



*C*erie
playhouse

CONNECTION

2015 ANNUAL REPORT
Reporting in fiscal year ending August 31, 2015



Shrek 2014



Donor Dinner 2014



Peter Pan Jr. 2015



Sleepy Hollow 2014



United Way's Reading Buddies 2014



PLAYtime 2015



MISSION

The Erie Playhouse enriches the greater Erie region by providing life-long opportunities to participate in quality theatre.

VISION

The Playhouse's artistic vision is to entertain, educate and enrich our community by providing diverse audiences with an opportunity to see live theatre by presenting affordable, high-quality productions that reflect and enlighten our community. The Playhouse pursues three basic artistic goals:

- ◆ The presentation of musical and dramatic theatre experiences which excite, challenge and transform Playhouse performers and audiences. Each season is a fusion of mainstream and contemporary works that appeal to a wide range of performers and audience.
- ◆ Theatre training that empowers and inspires artists of all ages. The education and training programs cater to young people, emerging artists, and amateur performers and musicians.
- ◆ The production of quality theatrical experiences within realistic means.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

COMMITTED TO COMMUNITY FOR 98 SEASONS

One of the most satisfying projects we complete annually is compiling this annual report. It provides us with one final opportunity to reflect on the past year. More importantly, however, it provides us the privilege of acknowledging the contributions all of you make to our efforts, without which our work would be impossible. Your commitment is unrivaled. I ask you to note the names of the individuals, corporations, and foundations on the following pages.

We were delighted with the artistry that happened on our stage this season, and we were equally pleased with the numerous activities that took place off stage, many of which are outlined in this report.

Theatre is the ultimate collaborative art form, and as such only happens when communities of willing people gather to make it happen. The Playhouse is fortunate to have a committed Board of Directors, a professional staff that is second to none, and a wonderfully dedicated cast of volunteers. We cannot possibly thank all enough for their roles in allowing the Playhouse to thrive.

See you at the theatre,

Almitra Clerkin



The Playhouse is most grateful to LECOM Health for its Mainstage season sponsorship. In appreciation, the Playhouse presented Dr. John Ferretti with a framed print by local photographer and Playhouse fan Georgi Harrington.

2014-2015 ANNUAL FUND SURPASSES GOAL

EVERY GIFT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Thank you donors! Thanks to you, we successfully exceeded our annual fund goal yet again.

We are pleased to report that under the leadership of Keith, Kelly, Morgan, Keegan and Reagan Kennedy, the Annual Fund campaign raised \$197,640, surpassing its \$160,000 goal. Five hundred thirty-three individuals made donations, including 150 first-time donors!

The Playhouse, like most other non-profit community theatres, charges less than the actual cost for productions and programming. We make up the difference through tax-deductible giving opportunities, such as the Annual Fund, the primary source that bridges the gap between fees charged and overall operating costs. That is why the Annual Fund is critical for the Playhouse; it makes it possible to pursue excellence in everything we do.

MEET MIKE KARNs

A BROADWAY PRODUCER AND ENTREPRENEUR



We are pleased to announce the 2015-2016 Annual Fund chair is Michael Karns.

When Mike Karns was in 5th grade, he auditioned for and was cast in his first Erie Playhouse production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. He had no idea then that it would be the beginning of a lifelong love affair with the theatre that would eventually change the trajectory of his life.

Through the Playhouse, Mike developed his love of acting and “hamming it up” on stage. When he realized that he wanted a career in theater, but not necessarily on stage, the Playhouse staff and volunteers encouraged him and provided countless opportunities to “dabble” in other areas that might interest him. While attending Penn State University for Stage Management and Lighting Design, David Matthews, the Playhouse’s Managing Director, introduced Mike to Jim Wilhelm, a former Playhouse actor and Broadway talent agent in NYC. Jim gave Mike his first Broadway internship.

Now, Mike is a Broadway producer and entrepreneur, living and working in New York City. His Broadway producing debut came in 2015 with the new musical *Allegiance* starring George Takei (*Star Trek*) and Tony winner Lea Salonga (*Miss Saigon*). Additionally, he founded a social media management company in 2013 that now represents Broadway shows like *Hamilton the Musical* as well as Grammy and Tony award-winning personalities.

