



2016 ANNUAL REPORT
Reporting in fiscal year ending August 31, 2016

A photograph of two actors on a stage. The actor on the left is a young woman with brown hair, wearing a red vest over a light-colored, tiered skirt and a wide brown belt. She is looking towards the right. The actor on the right is a young man with short brown hair, wearing a black vest with various pins, a black and white striped skirt, and a black headpiece. He is smiling and has his arms outstretched. Both actors are holding large, black, feathery wings. The background is a blue stage set with large, golden gears and mechanical structures.

CONNECTION



Honk 2015



Sondheim on Sondheim 2016



The Snow Queen 2016



Kiss Me, Kate 2016



Nice Work If You Can Get It 2016



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.

***Special thanks to our 2015-2016
Mainstage and Youtheatre season sponsors.***

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MARKING 99 SEASONS OF EXCITING THEATRE

The best part of my job is not just seeing the creativity and services firsthand, but hearing about the positive changes that experiences at the Erie Playhouse are making in people's lives. Being on the receiving end of these testimonials is incredibly rewarding, and I always look forward to receiving these notes as they fuel my passion for our mission.

For 99 years, the Playhouse has served our region through the production of theater that strives for excellence while remaining affordable and accessible to all. Since our modest grassroots beginnings on 99 borrowed funeral chairs in the Reed Hotel to our current home on 10th Street, we have grown to serve a wider community by fostering outreach programs to introduce people of all ages and walks of life to the joys and possibilities of theater.

We are only as strong as our relationships with our stakeholders and our community. This is one reason that we share our annual report with you, our supporters. With immense gratitude, we celebrate the support of our donors and patrons with every performance that receives a standing ovation, with every hand raised in a drama class, and with every "ah ha" moment in our preschool outreach.

We owe our success to our passionate contributors, past and present, whether they be performer, audience member, volunteer, donor or employee. Because of you, the Playhouse will continue to forge ahead, engaging people in the transformative power of theater, stimulating conversation and encouraging artistic skill and creativity.

See you at the theatre,

Almitra Clerkin



MEET THE YATES FAMILY 2016-2017 ANNUAL FUND CHAIRS



Bruce, Trish, Jenna Lindberg, Devon and Jesse Yates



Devon, center, *Mamma Mia!*



Trish and Bruce renew their wedding vows on stage of *Sunset Boulevard* 2016, with life-long friend, Shawn Clerkin.

“In the Circle of Life, it’s the wheel of fortune”...is the perfect lyric to introduce the Yates Family. Their fortunate journey with the Erie Playhouse began in 1981 when mom, Trish Yates, auditioned for her first show and played Maria opposite Shawn Clerkin as Tony in *West Side Story*. This became the first of many memorable moments shared at the Playhouse. Trish went on to marry Bruce Yates who joined in her love for the theatre as he played in the orchestra and went on to conduct many Mainstage productions.

Her daughter Devon was on the stage before she was even born! Devon went on to play her first role as Mary in *The Secret Garden* alongside mom on stage and dad conducting in the pit. Devon continued that love attending Baldwin Wallace for musical theatre and eventually moved to NYC to pursue a career as an actress. She just finished a run of *Mamma Mia!* as the mother, Donna.

Youtheatre and Mainstage productions were a natural part of their family lives and when son Jesse came along, he found himself backstage “helping the crew” at a very early age. He made his Mainstage debut as Danny Zuko in *Grease* where he met the love of his life, Rizzo, Jenna Lindberg. They have played opposite each other on stage and will now tie the knot in real life this May!

At present, Bruce is a music teacher at General McLane and Trish works in the arts producing musicals and running her own vocal studio. These days, she also enjoys working as Kate Kneubert-Lechner’s assistant with PLAYtime, a Playhouse program to promote literacy through the arts for children two to five years of age.

It is no surprise that the Playhouse has been the constant thread in the Yates’ household keeping the family connected. Friends, family, love, marriage and a lifetime of joy have all been a part of this journey and the whole family is honored to be selected as the 2016-2017 annual fund chairs as we continue to “find our place on a path unwinding in the circle of life” at the Playhouse.

As I reflected on our time at the Playhouse preparing for this article, I was emotional and joyful. I remember my mother passed away during the run of *Grease* and my out of town family all watching Jesse on stage the night before her funeral. I remember my husband surprising me on stage with a 30-year wedding renewal right at curtain call of *Sunset Boulevard*. I remember getting married during the run of *West Side Story*, and Almi and Shawn Clerkin getting married the very same day! So many important moments in my life. I hope my words capture the true love I have for the Playhouse!

