles Cerny Allison Chicorel Keith Huennekens Fran Hughes Gladys Chmiel Michael Chobanoff Nathan Hunt Spencer Hutchinson David Chorski Ted Hutton Tairre Christopherson Kathleen Cleary Monica Ianelli Kathlyn Inkmann Mike Cody Jean Cody Pat Jablonowski Thatcher Jacobs Roberta Coles Keona Jacobs Raj Jadhav Dorothea Collins Lukas Condie Scott Jaeger Parker Cristan Maddy Janick Laci Crow Jaclyn Janowski Joanne Cunningham Svdnev Johnson Megan Cunningham Tyler Johnson Jonathan Curvin Alex Johnson Donna Daniels Nancy Daniels Susan Johnson Mike Johnson Judy Dannenbrink Dave DeAngelis Marie Johnson Bill Jonas Joe Juknialis Barbara Decker Selena Deer Shirley Delahunt Karen Jurek Joan Kalinoski Carol Dimitraiades Diane Kallas Nancy Kay Dlouhy George Katsekes Arlene Dobner Grace Katsekes Casey Dobson Kathy Katsekes Fiona Dolan Dick Katschke James Katzenmeyer John Dolphin Carol Dolphin Catherine Kearn Shirley Dominitz Jim Donaldson Karen Kegel Nancy Kelley

Paula Keppeler Judy Kern Kate Ketelhohn Julie Ketelhohn Charlie Ketelhohr Claire Kitzerow Rebecca Kleefisch Ella Rose Kleefisch Violet Kleefisch Aaron Klein Philip Klinker Kathy Klug Andy Klug Matt Knudson Mary Knudten Kathy Koberstein Patricia Kobus Jake Koch Mark Koch Bridget Koch Scott Kopischke Kris Kordus Darleen Kosmatka Bonnie Krah Kristen Kraklow Mary Krauss Sarah Krenzien Grace Krueger Heidi Krueger Joan Kuhlthau Ellie Kumer Beth Kumer Donna Kummei Beverly Kuntzsch Reggie Kurschner Christopher Kurtz Marge Kurtz Jessica Kveen Marjorie Laflin Lillian Lakritz Jonathan LaMack Jenny LaMack Nikki Lemier Sam Lemme Danielle Lemmermann Ashley Levells Ann Levinson Mike Lindgren Isaac Lindner Nathan Lindner Renee Lindner **Ben Lisowski** Clayton Lokken Mary Lokken Gail Loosen Judith Looze Bryce Lord Dolores Lorenz Amie Losi Susan Loveridge Jim Loveridae Ted Ludwig Judy Ludwig Tommy Lueck Nikki Lueck David Mackinson Molly MacMillan Brvan Madson Bryanna Madson Lauree Madson Kurt Magoon Jim Mallmann Marika Marklin Chris Martin Drew Martin George Cook Tamara Martinsek Debbie Marx Keith Mar Spencer Mather Casey Matson Donovan McBride Terri McCoy Mark McGuire Molly McKay Beth McKay Aaron McLaughlin Lisa McLaughlin Marty L. McNamee Judy Meier Bill Miller Aidan Mille Allyson Mills Patty Mills Rudy Miskowitch Liz Mistele Bob Molenda Joyce Molenda Melissa Morgenstern Jennifer Morris Octavia Morton Stuart Mott Chris Muelle Dave Muelle Karie Mueller Debi Mumford Gaby Musickant Larry Myre Julie Myre Lori Nappe Judy Narlock