He credits the Erie Playhouse with being the catalyst and conduit for ALL of these opportunities, and encourages you to donate to help more kids receive the same guidance and experiences.



Alanna Grafius, Jerry Gill, Mike Karns,
Julian Decker and Megan Harrison

A Year with Frog and Toad 2007

2014-2015 GRANTS

AED grant – Automated External Defibrillator
Erie Arts and Culture – Programming and Operations
Erie Community Foundation – Facility Improvements
Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority – Lead Asset Sustainability and Programming
Erie Downtown Partnership – External Security Cameras
Gannon University GAINS – Outreach to Emerson-Gridley School and Martin Luther King Center
PA Council on the Arts – Programming
PA Council on the Arts – Professional Staff Development
Schuster Re-Grant Initiative – Arts Accessibility
United Way of Erie County – PLAYtime pre-K Program



To Kill a Mockingbird 2015

2014-2015 SPONSORS

SEASON SPONSOR

LECOM Health

FAMILY SEASON SPONSOR

UPMC Health Plan

SHOW AND EVENT SPONSORS

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WMCE



All Shook Up 2015

EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT TAX CREDIT

ENRICHING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN

WHAT IS EITC?

Offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program allows businesses to receive significant tax credits when they contribute to qualified educational improvement organizations. EITC funding allows us to bring increased educational opportunities to thousands of children annually in Erie County. This program only funds pre-approved innovative educational programs.

WHAT ARE EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS?

Educational Improvement Organizations (EIOs) are non-profit organizations that have been approved by DCED for participation in the EITC program. To become an EIO, the non-profit must apply to the DCED to show how their programs improve the educational

opportunities for children.

Since 2007, the Erie Playhouse has been designated an eligible EIO with seven approved programs.



Rhonda Berlin, Playhouse volunteer, sings with some of the youngest Playhouse campers.

WHAT BUSINESSES ARE ELIGIBLE?

Businesses that pay the following Pennsylvania taxes are eligible: Corporate Net Income Tax, Capital Stock Franchise Tax, Bank and Trust Company Shares Tax, Title Insurance Companies Shares Tax, Insurance Premiums Tax, and Mutual Thrift Institutions Tax.

WHY SHOULD YOU GIVE?

Your business will receive a 90% tax credit if you sign up for two years in the program and a 75% tax credit if you sign up for one year. Eligible businesses can receive up to \$200,000 in tax credits per taxable year. Plus, you are helping support the Erie Playhouse's educational programs.

The Erie Playhouse would like to thank the following companies for supporting our innovative Educational Improvement Tax Credit Programs.

**Erie Insurance
LifeServices Equity Partnership
Scott's Enterprises**

For more information on the application process and how your business can support the Erie Playhouse through the EITC Program, please contact Teri Marshall at 814.454.2852, ext. 4.

JOIN THE ELISHA H. MACK COMMUNITY BEQUEST SOCIETY

PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN ERIE PLAYHOUSE'S FUTURE

Donors who wish to help secure the future of the Erie Playhouse can do so by becoming a member of the Elisha H. Mack Community Bequest Society. A planned gift creates financial stability and allows us to withstand fluctuations in the economy and annual donations. Gifts may be made to honor an individual, and are a permanent and public testament to the person's commitment to arts and culture.

A bequest is simple and may include a will or trust; lifetime income arrangement such as a charitable gift annuity, charitable remainder trust, charitable lead trust, or life insurance; or an IRA/401(k) designation. Members do not need to disclose the amount of the gift.

Please contact Susannah Weis Frigon at The Erie Community Foundation at 814.454.0843 or sfrigon@eriecommunityfoundation.org or Almitra Clerkin at 814.454.2852 ext. 7 or almi@erieplayhouse.org to support the Erie Playhouse in perpetuity.



READING BUDDIES

Kate Neubert-Lechner and the casts of *Sleepy Hollow* and *Peter Pan Jr.* participated in three United Way of Erie County Reading Buddies workshops. The cast joined Kate as they read the books (*Sleepy Hollow* and *Peter Pan*) to the children ages 2-10 while their parents received Reading Buddies training. Then they participated in activities related to the books and shows. To conclude, the casts performed a musical number from the show, enjoyed a healthy lunch with some new friends, and all the families received vouchers to attend the shows.