Trish

2015-2016 GRANTS

American Tinning and Galvanizing Company – Neighborhood Assistance Program for PLAYtime pre-K Program

Erie Arts and Culture – Programming and Operations

The Erie Community Foundation – Facility Improvements

Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority – Lead Asset Sustainability and Programming Growth

Gannon University Erie GAINS – Outreach to Emerson-Gridley School

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

UPMC Health Plan – Neighborhood Assistance Program for PLAYtime Pre-K Program



PLAYtime at Downtown YMCA 2015

2015-2016 SPONSORS

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UPMC Health Plan

SHOW AND EVENT SPONSORS

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Penn Shore Vineyard

PNC

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Saint Mary's Home of Erie

Widget Financial

WJET/FOX 66/YourErie.com

WMCE

EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT TAX CREDIT CHANGING CHILDRENS' LIVES

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 such as the Erie Playhouse. Funding from the EITC program allows us to bring increased educational opportunities to thousands of children annually, thereby continuing its mission to provide educational and cultural enrichment to children in Erie County. This program only funds innovative educational programs that are pre-approved by the DCED. It does not fund general operating expenses.

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.

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.



Long-time Playhouse family member Matt Sherr, Kate Neubert-Lechner and Matt's husband Sandro Barbosa

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
MacDonald Illig
MAXPRO Technologies
Scott 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.

SUPPORTING THE ERIE PLAYHOUSE THROUGH A PLANNED GIFT

JOIN THE ELISHA H. MACK BEQUEST SOCIETY

Donors who wish to ensure that future generations are able to experience the joy of live theatre can do so by becoming a member of the Elisha H. Mack Community Bequest Society. Through planned giving, you can find the charitable gift plan that best fits your goals for your family, finances and philanthropy.

BEQUESTS The simplest way to make a planned gift is to name the Erie Playhouse in your will. You can make a bequest of a certain dollar amount, a particular piece of property, a percentage of your estate, or a “residual” (what is left after making specific provisions for loved ones).

GIFTS FROM LIFE INSURANCE OR RETIREMENT PLANS Another option is to name the Playhouse as a beneficiary of your life insurance or retirement plan. When the original purpose for such plans no longer applies – such as to educate children now grown or to provide financial security for a spouse – these assets can be redirected to help support a cause you value.

GIFTS THAT PAY YOU INCOME If you’d like to support our mission and receive steady payments during your retirement years, a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust may be right for you.



***Elisha H. Mack**, the founder of the Boston Store in 1935, established a community fund that eventually became The Erie Community Foundation. In recognition of his spirit of giving, The Erie Community Foundation created The Elisha H. Mack Community Bequest Society to recognize donors who include The Erie Community Foundation or any of its Agency Endowment Funds in their estate-planning.*

If you would like to have a confidential dialogue about supporting the Erie Playhouse with a planned 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.

A LOVERLY EVENING

PLAYHOUSE AND PHILHARMONIC COLLABORATE ON *MY FAIR LADY*

On May 21, 2016, the Erie Playhouse joined forces with the Erie Philharmonic to bring a fully-staged concert of Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe’s masterpiece, *My Fair Lady*, to life at the Warner Theatre. The orchestra and 20 costumed actors shared the stage. The leads included Kate Neubert-Lechner as Eliza Doolittle, Shawn Clerkin as Henry Higgins, Barry McAndrew as Colonel Pickering, and Julian Decker as Freddy Eynsford-Hill. Hundreds of concert goers also purchased tickets to attend the pre-concert reception in the Warner Theatre lobby and post-show party at the Boston Store Place. These events were catered by Bill Miller of Sabella’s Catering.

“It’s always such a joy to perform with the Erie Phil,” said Playhouse Executive Director Almitra Clerkin, who codirected the show with Andrew Rainbow, Playhouse Music Director. “We’re very excited about this collaborative effort, especially because this is one of the best-crafted musicals you’ll find.” The Erie Phil now “lives” on 10th Street with the Playhouse, just two doors west on the 3rd floor offices in the Meiser Building.

This collaboration was a significant fundraising event for both organizations, sharing the profits evenly.



Barry McAndrew as Pickering (left) with Shawn Clerkin as Higgins (right) are enthralled by Rich Tryzbiak as Doolittle (center) as Maestro Daniel Meyer and the orchestra look on.



