Welcome Village Players Family,

2008-2009 was a wild ride for our country and for our city. While this recession does not come close to the hardships that many experienced during the Great Depression, it does remind me of America’s ability to roll its sleeves up and get the job done when the chips are down. The “can do” optimism of the American people was pointed out by Franklin D. Roosevelt when he said: “The country needs and, unless I mistake its temper, the country demands bold, persistent experimentation. It is common sense to take a method and try it: if it fails admit it frankly and try another. But above all try something.”

So what does this have to do with theatre? The essence of community theatre is the coming together of a diverse group of people for a common goal: to “try something.” All the sore muscles and occasional bruises of the crew building the set, the lost sleep for the gal sewing last minute costume adjustments, the headache for the actor who’s been saying the same word over and over again until they get the inflection right or until their spouse threatens divorce, the near death experiences of the techies hanging lights, the increased car mileage for that person searching all over Toledo for that one special prop - all this blood, sweat and tears comes to fruition on opening night. We Vippies grin with inner satisfaction the moment the curtain opens. We finally exhale as you the audience show your appreciation with laughter, applause or perhaps even a tear. Every time the lights go up you are witnessing the product of our “persistent experimentation;” the labor of love from dozens of people standing in the shadows of the spotlight.

We invite you to join us in this collaboration. Roll up your sleeves and join us in this labor of love in any way you can. Volunteer, donate, tell your friends. Together, we make the magic of live theatre.

Your fellow laborer,
Laura Hansen
2008-2009 Season Board Members
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Andrew Black .............................................V. Pres. Production
Kara Ayers .................................................V. Pres. Publicity
Rich Chesko, Jr. ..........................................V. Pres. Development
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Jake Gordy, Laura Hansen & Frank Venda Programs
Judy Wiederhold ........................................Sold Houses
Larry Farley ...............................................Legal
Ann Veasey ..............................................Season Subscriptions
Laura Hansen .............................................Season Ticket Marketing
Derek Hansen .............................................Education
Larry Janney & Norb Mills ..............................Building & Grounds
Derek Hansen .............................................OCTA Delegate
Pam Kelso .................................................Costume Manager
J. Judson Lohman ........................................Graphic Artist
Don Weber ................................................Data Entry
Nancy Janney .............................................Playreading Committee
Frank Venda ..............................................Photographer
Judy Wiederhold .........................................Housekeeping
Jake Gordy ..............................................WebMaster
Open ..........................................................Props Manager
Would you like information on “Sold-House” opportunities at The Village Players Theatre: how your group, church, or other organization can purchase a performance and raise money through ticket sales?

Musical “Sold-Houses” are $800.00 per show; other productions are $700.00 per show. The theater seats 165 patrons. You determine the ticket price for your show and how much profit you make! A punch reception is provided at no additional cost. Show dates are limited.

Please call Judy at (734) 847-7746 for more information on “Sold Houses.”

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Anniversary?
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Birthday?
Special Occasion?

A gift of tickets to a particular show or Season Tickets may just fill the bill. For information, please call our answering service at 419-472-6817 and Ann Veasey will get back to you with all the details.
Directed by
Jennifer Rockwood

Produced by
Laura Hansen

Set Design by
Wes Skinner

Sound Design by
Derek Hansen

Light Design by
Andrew Todd

There will be one 15-minute intermission

Note: Please set all cell phones and pagers to “off” or “vibrate.”

Warning: This production contains the use of strobe lights, gunfire, and some adult content, situations, and language.
A Brief History of The Village Players Theatre

The Village Players Theatre presented its first play, *The Great Sebastians*, starring Rosemary Kahle and Edward C. Ames in 1957, in the Ottawa Hills High School. The original group performed in schools, churches and even in tents. The first musical, The Village Player’s fifth production was *Plain and Fancy*, which opened on February 25, 1958, in the Lincoln Hall at Collingwood Presbyterian Church. The show was directed by Arthur Lithgow, father of the television and movie star John Lithgow, and starred a whole cast of who’s who in Toledo.

The Theatre stopped moving from site to site in 1960. We put down roots when we purchased this building and converted it from a church to a theater. That Theatre Board took a leap of faith when they agreed to pay $45,000 for the church. However, because of their faith in the future of the theatre and the city of Toledo, literally hundreds of plays and thousands of actors have crossed these boards.

In thankful recognition of the continuing support of our members and volunteers, The Village Players Theatre culminated its 50th season celebration with the successful Rhinestone Ball held at the Toledo Botanical Gardens on June 29, 2007. In the 51st season, the Board was pleased to provide new seating for our patrons. In our 52nd season we installed a new stage for our actors. This past summer we were able to waterproof the basement, and rebuild the exterior stairwell which used to be a source of flooding. These projects are the direct result of responsible management of monies earned through Sold Houses and special donations over the years.