FISCAL YEAR IN REVIEW

SOUND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The Erie Playhouse demonstrated sound fiscal management and ended the 2015 fiscal year reporting a surplus of \$134,912 on a budget of \$1,232,096. Mainstage and Youtheatre ticket sales held steady and accounted for 42% of revenue. Mainstage and Youtheatre production and education costs represented 65% of total expenditure. We continue investing in energy-saving measures, improving operations, and finding efficiencies wherever we can while still producing quality productions our patrons expect.



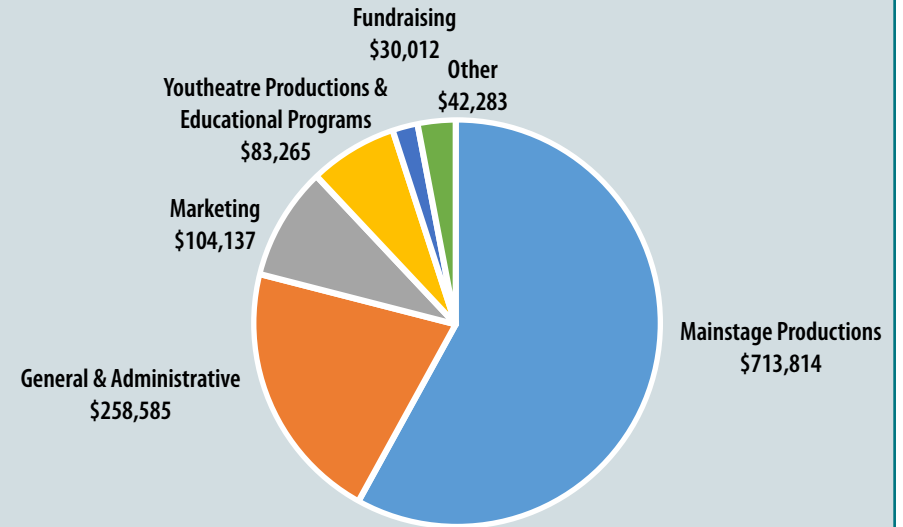
Elvis Has Left the Building 2015



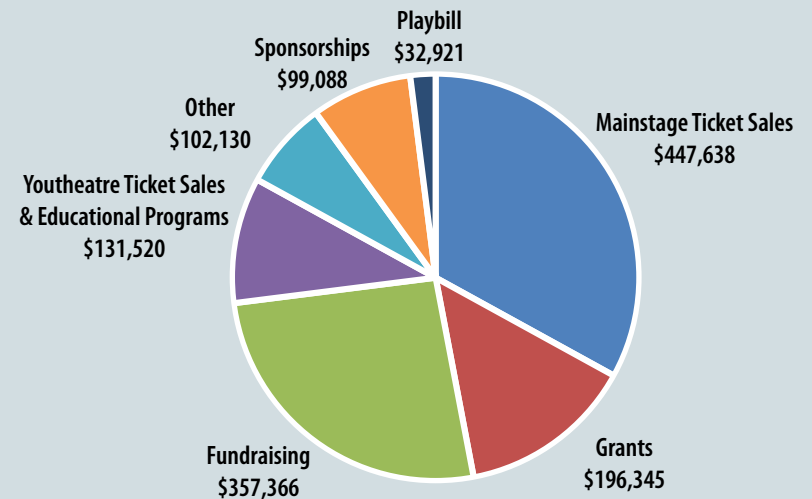
Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike 2014

FISCAL YEAR ENDING AUGUST 31, 2015

EXPENSES \$1,232,096



REVENUE \$1,367,008



*(Unaudited report)



COMMUNITY OUTREACH TAKES A GIANT LEAP FORWARD

PLAYtime

Studies continue to show that children in poverty and at-risk benefit especially from an education rich in the arts and yet

their access is the most limited. To address this issue and make impactful change in this area, the Erie Playhouse, supported by a three-year grant from United Way of Erie County, will launch a new initiative in 2015-2016 called PLAYtime, an Early Childhood Program designed to mitigate factors that place children at risk of poor academic outcomes.