Maria Nasby Jeannie Nazario Mike Nazario Allyson Nemec Sally Nicholson Pamela Niespodziani Lisa Nordin Dennis Novak Regan Nugent Esther O'Brien Mary H. O'Brien Joyce O'Connor Nancy Olson Diane Ormsby Jim Padovano Sue Page Samantha Paige (Deibler) Bea Pamperin Scott Pasbrig Matthew J. Patten Jessica Pawlak **Rick Peplinski** Patti Peplinski Terrie Peschman Patricia Peters Eileen Peterson Ruth Peterson Peggy Peterson-Ryan Bella Petropoulos Kathleen Pett Paul Pfannensteil Don Philipps Sue Philipps Michael Pocaro Ron Pogodzinski Jan Pogodzinski Joan Polczinski Mackenzie Possage Michael Post Betty Powers Gerry Powers Jan Pritzl Landon Quinney Hannah Quinney Tom Raidy Sidney Rakowiecki Donald Ralfs Rob Rasmussen Alicia Rice Karen Richards Mary Ricklefs Nancy Ring Paxtyn Robarge Jenny Robarg Karol Roberts David Robins Dean Rockstad Mary Rockstad Jason Rose Mikhela Rosko Lauren Roskopf Julie Rozek-Brady Rebecca Rueche Dominic Russo Mary Rynders Leila Sabree Raenetta Sabree Beverly Saunders Bob Scanlan Richard Schilffarth Al Schimel Mona Schmalz Aaron Schmidt **Bud Schneider** Carol Schneider Mike Schneider Linda Schneide Mary Jo Schoepke Grea Schoepke Michael Schottle Karen Schroeder Barb Schuldt Dave Schumacher Diane Schumacher Chris Schwartz David Scrobel Dolores Scrobel Pam Seccombe Dorene Sedlar Trevor Seefeldt Jeremiah Shaw Aubrey Shaw Jennifer Shaw Anthony Shine Emma Shingledecker Kim Shingledecker Emily Shircel Jim Śhkiele Bonny Shkiele Sue Siegert Aaron Siegmann A.J. Simon Kelly Simon Jim Skalitzky Lee Skalitzky DJ Slater Danny Slattery Margaret Slavinsky Doug Smedbron leff Smerz

Ken Smith

Katrina Smith Gabe Smith Julia Snider Joseph Z Snyder Isabelle Snyder Lisa Snvder Kathy Śobottke Sharon Sohner Amber Soik Alex Sparks Mary Sparks Becky Spice Joyce Sponcia Jo F. St. Clair Lee Stalter Linda Stalter Jim Stankovsky Edith Stankovsky Don Starr Jolie Steege Jenny Steeger Tracy Stefansk Jamee Stefanski Adam Steffan Julie Steinbach Stanley Steingold Susan Steinke Dennis Steinke Amanda Stellberg Hannah Stellick Phil Stepanski Zayda Stephens Kim Stephens Jonathan Stewart Danita Stich Antoinette Stikl Rich Stopczynski Kathy Stopczynski Diane Stopczynski Ann Stover Ron Strampe Judy Strampe Deanna Strasse Diana Susa Jan Szczepanski Lee Szczepanski Robert Szyba Sharon Szyba Marianne Szymanski Max Szymański Cobi Tappa Marsha Tenwinkel Lois Tesch Karen Thakei Taylor Thede Ava Thomann Patrick Thompson Lyle Thompson Aubrey Trecek Rhonda Trickey Paul Troglia Sheri Turnacliff Maddison Underberg Chris Unger Nancy Unz (Bahling) Dave Vanness Donna Vanness Karen Vaughn Cindy Velcheck Judy Vento Glenn Villa Nancy Armstrong Emily Wacker Schultz Kaylyn Wagner John Wagner Martin Wallne Kathy Warne Julia Warner Carol Wehrley Betty Weier Mitch Weindorf Sheri Weitner Shirley Wendt Tom Wendt Carla Werner Nora Werra Pat Westen Mark Westen Gary Westerbeek Kathy Westerbeek Carol White Sami Williams Annette Williams Cole Winston Lila Wixom Lindsay Woelbing Pepper Wood Susan Wustrack Georgia Yanicke Dan Žeck Phyllis Zeck Brian D. Zelinski John Ziino Pat Ziino Erica Ziino Jeanne Zimmerman Susan Zuern Madeline Baire Will Bowers

## 2013-2014 Season



**SideNotes Cabaret** 



The Twenty Greatest Hits of Johnny Cash



A Rhode Family Christmas



BoyGirlBoyGirl



A Gershwin Songbook

# *financial Overview 2013-2014* Balance Sheet

Current Assets Cash Accounts Receivable Other Current Assets	\$112,636 1,813 <u>20,291</u>	
Total Current Assets Fixed Assets		\$134,742
Building & Equipment Depreciation	\$2,508,546 <u>1,689,287</u>	
Total Fixed Assets		<u>\$954,001</u>
Total Assets		\$954,001
Current Liabilities		
Advance Ticket Sales	\$166,300	
Line of Credit	120,000	
Other Current Liabilities	<u>127,363</u>	
Total Current Liabilities		\$341,689
Mortgage on Building		<u>578,944</u>
Total Liabilities		920,632
Net Assets		33,369
Total Net Asset Less Liabilities		\$954,001