The Village Players Theatre has no paid year-round staff — volunteers keep it running. We take great pride in this and invite you to join us as we continue to add to the history of an organization making a significant cultural difference to our community.

Cast

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Actor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angela</td>
<td>Kate Abu-Absi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palmer</td>
<td>James M. Norman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ted</td>
<td>Bill Lancz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gert</td>
<td>Jennifer Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larry/Jessup</td>
<td>John Meadows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall</td>
<td>Matt Black</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Setting

An apartment in the Grammercy Park Section of New York City
New Years Eve

Special Thanks

- Neon Art by Phillip Hazard
- Digital Collage by Glenn Osborn
- Dresses - The Toledo Repertoire Theatre
- Tuxes - President Tuxedo
- Pistol - University of Toledo Theatre Department
- Cheryl Thomas

President P Tuxedo
Westfield/Franklin Park Mall
(Next to Master Cuts)
419.471.0974
**Theatrically Thinking**

When I was in college, all the pretty women were in the theatre, so I auditioned for a play.

- **Judd Nelson**

  Theatre is more exciting in the sense that you can actually see the audience in the eye. You know there are no takes and retakes. You have one chance to do your job... and you better do it well!

  - **Christine Lahti**

  The good die young but not always. The wicked prevail but not consistently. I am confused by life, and I feel safe within the confines of the theatre.

  - **Helen Hayes**

  But I loved the theatre and I was just doing theatre 24/7 and kept dropping courses because I didn't have the time and the chancellor thought that wasn't a good idea after awhile.

  - **Mandy Patinkin**

  I still think of myself as a stage actor. When I do film and television I try to implement what I was taught to do in theatre, to try to stretch into characters that are far from myself.

  - **Tony Shalhoub**

  When you come into the theater, you have to be willing to say, "We're all here to undergo a communion, to find out what the hell is going on in this world. If you're not willing to say that, what you get is entertainment instead of art, and poor entertainment at that.

  - **David Mamet**

  The color, the grace and levitation, the structural pattern in motion, the quick interplay of live beings, suspended like fitful lightning in a cloud, these things are the play, not words on paper, nor thoughts and ideas of an author, those shabby things snatched off basement counters at Gimbel's.

  - **Tennessee Williams**

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The Director

Jennifer Rockwood (Director) Jennifer Rockwood is the director of The University of Toledo’s First Year Experience Program in the UT Learning Collaborative. This program oversees initiatives to help first year students make the transition to college academically and socially both in and outside the classroom. Jennifer oversees the new Beginning the Academic Journey classes across 6 colleges with 170 sections each fall. She has done numerous papers and presentations on millennial student engagement and first-year students at national conferences. She also films a monthly video newsletter to students and families of current students. She also maintains a social networking site for new students and writes a blog on the First Year of College.

A UT master mentor, she taught theatre in the Department of Theater and Film for more than 20 years. She has directed over 22 plays both on campus, at The Village Players and The Toledo Repertoire Theatre. She also produces and directs plays for commercial and corporate use.

She is a recipient of grants from both the Ohio Arts Council and The Arts Commission of Greater Toledo for film production. Jennifer has worked and taught for both the Governors Gifted Summer Honors Institute, The Young Artist at Work Program, Arts Unlimited and The Lourdes College Summer Theatre Camp. Whew.

As a media consultant she has worked with CEOs of Fortune 500 companies, television anchors, as well as political candidates. She also freelances in casting, directing and location scouting for video production companies. A professional actor she has appeared in local as well as national television commercials. She has 2 young sons 25 and 27 and a big black dog and her fabulous and equally talented husband plays in a band and takes pictures. She directed True West here so many years ago she can’t remember.

The Cast

Kate Abu-Absi (Angela) is so happy to be back on the Village Player’s stage. Murder Among Friends has been a wonderful experience through out, but the best part has been once again working with two of my favorite Jennifer’s. Ladies, it’s been too long...

I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being.

-Oscar Wilde

Art is not a treasure in the past or an importation from another land, but part of the present life of all living and creating peoples.

-Franklin D. Roosevelt

What I love about theatre is that it disappears as it happens.

-Lusia Strus

All the best performers bring to their role something more, something different than what the author put on paper. That’s what makes theatre live. That’s why it persists.

-Stephen Sondheim

I figured as I got older, the good roles for women would be in the theatre. So 15 years ago I started building a Broadway career to try and develop the chops to be accepted as a great theatrical actress.

-Kathleen Turner

The money is better in films and television. But in terms of acting, theatre is more rewarding.

-Christopher Eccleston

Well the least favourite question is the one that one’s asked particularly about in Japan is what’s the difference between theatre and cinema and I think, well, that’s about eighty bucks.