For children, PLAYtime incorporates Erie County's Imagination Library books into art-related activities designed to build literacy skills for at-risk children at St. Martin's Center, St. Benedict Day Care Center, the downtown YMCA, and City-Center Early Connections. Over the three-year period, we will have worked with the SAME children 144 times for the greatest impact. By the end of the program, we will have completed 1,152 site visits.

For parents of participants in PLAYtime and United Way's Reading Buddies, we will offer PARENT & ME classes that use the Imagination Library books as a springboard to model activities designed on how to raise a reader. Parents, with their children, will practice techniques that build pre-reading skills, as well as

strategies on how to break material into small chunks, connect stories to real-life, and incorporate multisensory experiences.

For families county-wide, we will transform beloved children stories, including Imagination Library books, into musicals. The first production will be based on the Imagination Library book, MY LUCKY DAY by Keiko Kasza, and is scheduled for spring 2016.

It is an honor to be partnering with United Way of Erie County to promote early literacy skills because it is one of the most effective ways to ensure children grow up to be successful, self-sufficient adults.



2015 PLAYtime PILOT PROGRAM

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

When Kate Neubert-Lechner (above) began working at St. Benedict's Day Care Center, she encountered a group of very well behaved, but mostly reserved four year olds, many from households where English is the second language. One child in particular, Denish, was very quiet, almost withdrawn. He never spoke and was reticent to participate in activities. A teacher's aide sat next to him for the first few visits, always encouraging him to participate and engage, particularly during the goodbye song that ends every visit, in which each child is asked, one at a time, to say his name loudly and clearly to the room. Denish would not even volunteer a whisper. At the end of her fourth visit, however, he very shyly and quietly, without looking at anyone, said his name during the goodbye song. In subsequent visits, he engaged more, repeating lines from the book with the group as requested, turning his flashlight on and off to make twinkling stars, and making eye contact with her. At the end of the eighth visit when it was his turn during the goodbye song, Denish looked at Kate and stood proudly, clearly, and loudly said his name. As she was leaving, Denish stood up, ran over, gave her a hug goodbye, and said, "Thank you." That is what success looks like for PLAYtime.

A MUSICAL MASTERPIECE

REPRISE OF *LES MISÉRABLES*



When the Playhouse learned that *Les Misérables* was headed back to Broadway as well as a national tour, we knew if we ever wanted to stage the show again, it would have to be this season or far into the future. This prompted us to secure the rights and add 16 performances to our season as a special event. Happily, the leading actors from our 2012 production were available

and excited to reprise their roles; the ensemble, a mixture of new and repeat performers, completed the talented cast.



YOUTHEATRE SHOWSTOPPERS

The Showstoppers, the Youtheatre song and dance troupe, performed at 32 events this season. For booking information, contact Kate Neubert-Lechner at kate@erieplayhouse.org or 814.2852 ext. 6.

Thank you to our 2014-2015 Fund Drive Contributors

The following businesses, foundations and individuals made gifts to the Erie Playhouse and are listed according to Circle of Friends levels. Their support touched thousands of lives in the community. Contributors are updated in every Mainstage Playbill and prior to each performance on our preshow video.

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(\$2,500 +)

30/30 Raffle Ticket Buyers

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Bold indicates new donors
Italics indicates matching gift



All Shook Up 2015

MAINSTAGE and YOUTHEATRE

Production highlights

2014-2015 proved to be a notable season replete with topnotch shows, most of which were debuts. In our brochure, we promised **memorable characters** and **memorable performances**. Our Playhouse Production Team and dedicated volunteers did not disappoint!



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$ 57,666
 Production Expenses: \$48,876
 Performances: 12
 Attendance: 3,839
 Percent Capacity: 74%



Youtheatre



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$23,154
 Production Expenses: \$13,635
 Performances: 11
 Attendance: 2,519
 Percent Capacity: 53%



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$28,082
 Production Expenses: \$11,247
 Performances: 11
 Attendance: 1,436
 Percent Capacity: 30%





Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$91,926
 Production Expenses: \$38,812
 Performances: 16
 Attendance: 5,855
 Percent Capacity: 84%



Youtheatre



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$30,125
 Production Expenses: \$9,692
 Performances: 11
 Attendance: 3,034
 Percent Capacity: 64%