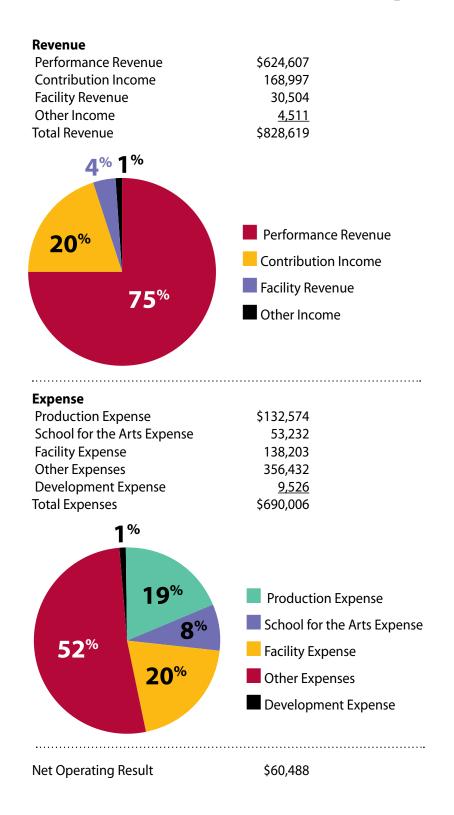
# The sun didn't set but shone on the Sunset Playhouse.

The 2013/2014 season was profitable and the balance sheet looks good. Performance revenue was 75% of the total Sunset revenue with contributions contributing just 20%. Contributions at The Rep and the Skylight Theatre make up over 50% of total revenue. Total revenues at the Sunset Playhouse were up 17.3% over the 2012/2013 season and we ended the year with \$112,636 of cash.

The Sunset's assets are more than what shows on the balance sheet. These off balance sheet assets include 30,176 patrons, 611 volunteers, 500 students at the Sunset School for the Arts, 255 donors, 169 actors, 11 members of the Board of Directors and a dedicated staff of six talented people. In addition, the School's Professional Children's Series **bug in a rug** played to 1,325 children at the Sunset Playhouse and over 12,000 Milwaukee Public School children at their 61 traveling shows.

The future of the Sunset Playhouse is bright.

# *Financial Overview 2013-2014* Revenue and Expense Statement



# Sunset Playhouse School for the Arts

Dear Sunset Stars:

I recently had a Sunset School for the Arts graduate, who is now studying Education/Theater Education in college, ask me a few guestions about my job. She asked, "Why do you think theater is important for kids?" My answer was easy." I believe arts education enables dream-making." I think it inspires selfconfidence and self-discipline. I think it can enhance social development. I think the arts have the ability to reach children who otherwise may be unreachable. I think arts education serves as a link between thoughts and actions. It offers the opportunity to use (and enjoy) your imagination. I think it asks us to see things in new ways and nurtures team-building skills. It teaches children to respect others' ideas and viewpoints, and it prepares children to think creatively. The arts are another way of looking, another way of perceiving, and another way of knowing. My hope for the Sunset Playhouse School for the Arts is that it offers opportunities for all families to make the arts an important part of their lives – through volunteering, attending, supporting, and/or participating in classes and performances.

The 2013-14 Sunset Playhouse School for the Arts year brought a record number of students through our doors and offered classes, camps, and workshops including improvisation, acting, musical theater, and stage combat. Our sessions reached over 350 students. Sunset Playhouse **bug in a rug** Children's theater performed for 1325 patrons at public performances and reached over 12,000 students at our 61 traveling shows.

We look forward to another season of dream-making. Thank you for your continued support of the arts and arts education programming. The School for the Arts has been providing performing arts education and children's theater for over 50 years, one of the bedrocks of Sunset Playhouse's vision as a theater created fully for the community. The school's mission is to provide challenging arts education programs that enable youth to acquire knowledge and skills in the performing arts, as well as gain lifelong interests in the arts and culture. We provide a fun, safe, artistic environment for our students. We nurture selfconfidence, encouraging students to develop their own unique skills and a strong sense of commitment and teamwork.

### **Sunset Playhouse School for the Arts**

The School for the Arts offers a wide variety of performing arts opportunities for children ages 2 – 18.

- Weekly classes are conducted during a Fall, Winter, and Summer Session. Children can choose from a range of classes in acting, improvisation, musical theater, creative drama, and writing.
- A variety of performing arts camps are offered during the summer. Families can choose from our creative drama camp, stage combat camp, or our two week summer stars camp.
- Students can also attend our summer performance camp. Sunset Playhouse produces an original musical each summer where in one week students audition, rehearse, create scenery, make props, and assist in finding costumes. On Saturday they sell out two performances to family and friends.
- Our Junior Musical Session produces a full musical on our main stage. This Junior Musical rehearses and performs at the same time as a main stage production. This allows for the opportunity for our main stage cast and crew to mentor our junior cast and crew.