The ensemble encircles Kate Neubert-Lechner (Eliza) in *Wouldn't It Be Lovely*.

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

FISCAL YEAR IN REVIEW

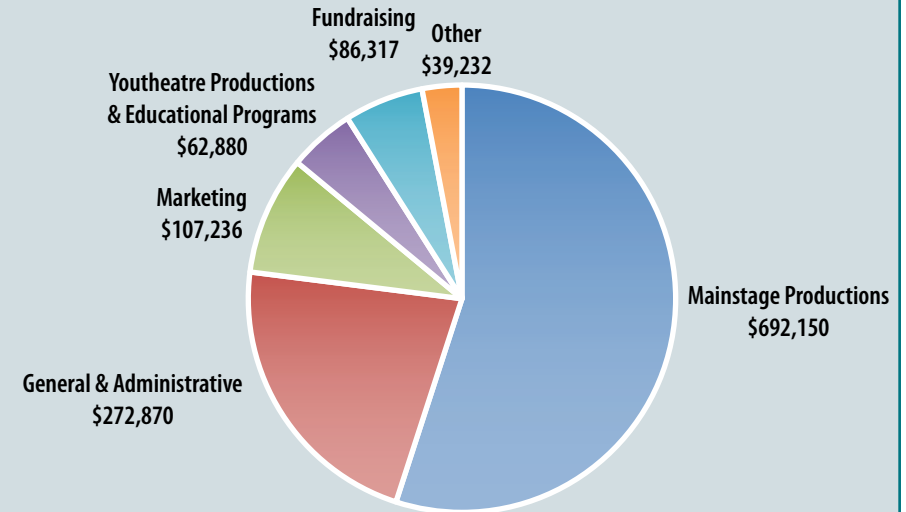
During the 2016 fiscal year, the Erie Playhouse turned in another strong, positive financial performance and launched fundraising plans for major capital improvements and building our endowment. We introduced educational and outreach initiatives that better serve the needs of our community. Our continued success is due to the support of our many sponsors, partners, donors, patrons, board members and dedicated staff and volunteers. We are pleased to report a fiscal report showing a surplus balance of \$105,657 on an operating budget of \$1.3 million.



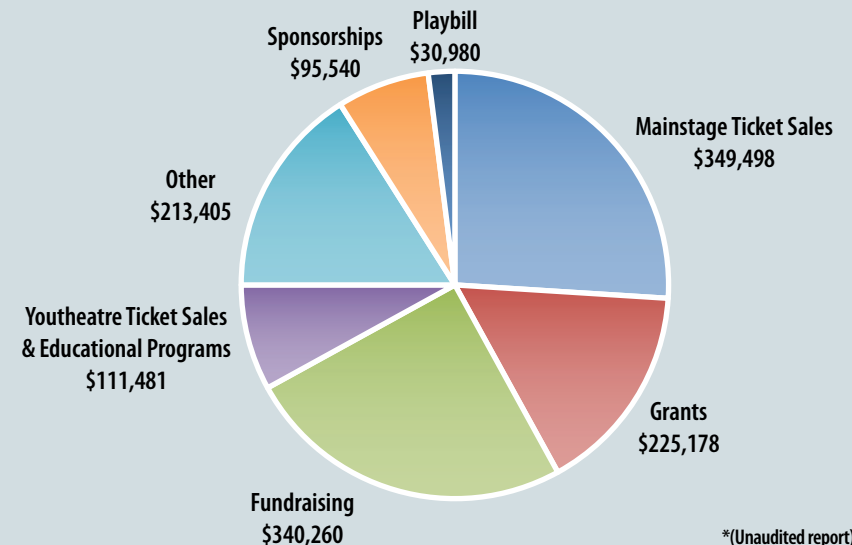
Richard Merwin (left) with Susan and Charles Furr attend the Annual Donor Dinner held at the Sheraton Hotel.

FISCAL YEAR ENDING AUGUST 31, 2016

EXPENSES \$1,260,685



REVENUE \$1,366,342





SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE 2ND CENTURY **MAJOR FUNDRAISING PLANNED FOR 100TH SEASON**

Since the first production in 1916, the Erie Playhouse has come a long way. As we move toward our second century, we are proud that we have continued the vision of founder, Henry Vincent, to build a participatory, community organization that promotes and celebrates live theatre. We are now at a critical junction. To continue the tradition of artistic excellence, we set a goal to raise 2.4 million dollars through a grassroots appeal.