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$54,029
 Production Expenses: \$33,289
 Performances: 11
 Attendance: 3,557
 Percent Capacity: 75%





Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$49,781
 Production Expenses: \$16,017
 Performances: 12
 Attendance: 3,213
 Percent Capacity: 62%



Youtheatre



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$51,242
 Production Expenses: \$30,381
 Performances: 12
 Attendance: 5,054
 Percent Capacity: 97%



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$41,459
 Production Expenses: \$30,964
 Performances: 11
 Attendance: 2,401
 Percent Capacity: 50%





Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$33,190

Production Expenses: \$12,651

Performances: 11

Attendance: 1,785

Percent Capacity: 37%



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$50,898

Production Expenses: \$22,491

Performances: 11

Attendance: 3,180

Percent Capacity: 67%



Payton Tevis (Rapunzel) and Blake Bojewski (Flynn) spend a "Princess Moment" with Ball guests.

THE PRINCESS BALL TREATED LIKE ROYALTY

Five hundred princesses and their chaperones attended the 5th annual Princess Ball on April 12, 2015 at the Bayfront Convention Center. The princesses, in costumes or fancy dresses, could opt to visit the Royal Hair & Nail Salon, Princess Boutique and Royal Raffle before the luncheon. Following refreshments, the Princesses and their escorts made their Grand Entrance for dancing and royal photo opportunities.

Tickets for this magical event sell out within weeks. In an effort to allow all who would like to attend entrance, the Youtheatre will host two balls on April 3 and April 10, 2016 at the Ambassador Center's Crystal Ballroom. Tickets go on sale February 1.



Dancing Princesses!

DONOR APPRECIATION DINNER

BENEFACTOR, DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER CIRCLES

Doris Becker, the 2013-14 Annual Fund Chair, hosted our donor appreciation dinner on October 28, 2014 on the set of *Sleepy Hollow*. Invitations for this annual event are sent to our **Circle of Friends** patrons at the **Benefactor, Director** and **Producer** levels. Eighty-eight guests enjoyed the signature cocktail, Bourbon Slushy, and the fall-themed four-course dinner prepared by Dr. Donald Baxter with assistance by Teri Marshall and wine-paring by Dr. Dennis Borczon and Joe Zegarelli. Following dinner, Kate Neubert-Lechner, Domenic Del Greco and Andrew Rainbow entertained the guests with a medley of "fall" songs.

*Donors Nancy and Bruce Kern,
Lynn McBrier and Susan Trott*



Aerial view of donor-dinner guests



*Christine Eddy, Edward DiMattio,
and Kathy and Doug Grisier*



*Kate Neubert-Lechner, Kathy and
Dave Lastowski and Board Member
Brad Fox (back)*



Buddytini!

HOLIDAY PARTY

BUDDYTINI A PARTY HIT

Annual fund chairs, the Kennedy family, hosted the Erie Playhouse holiday party on December 9, 2014 from 5:30 to 7:30pm at the Erie Playhouse. Invited guests socialized with friends and watched a Showstopper performance on the set of *Elf* while enjoying hors d'oeuvres, wine and beer, along with the featured drink, a Buddytini.

Many thanks to the wonderful holiday party Planning Committee of Thomas Bedner, Diana Bool, Kathy Grisier, Kelly Kennedy, Carl Larese, and Teri Marshall. Also, thank you to the additional helpers from the Playhouse staff and the Board of Directors.



Judy and Jim Dible and Marion and Bob Gallivan



*David Cockley and Brad Turner of
The Communications Factory*

98th SEASON OPENS WITH *SHREK*

CLOUD 9 WINE BAR HOSTS EVENT

On September 19, 2014, invited guests celebrated the opening of our 98th season with a pre-show gathering at Cloud 9 Wine Bar, followed by the premiere performance of *Shrek*. Thank you to Arrowhead Wine Cellar, Erie Beer, and Penn Shore Winery for generously providing the drinks for this wonderful event. We would like to extend a special thanks to Bertrand and the staff at Cloud 9 Wine Bar for hosting the event. According to the Cloud 9 website, they are "everyday people with a passion for great drinks and delicious food...who want to share that passion with the world by providing a sanctuary for all things divine." Our guests will attest to that!