# Sunset Playhouse School for the Arts

#### **Sunset Playhouse Actletes Troupe**

Named by Stephanie Seymour, a sophomore at Eisenhower High School, the Sunset Actletes program began in September of 2010, and was made possible that year by a grant from the Elm Grove Junior Guild. Actletes has been a great success for area high school students. The Wisconsin Arts Board has funded the program for our 2014-15 season. Currently, 15 students from different high schools work together as a group and with our Sunset Actletes coach to engage in all things theatrical.



Open to all high school students, the Actletes program is two-fold:

- theatrical education through workshops and classes
- theatrical education through production of performances

With an Actletes coach as a resource/mentor, the Actletes run every aspect of decision-making, including management and execution of all steps of the program.

#### Outreach

The Sunset Playhouse School for the Arts has given young people in the area their first introduction to arts and culture through innovative and accessible classes, community presentations, and public performances. The Sunset Playhouse School for the Arts is a resource to schools, organizations, and the community at large for theater workshops, classroom curriculum enhancement, high interest days, career days, building tours, volunteer experiences, and even performing arts-based birthday parties.

### Sunset Playhouse bug in a rug Children's Theater

The Sunset Playhouse School for the Arts produces a Children's Theater series called bug in a rug, an interactive theater experience for the whole family targeted for children ages 2 – 8. Each year bug in a rug produces three original musicals

created by Playhouse professional staff and artists. One musical is based on an original idea, one on children's literature, and one on a fairytale/fable. Every musical has a theme and educational points targeted for children ages 2 - 8. Students attending bug in a rug performances



have a great time while they learn something (ex. using teamwork, overcoming fears, handling bullying, hard work, and perseverance) and gain an appreciation for live theater.

Each Sunset Playhouse bug in a rug production includes public performances at Sunset Playhouse for one weekend and then tours to area elementary schools, preschools, libraries, and community centers.

#### Alan Furlan Memorial Scholarship Fund

The Alan Furlan Scholarship of Sunset Playhouse was established in 1982 to provide financial assistance to Sunset volunteers pursuing a career or advancement in any facet of the performing arts. Named for Alan Furlan, Sunset's long-time Artistic and Managing Director, grants are supported through a variety of means including cookie sales at all performances, and gifts and donations from our audiences, members, corporate sponsors, and the community. The Scholarship Fund is administered by the Scholarship Committee and the Director of the Sunset Playhouse School for the Arts.

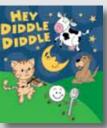
2014-2015 Season

### bug in a rug Children's Theater

2013-2014 Season

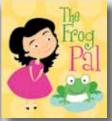






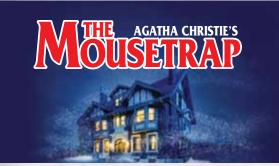






# 2014-2015 Season

### ----- Furlan Mainstage



September 11-28, 2014



December 4-31, 2014



October 23-November 16, 2014



January 22-February 8, 2015



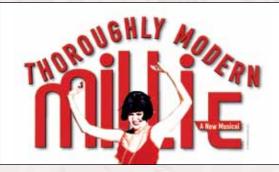
March 12-29, 2015



June 4-21, 2015



April 23-May 10, 2015



July 16-August 9, 2015

## 2014-2015 Season





RED HOT MAMA! A Tribute to Sophie Tucker October 9-11, 2014

# Jingle and Jive A Radio Rosies Holiday Special

Jingle and Jive! A Radio Rosies Holiday Special December 18-20, 2014



A Heart Full of Swing February 12-14, 2015



CAPPS Off to Hollywood April 9-11, 2015

# Sponsor a Show

There are great opportunities to sponsor a Furlan show, a Musical Mainstage concert, a Cabaret show or a bug-in-a-rug children's show. A sponsor is recognized in the program, in the advertisement for the show, at the theatre with the sponsor's name projected on the main curtain and on the Sunset website. A sponsor of the Furlan shows receives 50 tickets to the show (with more available at \$10 per seat) and the option to use the Studio Theatre for a pre show reception. There are many options for food service at the reception and liquid refreshments. Some of the Furlan sponsors continue their reception with dessert and coffee after the show. Cast members can be invited to the post performance reception.

