

The Brookfield Theatre For The Arts, Inc.

September 2015

Dear Friends of Brookfield Theatre,

We are happy to welcome you to Truvy's Beauty Salon in Chinquapin Parish, Louisiana, for ***Steel Magnolias***, the well-loved story about resilience and friendship by Robert Harling. It is directed by Tom Sheehan and stars Marilyn Olsen, Amber Mason, Kristin Hoose, Rebekah Derrick, Katy Ann Milano, and Monica O'Brien. A wonderful blend of familiar faces and BTA newcomers, we are happy for the new friendships this show has fostered and hope you will enjoy the performance as much as this team enjoyed bringing it to you.

The last show of this season is ***'Night Mother*** by Marsha Norman, a beautiful exploration of life and relationship directed by Michael Burnett. It will star Meg Jones as Thelma, Stacy-Lee Erickson Frome as Jessie and runs Nov. 6 thru the 21st.

Our season also features improv comedy nights with our resident troupe the **17 Debacles!** Remaining shows for this year are on Saturdays—**Oct. 10** and **Dec. 5**. As always, tickets are just \$10 at the door. Doors open at 7PM and shows start at 8PM.

Last but not least is our annual Paddys celebration which will be held in November. We will celebrate and honor the countless hours given by our volunteers, both on and off stage, and the dedication of our Board of Directors during the 2014 and 2015 seasons. We will also thank our sponsors, subscribers and members for their continued financial support. Please consider adding your name to our list of supporters to join us at the Paddys. It promises to be a fun evening filled with good memories, great friends, and fun!

If you like what you see here today, tell your friends and family. Better yet, bring them back with you—your presence at the theatre is our greatest support. Information about shows and events can be found on our web site www.BrookfieldTheatre.org or follow us on social media.

We will be officially announcing our 2016 season at our Paddy's celebration and we have some exciting shows planned for you. Watch for information about the coming season by the end of November. Season subscriptions will be available for the gift giving season.

Last of all, please remember Brookfield Theatre in your year end giving. Your donation helps us to provide quality live theatre at low prices keeping performances accessible to each new generation of theatre lovers. We are an all volunteer, non-profit organization. Donations are tax deductible—please consult your financial advisor for information.

ENJOY THE SHOW!

Lou Okell
BTA President

Thank you to our 2015 Season Supporters

PLATINUM \$500-\$999

Thomas & Emilie Connor

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BRONZE \$25-\$99

Anthony Chiodo • Kristin Collins

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"TIPS" up to \$25

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Rick Hodder • Lillian Hope • Juliette Koch • Corey Leake

Laura Lerman • Liz Matteson • Carolyn Mccarthy • Kevin Morgan

Timothy Muir • John Murdock • Suzanne Murdock

Laura Nicoletti • Sonia Ohanlon • Sabrina Post

Susan Primavera • Timothy Rees • Jeffery Robeson

Karen Robinson • Paul Sofia • Shelley Stampfler

Robert Taylor • Jessie Wasserman • Eric Wilczak

List is complete as of printer's deadline. We apologize for any errors or omissions.

A Brief History of The Brookfield Theatre for the Arts

The building that houses BTA was originally a gymnasium for The Curtis School for Boys. First established in 1875 in Bethlehem, CT by Frederick S. Curtis, the school was moved to Long Meadow Hill in 1883 and then to the present site that was the former Goodsell Estate in 1886.

In 1906 the price for one school year was six hundred dollars. This included "tuition, board, a seat in church, lighting and warming, the care and mending of clothing, and the use of school books." In the 1920s, girls were allowed to enroll as day students. This is the second gymnasium for the Curtis School. The first was destroyed by fire in 1906. The present stone building was built in 1907. The Curtis School closed its doors in 1943.

The gymnasium was purchased by the Brookfield Country Players in 1957 and has been used as a theatre for year-round plays and musicals ever since. This year, 2015, is our 58th season.

Visit our web site for more information or contact us to share your story!