*Stellar ambiance
and great food at
Cloud 9*



Board President Carl Larese, David and Linda Brennan and Board Member Gary Matczak



Kim and Nick Scott with Development Director Teri Marshall



Disney's *The Little Mermaid*



The Snow Queen

2nd ANNUAL LAUNCH PARTY

RED CARPET NIGHT AT THE PLAYHOUSE

On March 25, 2015, a standing room only crowd of VIP guests joined us at the Erie Playhouse for an exclusive REVEAL of our 2015-2016 Season. Guests enjoyed butlered hors d'oeuvres and complimentary beer and wine. Once again we offered special promotions to guests who renewed or purchased traditional or open card season tickets that night!



The Bayle family enjoys the Launch Party. Gabe (right front) brought down the house with his *A Christmas Story* solo.



Playhouse family members Bob Martin, Casey Conrad-Medvis, and Chatiqua Keyes-Carr



A standing room only crowd attends this highly-anticipated event.

MAJOR RENOVATION COMPLETED

IMPROVED SAFETY...ENHANCED AESTHETICS...INCREASED EFFICIENCY

What started as a simple question from an Erie Playhouse patron, “What project can I help the Playhouse with?” turned into a \$70,000 renovation!

Our initial response was to replace the 29-year old carpeting inside the high-traffic, inner lobby and theatre aisles; the stairs to and in the lower lobby; the box office; and office spaces. Before that was done, however, the staff and Board chose to repaint and wallpaper those areas first, something that had not been done in three decades. In addition, we purchased office furniture to replace the dilapidated seconds that did not properly fit the space and hindered inter-office communication and efficiency. This was the first time matching furniture was purchased and efficient work spaces were designed at the 10th Street theatre.

Some additions to improve logistics and make the project more complete included replacing the wooden side of the lower lobby stairs, adding carpet transitions in the theatre and fixing Loge step lights, staining five wooden doors, adding and moving data lines, professional hanging of show posters and portraits, and reupholstering the lower lobby bench cushions. Also, the Playhouse Wing turned these benches into much-needed storage units.

The Playhouse was glad to work with 10 local vendors – ProSource Wholesale Floorcoverings, PPG Paints, Sanner Office Supply (WB Mason at the end of the project), Vogt Finishes LLC, Acclaim Electric, Scobell Heating and Air Conditioning, Sesler Builders, Gris  Audio Visual, Sal Clemente/Artworks, and Cover to Cover.

BEFORE



AFTER



This project became a reality with the generous support of:

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Anonymous | Sara Mapstone |
| Erie Community Foundation | Mark and Sharon Kresse |
| Helping Today Grant | Bobbi Pollock |
| Erie Playhouse Wing | Anonymous |
| Scott and Angela Allen | |
| 12 for \$12 Raffle Revenue | |

BEFORE



AFTER



PUTTING PATRONS' SAFETY FIRST DEFIBRILLATOR AND CAMERAS INSTALLED

A generous donation from Sara Mapstone, an ardent Playhouse supporter, and a grant from AEDgrant, enabled us to purchase and install a defibrillator. Angela Pulling, Playhouse House Manager, received her certification to operate the device, and Board member, Tom Wager, gave a workshop to the entire Playhouse staff on the appropriate operation of the AED.



Thanks to a matching external security camera grant from the Erie Downtown Partnership, we were able to purchase and install three cameras that monitor the front, alley and back of our venue 24/7. Cyber System US designed the security camera plan and installed the cameras and monitoring device.

GIVE THE KIDS AN ARTS ADVANTAGE

\$100 BUSINESS SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Our newly created "Give the Kids an Arts Advantage," a \$100 business sponsorship program raised \$2,800 this fiscal year. Arts Advantage funds provided the following:

- two American Sign Language signers for *Peter Pan*, *Elf*, and *Sleeping Beauty* so that Deaf and hard of hearing children and adults could experience the joy of live theatre, many for the very first time;
- 110 tickets for underserved families participating in the United Way of Erie County's Imagination Library Reading Buddies program to see *Sleeping Beauty* & *Peter Pan, Jr.*;
- 10 scholarships for acting classes and camps;
- tickets for 40 students from the Erie School District to attend *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- tickets for 40 children from the downtown KinderCare to attend the Summer Play Series performance of *Dorothy in Wonderland*; and
- subsidized tickets which enabled 3,452 students to attend school matinees of *Sleepy Hollow*, *Peter Pan*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

We are grateful to these businesses and individuals who support the Erie Playhouse's mission of providing children access to first-class theatre with a focus on education.