-Andrew Lloyd Webber

The theatrical thinking by Theatre Logic

 Author Unknown

In is down, down is front, out is up, up is back, off is out, on is in, and of course - right is left, and left is right.

A drop shouldn’t and a block and fall does neither. A prop doesn’t and a cove has no water.

Tripping is O.K. A running crew rarely gets anywhere. A purchase line will buy you nothing. A trap will not catch anything. A gridiron has nothing to do with football.

A Strike is work (in fact a lot of work). And a green room, thank God, usually isn’t. Now that you are fully versed in theatrical terms, Break a leg... but not really!

I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being.

-Oscar Wilde

Art is not a treasure in the past or an importation from another land, but part of the present life of all living and creating peoples.

-Franklin D. Roosevelt

The word theatre comes from the Greeks. It means the seeing place. It is the place people come to see the truth about life and the social situation.

-Stella Adler

Free speech means the right to shout ‘theatre’ in a crowded fire.

-Abbie Hoffman

It’s one of the tragic ironies of the theatre that only one man in it can count on steady work - the night watchman.

-Tallulah Bankhead

What I love about theatre is that it disappears as it happens.

-Lusia Strus

All the best performers bring to their role something more, something different than what the author put on paper. That’s what makes theatre live. That’s why it persists.

-Stephen Sondheim

Fifteen years before I became a screen actor, I was in the theatre. A lot of my work was comedy, which I loved doing.

- Ben Kingsley

It’s harder

The money is better in films and television. But in terms of acting, theatre is more rewarding.

-Christopher Eccleston

I figured as I got older, the good roles for women would be in the theatre. So 15 years ago I started building a Broadway career to try and develop the chops to be accepted as a great theatrical actress.

-Kathleen Turner

Well the least favourite question is the one that one’s asked particularly about in Japan is what’s the difference between theatre and cinema and I think, well, that’s about eighty bucks.

-Andrew Lloyd Webber
James M. Norman (Palmer) most recently directed the smash hit The Full Monty at the Toledo Rep for the third time in two years. He vocal directed the University of Toledo’s Bat Boy and has also directed for Toledo Opera, Central Catholic, Ottawa Hills and Springfield high schools, and performed with The Rep (Pass the Butler - Butler, The Importance of Being Earnest - Algernon, Sweeney Todd - Anthony), Oregon Community Theater (The Music Man - Harold Hill), Ohio Northern University (The Mikado - Nanki Poo), Ms. Rose’s Dinner Theater (Moon Over Buffalo - Richard) and the Toledo Opera. He has sung over 50 operas and musicals ranging from Aida to Sweeney Todd to The Music Man and once sang back up for Barry Manilow. Mr. Norman makes his Village Players debut with Murder Among Friends.

Bill Lancz (Ted) studied theatre and English at the University of Toledo. He has performed locally at the Toledo Rep, Valentine Theatre, Croswell Opera House and UT. He last appeared on The Village Players’ stage in 2004’s All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten. His play The Jewelry Store was produced as part of UT’s ’05-’06 season, and two additional plays have premiered as part of the Village’s summer staged readings program.

Jennifer Lake (Gert) is very short, very funny, and puts everything off to the last minute, so her husband is writing this bio. Living with Jennifer is like sharing a tree house with a manic hobbit on crack. One never knows with whom you’ll wake up or go to bed, and the wind is always blowing.

In truth, Jennifer has an extensive résumé which includes a children’s tour of Beauty and the Beast, wherein the company covered 46 states in 6 months, received an ‘endangering wildlife’ ticket for speeding in Montana, and lost 50% of their costumes, set, and personal effects off the back of the truck in Arkansas.

She and her (brilliant, handsome, charming, and humble) husband spent the first two years of their life together performing at a dinner theater in Florida for audiences half in the bag and mostly dead. There Jennifer danced ‘Louise’ 48 times in Carousel, forgot the lyrics to her only song in Man of La Mancha, and took an additional 48 inexplicable turns as the first Hungarian Puerto Rican amidst a chorus of equally pasty mid-western ‘Shark’ girls subsisting on jello salad and one free drink a night.
Her most memorable credits include summer productions as Martha Jefferson in 1776, and Mary Magdelene in Jesus Christ Superstar (which are really the same role, if you think about it). Local credits include Fiona in Brigadoon, and Vera in Ten little Indians at the Croswell Opera House. Neither one of them - as it turns out - were operas. She also played Bianca in some play by Shakespeare at the University of Toledo, and the chick with that really fast song in A Little Night Music.

Believe it or not, Jennifer’s insatiable talent for mischief took her away from the glamour of the road for the suburban housewife and working mother deal. She is ‘Mommy’ to an equally dramatic and beautiful daughter, and spends her waning twilight years masquerading as a successful independent insurance agent. Her return to the Toledo stage should be blamed on her enduring university friendships with Kate Abu-Absi and Jennifer Rockwood. Jennifer is quite seriously thrilled to be among such accomplished ladies again; all fiercely talented and passionate, a little wiser - and above all - much older than they were twenty years ago.