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Recently I was asked why I chose this play, *Steel Magnolias* to bring to the Brookfield stage. Honestly I don't think I chose but rather it chose me. Why? Two words—the story.

The story setting: It is a small town in the heart of a northern Louisiana Parish that is steeped in southern traditions. It is a place whose residents live and work and marry and raise families and die the best that they can. I suppose it is a bit of an ideal world, perhaps. Or maybe a slower paced world of talking face to face and writing letters if preferred over today's instant message and wifi world.

The story characters: The ladies of Chinquapin, or at least these six ladies, each so unique and colorful in their own special way. They each bring their special brand of humor, philosophy, sympathy and candor and form this beautiful bond of love and support for one another. Together they draw each other in as they draw us in. We not only relish being a fly on the wall to enjoy their banter, but they make us think about and relish the close family and friends that make up the fabric of our lives.

A play about women so carefully and lovingly crafted...by a man.

Robert Harling grew up in Natchitoches, La. and drew from his very personal life experiences to create this story. His family lived the richness and the tragedy and understood "laughter through tears" intimately. They lived with and understood the effects of diabetes not only on the person who is challenged by this disease, but by her family who cared for her until the day she lost her battle. It is told that Robert ranted and raved about the anger he felt over the loss of his sister to a playwright friend who just kept saying, "Write it down."

And so he did.

We are so very proud and honored to bring you this touching, funny, honest story of love, of friendship, of joy and sorrow, but mostly...of hope.

—Tom Sheehan

IN OUR LOBBY

Born in New York, Bruce Hunter grew up in France where he discovered a love of art and architectural art as well as an affinity for things in nature, explaining the themes of his artwork. Bruce returned to New York to attend Pratt Institute, where he received a BFA degree. His early background includes working at Skidmore, Owings and Merrill as an architectural model-maker and as a highly respected craftsman in the miniatures world. He is an award-winning artist who exhibits all over the country. Mr. Hunter's ability to make the viewer feel a part of the painting has resulted in his artwork being held in private collections throughout the United States and Europe as well as earned him many exhibition awards. He is a member of the Society of Illustrators, the California Society of Pastels and the American Watercolor Society.

Joanne Hunter is a native of Connecticut, having met Bruce at Pratt Institute in New York where they both received BFA degrees. Trained as a designer, Mrs. Hunter freelances in textile, interior and fashion design as well as graphics. In addition she is an award winning fine artist exhibiting pastels and watercolors. Joanne is an exhibiting member of many regional art associations and is on several State of Connecticut Art Committees.

Bruce and Joanne own The Art Spot, a Fine Arts School, teaching children and adults watercolor, pastels, oils and many other art techniques. Other programming includes Artist in Residence programming in schools through out the east coast.

Brookfield Theatre Membership

Membership is still only \$20 and is a great way to support the theatre!

2015 Members

Aldis Alexander, Robert Bassett, Kerry Bulson,
Michael Burnett, Desirae Carle, Brian Casella,
Dawn Garamone, Carol de Giere, Carol Hoose,
Kristin Hoose, Margaret Teed Jones, Wayne Leiss,
Don Lombardo, Tracy Lowry, Karlene Lombardo,
Sara Mariano, Andrew Okell, Lou Okell, Rebecca Pokorski,
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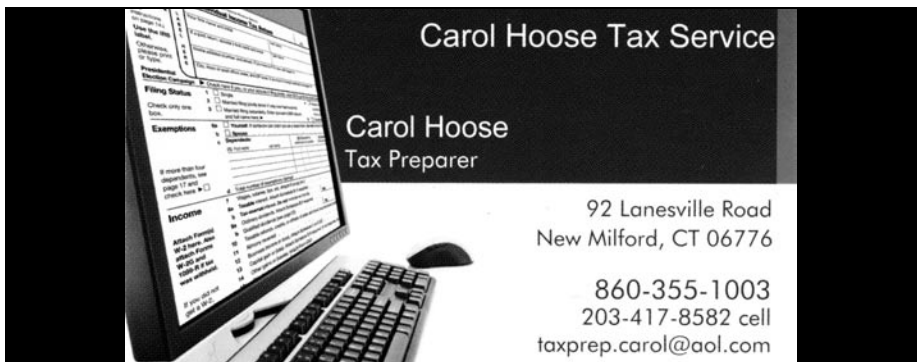
Season Subscribers