If you would like more information on this program, contact Kate Neubert-Lechner, Youtheatre and Education Director, at 814.454.2854 ext. 6 or kate@erieplayhouse.org.

Thank you to our \$100 "Give the Kids an Arts Advantage" Corporate and Business Sponsors*



Susan & Don Baxter	Koldrock Waters, Inc.
Baycrete Redi-Mix, Inc.	Lakeside Auto Group
Beute & Bliley Inc.	Lorei Portraits
Scott & Patty Bonnell	Matrix Tool, Inc.
The Bradley H. Foulk Children's Advocacy Center of Erie County	New Motors
Claudine's Consignment	Organ Supply Industries
CMIT Solutions of Erie	The Plymouth Tavern
Doleski & Wolford Orthodontics	The Sassy Peacock
Electrical & Mechanical Systems Inc.	Smuggler's Wharf, Inc
Erie Bronze & Aluminum	Thayer Power & Communication Line Construction Co., LLC
Glenwood Beer - Michael Green	We ALL Love Pancakes - Jennifer Greevy
Aron & Cynde Goldberg	Werle & Rushe Insurance Agency, LLC
Interstate Mitsubishi	George Winston Co., Inc.
Donors as of 2/20/15	Joanna & Roger Zurn

Your generosity is making a difference!

5TH ANNUAL ERIE GIVES DAY A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS

PLAYHOUSE ONE OF 339 NONPROFITS PARTICIPATING

On Aug. 11, 2015, The Erie Community Foundation hosted the 5th Annual Erie Gives Day. Participating nonprofits received a percentage of the \$220,000 pro-rated match pool from GE Transportation, Erie Insurance, Presque Isle Downs & Casino, Eriez Magnetics, The Erie Community Foundation and an Anonymous Donor. In 12 hours \$2,821,923 was raised.

Like the last three years, the Erie Playhouse placed in the top 10 for number of donors and amount raised. We ranked sixth in the number of donors with 276, up 60 donors from last year, and fifth in the amount raised at \$55,281. With the pro-rated match, our total was \$58,541.37. The funds were used to benefit year-round Youtheatre Programming, our Pre-K initiative *PLAYtime*, and continuing improvements to the safety and security in and around the theatre.

A heartfelt thank you to The Erie Community Foundation for hosting and financially supporting the event; GE Transportation, Erie Insurance, Presque Isle Downs & Casino, Eriez Magnetics, and an Anonymous Donor for providing the pro-rated matching funds; and our 276 generous donors from coast to coast!

Erie Community Foundation Board of Trustees President Russell Warner, Vice President of Marketing and Community Relations Erin Fessler, and President Michael Batchelor celebrate 2015 Erie Gives Day with Almitra Clerkin.



7th REVERENDS UNCORK'D...THEY'RE BACK

MICHAEL MALTHANER PRESENTED DR. DORIS SNELL AWARD

On Sunday, June 28, 2015, 190 guests traveled to Riverside: The Inn at Cambridge Springs for the 7th annual *Reverends Uncork'd...They're Back!* Guests enjoyed appetizers and drinks in the lounge, breezeway and porch followed by dinner in the ballroom. The celebrity performers included Reverends Shawn Clerkin and David Edmunds and Monsignor Tom McSweeney.

Congratulations to Michael Malthaner who was presented with the Doris Snell Award for his outstanding contribution to musical theatre and his service to the Erie Playhouse. Michael, who recently retired as Director of the McDowell Center for the Performing Arts, is credited with directing over 150 different productions. He served as the arts education ambassador to Zibo, China, a sister city to Erie, and was a 2010 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year finalist.

For the Erie Playhouse, he has appeared on stage numerous times, conducted many of our orchestras and, with his writing partner, Charles Corritore, has written four original musicals for MC2 Productions which premiered at our theatre—*Jane Eyre*, *Arthur's Halloween*, *Santa Claus: The Musical!* and *Beauty and the Beast*.