To meet the needs that current theatre demands and ensure patron comfort, 1.4 million dollars will go to sink the orchestra pit, create under-the-stage green room and storage, purchase new lighting/dimmer system, replace HVAC system, add a backstage restroom and remodel all theatre restrooms. Construction is scheduled to begin after *Oklahoma!* closes on July 23, 2017.

So that everyone can “share” in the future of the Playhouse, we are also creating a one million dollar endowment by selling 10,000 shares at \$100 each. The interest earned will be reinvested in education, outreach and productions.

If you would like *to play a part* in the renovations or endowment, we have enclosed a remittance envelope for your convenience. If you have any questions, please contact Almitra Clerkin at 814.454.2852 ext. 7 or almi@erieplayhouse.org.

Thank you to those who have shared their generous support to date. We look forward to all of you participating in the Playhouse future through this effort.

LAUNCH OF 100th ANNIVERSARY AT DONOR DINNER

SKYPE WITH MIKE

On Tuesday, November 17, Keith and Kelly Kennedy, the 2015 annual fund chairs, hosted the donor appreciation dinner and 100th anniversary launch party in the Harlequin Ballroom at the Sheraton Erie Bayfront. Following cocktails and hor d'oeuvres, guests enjoyed a three-course meal with wine pairing. Kudos to Thomas Bedner, Sheraton Food and Beverage Manager, and his entire staff, for the creative menu that was impeccably prepared and served.

Almitra Clerkin, Executive Director, publicly unveiled for the first time **SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE 2ND CENTURY**, the ambitious plan to complete theatre renovations and build an endowment. Please refer to page nine to read details of the plan.

Mike Karns, the 99th season annual fund chair, skyped from the set of *Hamilton* in New York City with our guests. Mike, who did his first Playhouse production when he was in 5th grade, is the founder and CEO of Marathon Live Entertainment, a producing and social media marketing company, as well as a Broadway producer.



Msgr. Tom McSweeney offered the blessing and Playhouse talent entertained the guests.

Front row: Patrick Thiem, Shawn Clerkin, Leah Johnson, Andrew Rainbow. Back row: Msgr. Tom McSweeney, Brendan Daugherty, Kate Neubert-Lechner, Christine Daugherty, John Burton.



Almitra Clerkin, Noel Burgoyne, Betsy Guelcher, Joan Harf and Bobbi Pollock celebrate the evening's success.

ANNUAL FUND SURPASSES GOAL YOUR GIFT COUNTS

Thanks to **YOU**, we successfully exceeded our annual fund goal yet again. We are pleased to report that under the leadership of Mike Karns, the annual fund campaign raised \$184,357, surpassing its \$175,000 goal for fiscal year 2016. Six hundred thirty-four individuals made donations, including a record-breaking 238 first-time donors!

Like most other non-profit community theatres, we charge 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; it makes it possible to pursue the excellence in everything we do.



Loretto and Pierre Bellicini from LECOM enjoy the evening at the launch of the 100th Season

Thank you to our 2015-2016 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.

Producer Circle

(\$2,500 +)

+Anonymous
+Don & Susan Baxter
+Richard & Victoria Brogdon
Erie Community Foundation
+Erie Insurance Matching Gifts Program
GE Matching Grant Foundation
Dr. & Mrs. R. T. Guelcher
Anonymous
+*The Kennedy Family*
The Kern Family Foundation
Lawrence Park Athletic Association
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Barbara R. Pollock
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Marquette Savings Bank
Vorsheck Family Foundation, Inc.

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(\$1,000-\$2,499)

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+Leo & Teresa Brugger
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Joanna & Roger Zurn

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(\$600-\$999)

+Chevron Humankind Matching Gift Program
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+ Indicates increase giving
Bold indicates new donors
Italics indicates matching gift

ERIE PLAYHOUSE MAINSTAGE AND YOUTHEATRE 99TH SEASON

The following statistics highlight attendance and production expenses for our 2015-2016 season.