Thank you to our 2015 Season Subscribers

Susan Amlung, John & Anne Baron*, Anna & Roy Chan*,
Anthony Chiodo, D. Laurence & Arlene Coleman*,
Annette & Brent Crozier*, Marianne Gaffey*,
Janine & Jonathan Gibney*, Diane Hires*, Steve Hoose,
Greg & Joanne Kelsey*, Donald & Karlene Lombardo*,
Lyn Lyon*, Michael & Susan O'Brien*,
Tara Peterson, Anne & Clint Rickards*, Sue Slater*,
Jina Williams, Steve Wright*

Thank you for your support!

**Subscription for Two. List current as of press time. We apologize for any errors or omissions.*



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Tax Preparer

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New Milford, CT 06776

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STEEL *Magnolias*

by Robert Harling

directed by Tom Sheehan

a Desi-Lou production

C A S T

(in order of appearance)

Truvy Jones Amber Mason
Annelle Kristin Hoose
Clairee Belcher Rebekah Derrick
Shelby Katy Ann Milano
M'Lynn Eatenton Marilyn Olsen
Ouiser Boudreaux Monica O'Brien

Place: Chinquapin, Louisiana

Act I

Scene 1: April

Scene 2: December

15 minute intermission

Act II:

Scene 1: June, eighteen Months later

Scene 2: November

Originally produced by the WPA Theatre, New York City, 1987

(Kyle Renick, Artistic Director)

Performed with permission from Dramatists Play Service Inc., New York, NY

THE BROOKFIELD THEATRE FOR THE ARTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Lou Okell, President • Kristin Hoose, Vice-President
Carol Hoose, Treasurer • Desirae Carle, Secretary
Michael Burnett, ex-officio

DIRECTORS

Rob Bassett, Brian Casella (Technical Director), Janice Gabriel,
Meg Jones, Abbey Lynch, Sara Mariano, Andrew Okell,
Rebecca Pokorski, Karen E. Steckler, Nicole Veach

STEEL *Magnolias*

by Robert Harling

PRODUCTION CREW

DIRECTOR Tom Sheehan
PRODUCERS Desi-Lou Productions
SET DESIGN Andrew Okell
COSTUME DESIGN Corrine Bottelsen
LIGHTING DESIGN Beth Patrick
SOUND DESIGN Lou Okell
STAGE MANAGER/PROPERTIES Nicole Veach
SOUND EXECUTION Karl Gonzalez
LIGHTING EXECUTION Beth Patrick, Rebecca Pokorski
SET CONSTRUCTION Bob Lane, Don Lombardo, Andy Okell,
Emma Okell, Lou Okell
HOUSE MANAGER Cynthia Merchant, Ed Carle,
and BTA Volunteers
HOUSE PHOTOGRAPHER Stephen Cihanek
BOX OFFICE Carol Hoose
SRO/CONCESSIONS Joy Tagliavento
OPENING NIGHT PARTY Abbey Lynch, Sara Mariano

SPECIAL THANKS

A Common Ground, Willow Springs Association, Arketype Graphics,
Ellen “Cookie” Cooke, Litchfield County Pickers, Savers, Frank Wargo,
Marilyn—the wig whisperer, Monica and her magic shed,
Nicole’s Linen Service, Steve Cihanek, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Stacy & DJ,
and The Woo-Yeahs:

Our pre-show music features songs from their recent album
“Friday Night Fighters”

Order forms can be found in the lobby or visit them at [facebook.com/thewooyeahs](https://www.facebook.com/thewooyeahs).