Many family, friends and former students of Michael's were on hand as Charlie Corritore, Playhouse Business Manager, presented him with the award. The cast of *Peeved*, an MC2 Production, entertained the guests with a song from the show, and Eli Kerr, a former student of Michael's, sang "Look to Your Heart" from *Jane Eyre*.



Doris Snell Award-Winner Michael Malthaner with his friend and musical partner Charlie Corritore.

A special thank you to Riverside: The Inn at Cambridge Springs, C. A. Curtze Company, Arrowhead Wine Cellars, Penn Shore Vineyards, Stella Artois, Labatt Blue, Magic Hat, Romolo Chocolates and Larese Floral Design for making this event possible!



Msgr. Tom McSweeney, Rev. Shawn Clerkin, and Rev. Dave Edmunds entertain 190 guests.



Norbert Meister, Charlie Sacco and Patti Sullivan congratulate their friend Msgr. Tom McSweeney after a memorable performance.



All the Playhouse talent in attendance at Reverends Uncork'd perform in the finale.

THE OFTEN HIDDEN COST OF DOING THEATRE

A SCENE FROM *ELF*



SCENERY & LIGHTS

Before the annual budget is presented to the Board of Directors for approval, the staging of each production is carefully researched and the cost for sets, props, lighting/sound design, and costuming is carefully estimated. Once the budget is approved, the production staff strives to remain within that budget. The expenses for all Mainstage and Youtheatre performances totaled \$268,055. Budgets ranged from \$9,692 for a Youtheatre musical, to \$16,017 for a Mainstage play and \$48,876 for a Mainstage musical. Pictured is a scene from *Elf* to illustrate the often hidden costs of producing live theatre.



SERVING THE COMMUNITY

A REALITY, THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT

The Playhouse believes that theatre is for everyone, and that it does not begin and end with the rise and fall of the curtain; therefore, we aim to make our work accessible to as wide an audience as possible, deepening engagement throughout the community and positioning our theatre as a popular destination.

This belief is increasingly developing into reality, thanks to the generosity of donors and businesses that support our outreach programming!

We have continued our partnership with The Barber National Institute (BNI) to create and produce a theatrical production. The students presented this year's show, based on the United Way's Imagination Library book *I am a Rainbow*, by Dolly Parton, to the BNI students and general public on March 19th. For six consecutive years, we have partnered with Big Brothers/Sisters of Erie County by providing, at no cost to participants, three pre-show workshops, a healthy lunch at Franco's, followed by attendance to the show.

We also hired the services of two American Sign Language signers for *Elf*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Disney's Peter Pan Jr.* so that families with children who are Deaf and hard of hearing can enjoy live theatre. We also offered "Sensory-Friendly" performances to *Sleepy Hollow*, *Elf*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Disney's Peter Pan Jr.* These performances are designed for families with children with autism or other developmental disabilities. At these performances the theater environment was modified into a welcoming Sensory-Friendly, comfortable, and judgment-free space. These programs are supported and planned in cooperation with Erie Arts & Culture; Barber National Institute; Autism Society: Northwestern PA; KaleidAScope of Erie;

Crystal Arlington, Lake Erie Autism Diagnostic, Education and Research Services Program; the Achievement Center; Schuster Re-Grant Initiative; and the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit.



Barber National Institute students perform in *I am a Rainbow*, March 19, 2015.

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Kate Neubert-Lechner, Youtheatre/Education Director

Andrew Rainbow, Music Director



TUESDAY TALENT

WSEE-TV 35 Tuesday Talent spot – Matt and Aurora Fuchs (Atticus and Scout Finch) share a photo with Eva Mastromatteo after promoting *To Kill a Mockingbird*.



Sunset Boulevard 2015



Sleeping Beauty 2015



The Erie Playhouse was the winner of the Nonprofit Partnership's Annual Report Contest in the large organization category (budget greater than \$500,000). There are over 120 nonprofits in the Erie region with budgets over \$500,000. The Playhouse is the first arts organization to receive this recognition in the six-year history of the award.

2014 ANNUAL REPORT
REPORTING ON FISCAL YEAR ENDING AUGUST 31, 2014



CONNECTION



ERIE PLAYHOUSE WING

13 WEST 10TH STREET
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