**John Meadows** (Larry/Jessup) is returning to the stage after taking a considerable amount of time off from stage acting. He has starred in numerous independent feature films such as Toledo Conspiracy and Last Call. John obtained his B.A in Acting and Spanish from Ohio University and the University of Toledo and his M.Ed from the University of Toledo. Currently, he teaches high school and college Spanish. John would like to thank each and everyone of you for coming to see the show. Please form a line outside of his dressing room after the final curtain.

**Matt Black** (Marshall) This is Matt’s 4th show at The Village. He previously played the role of Paul Bratter in Barefoot in the Park and Robert in Don’t Dress for Dinner. His most recent production was My Three Angels in 2008. He has starred in numerous other local theatre productions, including Heaven Can Wait, Cats Cradle and Harvey. Matt is the production manager at 13ABC and is allowed to also pursue his creative desires at work. Aside from producing local commercials and long form programming, he has also lent his face and voice to numerous television campaigns. Matt is a Toledo native, born and bred, and is extremely excited to be performing at The Village once again. Matt has been married for 19 years to his lovely wife Becky, and together they have one daughter, Nadine, who is 18 and currently attending Oakland University. He is honored to be a part of The Village Players and hopes to continue to be involved in this wonderful Toledo tradition.
**The Village Players’ 2009–2010 53rd Season**

**Squabbles** (Comedy)
Written by Marshall Karp
**Dates:** September 11-26, 2009
**Director:** Wes Skinner

This hilarious play pits a father-in-law against a mother in a comedic succession of squabbles. Jerry Sloan is a successful writer of advertising jingles married to an equally successful lawyer. Living with the happy couple is the not-so-happy Abe (Jerry’s curmudgeon father-in-law). Abe is a funny guy...to the audience, not to Jerry. The situation is exacerbated when Jerry’s mother Mildred’s house burns down and she needs a place to stay.

**Murder Among Friends** (Comedy/Mystery)
Written by Bob Barry
**Dates:** November 6-21, 2009
**Director:** Jennifer Rockwood
**Call Backs:** Sat., Sep. 19, 2009

Take an aging, exceedingly vain actor; his very rich wife; a double dealing, double loving agent plunk them down in an elegant New York duplex and add dialogue crackling with wit and laughs and you have the basic elements for an evening of pure, sophisticated entertainment. Angela, the wife and Ted, the agent, are lovers and plan to murder Palmer, the actor, during a contrived robbery on New Year’s Eve. But actor and agent are also lovers and have an identical plan to do in the wife. A murder occurs, but not one of the planned ones.

**The Melville Boys** (Dramedy)
Written by Norm Foster
**Dates:** January 8-23, 2010
**Director:** Norb Mills
**Auditions:** Mon., Nov. 16, 2009
Tue., Nov. 17, 2009
**Call Backs:** Wed., Nov. 18, 2009

Brothers Owen and Lee Melville, who’ve set aside a weekend of time at the lake, are surprised by how meeting two sisters changes the agenda, and transforms their perspective. Winner of the Los Angeles Critics Drama-League Award, The Melville Boys is an endearingly simple play about family, love, moving forward on the journey of life and valuing those around you.

**Third** (Drama)
Written by Wendy Wasserstein
**Dates:** March 5-20, 2010
**Director:** Derek Hansen
**Auditions:** Mon., Jan. 11, 2010
Tue., Jan. 12, 2010

A timely and funny play, Third tells the story of college professor Laurie Jameson, whose seemingly well-ordered life as wife, mother and daughter is thrown into disarray when she accuses a student, an outwardly stereotypical jock nicknamed ‘Third,’ of plagiarism. Defined by its dazzlingly smart dialogue, crackling wit, intelligence and wryness, Third is true evidence of what made the late Wendy Wasserstein one of the most prominent female playwrights of the last 20 years.

**The Fantasticks** (Musical)
Written by: Harvey Schmidt & Tom Jones
**Dates:** May 7-22, 2010
**Director:** Paul Palmisano
**Auditions:** Sun., Feb. 21, 2010
Mon., Feb. 22, 2010
**Call Backs:** Wed., Feb. 24, 2010

*The Fantasticks!* – the longest running musical in the history of theatre. Based loosely on *Les Romanesques* by Edmond Rostand, *The Fantasticks!* opened in New York City on May 3, 1960 and played 17,162 performances before closing January 13, 2002......42 years! There are a number of familiar songs such as “Try To Remember.”

**Thank You!!**

Voted “Best Local Theatre Group 2008,” by The Toledo City Paper.