For the safety of performers and the courtesy of fellow patrons, taking photos of any kind is strictly forbidden. Copyright laws prohibit the recording of sound and video. Please turn off **ALL** phones and other electronic devices as they can interfere with our technical systems and disrupt the show. **Patrons who need to text, tweet, or candy crush may do so in the lobby.**

MUSIC CREDITS

Preshow Music courtesy of The Woo-Yeahs
with selections from Buckwheat Zydeco and Harry Connick Jr.

Act I

Hound Dog by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, performed by Big Mama Thornton with Buddy Guy, recorded live 1965.

Jingle Bell Hustle written by W. Newton, D. Vincent and J. Madara. Performed by Wayne Newton, recorded 1979.

Christmas-y Feeling written and performed by Johnny Cash, recorded 1977.

"Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's *Messiah* by Frederic Handel, performed by the Sunderman Conservatory, Gettysburg College, recorded live on Dec. 2014.

Intermission

One Fine Thing written and performed by Harry Connick Jr., recorded 2013.

Jambalaya On The Bayou written by Hank Williams, performed by Joel Sonnier, recorded 1960.

Hey Ma Petit Fille written and performed by Buckwheat Zydeco, recorded at the Montreux Jazz Festival 1989.

Jabberwocky - Jazz sous les Pommiers written by Branford Marsalis, performed by the Branford Marsalis quartet, recorded 2009.

Act II

Hoochie Koochie Man by Willie Dixon, performed by Muddy Waters and The Rolling Stones live at the Checkerboard Lounge, recorded Nov. 22, 1981.

I'm Coming Out written and produced by Bernard Edwards and Nile Rodgers, performed by Diana Ross, 1980.

True Colors written and performed by Cyndi Lauper, recorded 1986.

Like A Virgin written by Billy Steinberg & Tom Kelly, performed by Madonna, recorded 1984.

Girl With The Heart of Gold written by Bruce Hall, performed by REO Speedwagon, recorded 1982.

Time In A Bottle written and performed by Jim Croce, recorded 1973.

Free Bird written by Allen Collins and Ronnie Van Zant, performed by Lynyrd Skynyrd, recorded 1973.

Hazy Shade of Winter written by Paul Simon, performed by The Bangles, recorded 1987.

Always On My Mind written by Wayne Carson, Johnny Christopher & Mark James, recorded by Brenda Lee in 1972

Can't Get Enough of Your Love, Babe written and performed by Barry White, recorded 1974.

Hawaii 5-0 written and performed by The Ventures, recorded 1969.

Bows: *That's What Friends Are For* written by Burt Bacharach and Carole Bayer Sager, performed by Dionne Warwick with Gladys Knight, Stevie Wonder and Elton John, recorded in 1985 as a benefit for American Foundation for AIDS Research.

Exit: *Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da* written by Lennon-McCartney, performed by The Beatles, recorded 1968.

BIOGRAPHIES

Corrine Bottlesen (COSTUME DESIGNER) is a senior at SUNY Oswego graduating this spring with a degree in film and theater design. She is so very excited to be working with The Brookfield Theatre for the Arts (BTA) on this production and plans to take everything she learned into her senior project of costume designing *The Mousetrap* by Agatha Christie at her college. She thanks the cast and everyone at BTA for welcoming her with open arms this summer and teaching her so much. Special thanks to Desi for helping put together the final looks, and to Tom for letting her help complete his vision as well as guiding her through her first community theater experience.

Desirae Carle (PRODUCER) is so excited to be producing a show with such an amazing cast, crew and director. On-stage credits include *The Complete Works of Wm. Shakespeare (abridged)*, *Edith in Blithe Spirit*, and *Little Timmy in The Divine Sister*, all here at BTA and Sarah the sea-lizard in *Seascope* (Theaterworks). Many thanks to family and friends for all their support and to the cast and crew of *Steel Magnolias* for making this such a fun and rewarding experience. Special thanks to Lou for her guidance and support and to Nicole, the greatest stage manager and armadillo cake baker!