# Program Advertisement

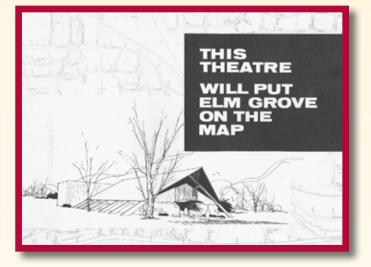
The Sunset Playhouse produces its own program. There are eight programs in a season. There are 150 performances in a season showing to 30,000 to 35,000 people. The audience of the Sunset Playhouse is predominantly Westside Metro Milwaukee, average age about 60 years of age with upper middle class income. A perfect opportunity for businesses that want to reach a very loyal customer base.



# History of Sunset Playhouse

It was the Strike Party for the Elm Grove Players production of "Teahouse of the August Moon" on Saturday, March 23, 1957, or rather early in the morning of Sunday, March 24th, when Jim Johnson suggested the building of a theatre and the creation of a community theatre. Jim, a lawyer by profession, was the heart and soul of the Elm Grove Players. At that time the Elm Grove Players had 52 couples as members, put on two plays a year and had a wonderful social agenda. Building a theatre was a big project. The first thought was to convert the St. Mary's barn which was where the Town Bank is now, to a theatre in the round. The architect, Mark Pfaller, was one of the members of the Elm Grove Players and guickly squashed that idea as not conforming to current building codes. The Sisters of St. Mary owned a parcel of land south of the Elm Grove Shopping Center which could be purchased very reasonably. Mark Pfaller was instructed to create the plans. At the same time the troika of Jim Johnson, Chairman Theatre Planning Committee, Dick Schilffarth, Chairman of the Board and Jim Gibbons, Campaign Chairman, laid out plans for a fund raising campaign in 1958. Claire Richardson's public relations firm was hired to run the fund raising campaign. The plans were completed and the fund raising goal for the project was \$100,000. Seats in the 299 seat





theatre were sold, a gold seat (aisle seat) sold for \$500 and a red seat was priced at \$250. At the end of the campaign \$67,000 had been raised. There was a slight problem, \$53,000 was in cash and \$14,000 in-kind gifts – Jim Trad's gift was the carpet for the aisles, Bob Stark gave the tile for the restrooms, etc. This demanded that the theatre be built in two stages with the future auditoriums being added later. The theatre started with a \$50,000 mortgage. The fundraising was over and to celebrate its success the Broadway Star, Mary Martin, cut a cake in the shape of the full future theatre. The excavation, was started in February of 1959. The shovel took its first bite of ground and the hole instantly filled with water. It appeared that our land was on an underground lake.

# *The excavation was started in February of 1959.*

The building was done, money was scarce and we still needed seats. New seats were beyond the budget. The Comet movie theatre on Green Bay Road and Burleigh had closed and they were auctioning off the equipment and seats. The 600 seats were auctioned off in two sets of 300 each. Ben Marcus was the only bidder for the first 300. When the second 300 seats were put up for auction, we bid the same amount Ben Marcus had bid for the first 300. The auctioneer had a very quick gavel and we had bought half the seats of the Comet Theatre. Ben Marcus needed all 600 seats. He offered to buy the seats from us and give us 300 seats he had from a defunct movie theatre in Beloit. They were stored on the third floor of the Beloit building and it took 15 trips and one speeding ticket to haul the seats to Elm Grove in a station wagon. The seats were better than expected. The unofficial women's auxiliary used putty knives to take the gum off the bottoms of the seats and made slip covers to cover the worn and stained seat backs. Yes, gold seat covers for aisle seats and red seat covers for the red seats. The community playhouse was named "Sunset Playhouse" depicting the Westside where the sun set and the telephone exchange for the west side, "Sunset 2" (which was later changed to "782"). The Sunset Playhouse was to be the home of the West Side Community Theatre.

The community playhouse was named "Sunset Playhouse" depicting the Westside where the sun set and the telephone exchange for the west side, "Sunset 2".

The first director of the Sunset Playhouse, Ian Dobbie, was hired in April 1959 with the plan that the Sunset Playhouse could parlay its \$53,000 of fundraising cash by putting on a season of summer stock. Ian Dobbie would direct and hire a cast of professional actors who would put on ten weekly shows – a new show each week for ten consecutive weeks. The West Side Summer stock was born. The basement of the Rose Bowl bowling alley was its home. It was a theatre in the round, held 250 people and if you sat in the top row you couldn't sit up straight. Ian Dobbie was the director, Claire Richardson our public relations and advertising person, and an equity minimum actor from New York was the male lead. His name was Alan Furlan. The summer stock season closed with no profit but did break even.