Rebekah Derrick (CLAIREE) The First Lady of Chinquapin Parish is Clairee Belcher, widow of former mayor Lloyd Belcher. Lloyd, rest his soul, was well-loved by the community. Former football player and WWII veteran, he passed on just months shy of his 50th wedding anniversary. Although a new mayor has succeeded the office, Clairee is still the center of local politics. Certainly as well-loved as her husband, if not more so, she is celebrated by the local football team and is the center of Chinquapin Parish society. Clairee is the quintessential hostess, mavin of style and grace, and trusted confidante.

Playing the part of Clairee is professional model and actress Rebekah Derrick. She has performed for film and television along with regional stage performances with Kentucky Shakespeare Festival, Thomaston Opera House, and most recently as Mother in *Ragtime* at the Warner Theater. We are so happy to welcome Rebekah to the Brookfield stage!

Karl Gonzalez (SOUND EXECUTION) resides in Brookfield with his wife Ingrid, their two children and the family dog. Karl has worked for the past 19 years with an IT multinational as Program Manager, has digital video broadcast experience, enjoys playing guitar and learning new songs. As a teenager, Karl was involved in town/school plays and some limited TV appearances. This is Karl's first time volunteering at BTA and he thanks the entire company for the warm welcome.



Kristin Hoose (ANNELLE) Annelle is the new beauty school graduate hired by Truvy to work in her salon. When we first meet her, we know right away that she has quite a story. As Annelle begins to find her way, she has some ups and downs, but will she ever find true love?

Our "newcomer" is no stranger to BTA—we are happy to welcome Kristin back in the role of Annelle. She is excited to be able to wear an ugly holiday sweater on stage! She has performed on the Brookfield stage many times including in *Rent*, *Hair*, *Thou Shalt Not Dance*, *Sylvia* and *Dog Sees God*. A graduate of Western New England College, she works in marketing and communications at The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

BIOGRAPHIES

Robert Lane (SET DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION) is in his sixth season at BTA as Set Fabricator. He thanks his wife, Rita, for supporting his time spent building (many long into the evening). He also thanks all of the BTA-ers he has collaborated with over the years.

Don Lombardo (SET CONSTRUCTION) is a long-time supporter of BTA and is happy to join Andy and Bob on another set building adventure.



Amber Mason (TRUVY) Welcome to Truvy's Beauty Salon where brides, beauty queens and the finest ladies in town discover the secrets of true beauty. Everyone who's anyone gathers at Truvy's for her lavish treatments and the latest gossip. She always has the perfect style for every 'rite du passage' and time for even the most particular of clients.

Dancer, actor, and model Amber Mason joins us in the role of Truvy. Her numerous stage credits include *Romeo & Juliet*, *Time Stands Still*, *Chicago*, *Stop Kiss* and *Dearly Departed*. She has been recognized for her acting skills by On Stage Critics in both 2014 and 2015 and holds a Masters degree in family therapy..



Katy Ann Milano (SHELBY) Shelby Eatenton is the prettiest girl in town and bride to be. Although she can be snappy with her mother, M'Lynn, she is selfless and loving, offering support and affection to all the women in the beauty salon. Shelby is determined to live her life to the fullest without exceptions. From competing in the Miss Merry Christmas pageant to donating to the less fortunate, Shelby is the sweetheart of Truvy's Salon.

The role of Shelby is played by Katy Ann Milano who comes to us from Brewster, NY. A talented actor, singer and dancer, she has performed in a wide variety of shows including *Plumfield Iraq*, *Avenue Q*, *Spring Awakening*, and *The Crucible*.

Andy Okell (SET DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION) is on the Board of Directors and thanks his wonderful daughter, Emma, for introducing him to theater. By day he runs his own graphics & printing business (arkett.com). He hopes you will tell your family and friends about BTA so that he can return to build many more sets with "Bob da Builder" Lane and Don Lombardo.