The Sunset Playhouse season started in September. Unfortunately, the building wasn't done, so the first show of the Sunset Playhouse was staged at the Longfellow Junior High School theatre. The show was the musical "Guys and Dolls". The theatre was completed in late February of 1960, and the first show in the new Sunset Playhouse was "Dark at the Top of the Stairs". 1960 saw the Sunsets first musical. Ian Dobbie had somehow gotten the first rights for a non professional production of "West Side Story". Ian Dobbie left in 1962 and was replaced with that equity minimum actor from New York – Alan Furlan. Alan Furlan became the personification of the Sunset Playhouse. He was Artistic Director, General Manager and Business Manager. His wonderful wife, Mary, was his assistant in all areas and ran the office. Their very attractive daughter, Nikki (now Mrs. Nikki Furlan Medice) grew up in the Sunset Playhouse. These 26 years under Alan Furlan were glory years for the theatre. The Sunset



FIRST ABOARD to start rehearsals for the West Side Community Theater's Summer stock presentation of "Once More with Feeling," is the glamorous leading lady. Elizabeth Fleming, Welcoming her to the Rosebowl, Highway 100 near Greenfield ave., in which an arena style theater is built, are Jim Gibbons (center), Jim Johnson, both theater officials, The first off-Broadway production of the hit comedy will open Tuesday, June 30, and run for five days.





Alan Furlan and Jeanette Leahy are the whole cast of the drame. "The Four Poster," that opens tonight at the West Side theater, in the Rose Bowl, highway 100 and Greenfield av. The play had a long Broadway run and was made here a movie. Playhouse was debt free, had \$300,000 in the bank and sold 90% of the house in ticket sales in the 1980's.

The Sunset Theatre continued to put on great community theatre and provide quality children's theatre after Alan retired. Thomas Somerville was the next Managing Director of the theatre. In 1990, the Sunset Playhouse's 30th year, the playhouse had operating revenue of \$371,809, excess revenue over expenses of \$12,759, \$100,000 of cash in the bank and a net worth of \$470,052. Michael Duncan followed Thomas Somerville as Managing Director in 1995.

The Board of Directors decided in 1998 to enlarge the theatre by adding the Studio Theatre and updating the entrance and lobby. The project cost \$1.4 million. The project was completed in 1999 resulting in a mortgage of \$840,000. The theatre added "Musical Mainstage" in 2004 as a source of additional revenue. Musical Mainstage produces six professional musical concerts each season. The four professionals and one of our high school or college rising stars sing the songs of a specific composer or particular era as written and produced by Susan Loveridge. The community theatre added another show each season. The professional Cabaret series was added in 2011 playing in the new Studio Theatre, all producing more entertainment for the Sunset patrons and added revenue for the Theatre. After 10 years at the helm, Michael Duncan retired as Managing Director in 2004. Mark Salentine took over in 2004 and in 2008 Jonathan West was hired as the new Managing Director. He left in 2012 and starting in 2014, Nancy Visintainer Armstrong became the Sunset's current Artistic Director.

Through these years there have been countless dedicated volunteers, members and donors whose time, money and sweat have built the theatre that exists today. Many, too many to be named here but they have our heart felt thanks and appreciation.



a Dinnel

acket

# Rental Information

It's a Party; It's a Meeting; It's a Reception. It's lights, sound and action at the Studio Theatre at the Sunset Playhouse. The Studio Theatre is an ideal rental location for any function of 125 people or less. The Studio Theatre seats 100 people and it has a complete serving kitchen. The Sunset Playhouse has a full liquor license and can provide liquid refreshments and complete bar service if requested. It is an ideal spot with more than adequate parking in the theatre's own parking lot in a convenient location just off Bluemound Blvd. in Elm Grove. The 299 seat Furlan Theatre may also be rented. It features all the theatrical elements needed for larger presentations.

Please call Nancy Visintainer-Armstrong, Artistic Director, at 262-782-4431 for details, availability and prices.

### Contributors

The Staff, Membership, and Board of Directors of Sunset Playhouse acknowledge the individuals, corporations, and foundations whose generosity confirms the importance of live theatre in our community. In recognition of this support and encouragement, we proudly list their name in thanks.

The following is a list of contributors kind enough to think of Sunset Playhouse. This list reflects those who donated to Sunset Playhouse within a year of October 31, 2014.

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