Lou Okell (PRODUCER/SOUND DESIGN) is the new president of BTA where she has enjoyed many years of producing and backstage work. She thanks the wonderful cast and crew for bringing this heartwarming play to life. Special thanks to Desi for heading up the production team and finding so many new friends to join us and to Andy for everything! *Enjoy the show....*



Marilyn Olsen (M'LYNN) M'Lynn does not talk about business in a social setting, which is why she is a trusted confidante for the more troubled citizens of Chinquapin Parish. When she is not working at the Mental Guidance Center, she is busy raising her two sons, Tommy and Jonathan, and her daughter, Shelby - all while trying to keep her husband, Drum, from driving the neighbors crazy.

We are thrilled to have the incomparable Marilyn Olsen playing the role of M'Lynn. Her long list of credits and recognitions are too numerous to list. Marilyn's performances here in Brookfield include the witch in *Into The Woods* and Melissa Gardener in *Love Letters*.

BIOGRAPHIES



Monica O'Brien (OUISER) Best Friends....Ouiser may seem a little bit grumpy, but you might be too with two failed marriages, three grown and ungrateful children, and a dog with a condition. Luckily she has her best friend Clairee and a helpful grandson she can count on—and her garden. She is “an old Southern woman. We’re supposed to put on funny looking hats...and grow vegetables in the dirt.”

Monica O'Brien is thrilled to be making her first appearance at BTA. She has portrayed a grief stricken mother, who lost her young daughter in the original play *Swish: Maria in the Mourning* at the Manhattan Repertory Theater and has appeared in a variety of community theater productions in Westchester- NY and Stamford, CT. She has also worked with the National Improvisational Theater in Manhattan. She is currently directing *Father of the Bride* for (AMDG)2—a homeschooling theater troupe in Waterbury, CT. Monica's favorite “role” by far is homeschool mother to four awesome kids!

Elizabeth Patrick (LIGHTING DESIGN & EXECUTION) Once upon a time, this girl thought she wanted to be a professional lighting designer. Then after a chance of a lifetime to run away and tour with a dance company, she ditched grad school and became the Production Stage Manger for Pilobolus Dance Theatre. After 4 years of touring the world, she gave up that glamorous full time tour life for the comfort of her own bed. She then did time as the Director of Production for Pilobolus before joining Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet where she was the Company Manager and then the Events Manager. Beth now calls Event Resources in Hartford her home where she is Production Manager. Beth is very happy to have been “swindled” into this gig by the lovely Producers and to have the ability to once again play in the theatre in her down time.

Tom Sheehan (DIRECTOR) is very happy to be returning to BTA and is honored to be directing this wonderful play. Previous directing credits in Brookfield include *Tuesdays With Morrie*, *Moonlight and Magnolias*, and *Love Letters*. Tom's extensive on-stage credits include several shows here at BTA and in many other regional theaters. He thanks the entire production team, aka “Desi-Lou Productions” and everyone at BTA who have made this a very special experience. Thanks also to this amazing cast. “Ladies, your talent, creativity and intelligence have truly been inspiring. Thanks as well to my friends and especially my family, children and grandchildren. My deepest gratitude to my wife, Lynn, without whose support none of this would be possible. *Tha goal agam ort.*”

Patrick Spaulding (DJ/VOICEOVER) is extremely happy to be returning to BTA, if only in voice. He performed here this past spring in *The Complete Works of Wm Shakespeare (Abridged)(Revised)*. His many credits throughout the region include *Man of La Mancha* at The Clay & Wattles and *Ragtime* at Warner and many others. As always he wishes to thank his not-so-clueless costar in life: Celia, for her patience, love and constant support.

Nicole Veach (STAGE MANAGER) is beyond excited to have the privilege to work with the exceptionally talented cast, crew and production team of *Steel Magnolias*. She is thrilled to return to BTA, after an amazing run of *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare: Abridged*. Nicole would like to thank her family and friends for all their love and on going support! And a special thanks to Desi for introducing her to the magical place that is Brookfield Theatre. “You know that I love you more than my luggage!”