The Little Mermaid



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$69,296

Production Expenses: \$52,585

Performances: 13

Attendance: 4,400

Percent Capacity: 78%



The Game's Afoot



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$34,882

Production Expenses: \$14,122

Performances: 11

Attendance: 1,925

Percent Capacity: 42%



Honk Youtheatre



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$22,311

Production Expenses: \$13,793

Performances: 12

Attendance: 2,421

Percent Capacity: 47%





A Christmas Story, The Musical



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$70,167

Production Expenses: \$29,544

Performances: 15

Attendance: 3,863

Percent Capacity: 60%



The Snow Queen

Youtheatre



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$32,522

Production Expenses: \$14,128

Performances: 12

Attendance: 3,561

Percent Capacity: 69%



Nice Work If You Can Get It



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$39,860

Production Expenses: \$25,954

Performances: 11

Attendance: 2,301

Percent Capacity: 50%





Peter and the Starcatcher



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$43,291

Production Expenses: \$19,220

Performances: 12

Attendance: 2,571

Percent Capacity: 50%



Rapunzel A New Musical

Youtheatre



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$41,593

Production Expenses: \$14,278

Performances: 12

Attendance: 4,526

Percent Capacity: 87%



Kiss Me, Kate



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$42,800

Production Expenses: \$29,626

Performances: 11

Attendance: 2,508

Percent Capacity: 54%





One Slight Hitch



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$39,991

Production Expenses: \$11,750

Performances: 11

Attendance: 1,667

Percent Capacity: 36%



Sister Act



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$59,900

Production Expenses: \$30,798

Performances: 14

Attendance: 3,710

Percent Capacity: 61%



Sondheim on Sondheim in Concert

Special Event

HIS STORY. HIS INSPIRATION. HIS GENIUS

On April 8-9, 2016, we presented Sondheim on Sondheim, an intimate portrait of famed composer/lyricist Stephen Sondheim. The musical performance featured celebrated compositions from nineteen Sondheim shows produced over a 62-year period with taped interviews of Sondheim that we projected on a large screen. After the April 8 performance, we invited students from Gannon University, Penn State Behrend, and audience members at large to join Andrew Rainbow, Music Director; Richard Davis, Director; Shawn Clerkin, Associate Professor, School of Communication at Gannon University; and Emily Cassano, Lecturer in Theatre at The Behrend College in a post-show talkback. The focus of the talkback was why many critics claim Sondheim is the "single most important force in the American musical theater." A special thank you to Erie Arts and Culture for their generous grant support for this concert and talk back.





Sue Lechner, Teri Marshall, Almitra Clerkin and Board President Carl Larese

DISNEY'S THE LITTLE MERMAID OPENED THE 99TH SEASON

The Erie Playhouse invites our valued supporters (donors at the benefactor level and above, sponsors, advertisers, media, government officials, partners and special friends) to join us each year for a season opening celebration! On September 10, 2015, invitees helped us open our 99th season with a pre-show party at 21 la rue dix, followed by the premiere performance of Disney's *The Little Mermaid*.

Special thank you to Matt Sherr, owner of 21 la rue dix, Make It Fabulous, Two Sisters Sweet Treats, Pufferbelly, 1201 Kitchen, The Plymouth Tavern, Labella, Cloud 9, Wegmans West, Sheraton Erie Bayfront, Sabella's Catering, Calamari, and Pineapple Eddies.



Grant and his mom, Janis Filbeck, David and Linda Brennan



Dick Reichel, Sharon Reichel and Erin Fessler



Dave Lastowski and Renie and Brady Louis



Judy and Jim Dible

HOLIDAY PARTY RED RYDER MARTINI A CROWD PLEASER

The Erie Playhouse hosted its holiday party on December 15th, 2015, from 5:30 to 7:30pm at the Playhouse. Invited guests socialized with friends and watched a Showstopper performance on the set of *A Christmas Story: The Musical* while enjoying hors d'oeuvres, wine and beer, along with the featured drink, a Red Ryder Martini.

A special thank you to the Planning and Food Committee of Thomas Bedner, Kristy Garvin, Kathy Grisier, Kelly Kennedy, Carl Larese, Susan Lechner, Teri Marshall and Amy Tevis. Also, thank you to the additional helpers from the Playhouse staff and the Board of Directors.

A special thank you to Cloud 9 owner, Bertrand Artigues, for the delicious crab wontons, skewered chicken and stuffed mushrooms. Cloud 9, located a block from the theatre on 10th and French, offers a bar-centric approach to fine wines and good food AND it is open before and after our shows.



Bill Williams and Christine Temple



Geri Cicchetti, Christine Carmichael and Noel Burgoyne



Volunteers, cast and guests at the 100th Season Launch Party



3RD ANNUAL LAUNCH PARTY

100th SEASON ANNOUNCED

On April 16, 2016, a standing-room-only crowd packed the Playhouse for the exclusive reveal of our 100th season and the special celebratory events planned to mark this milestone. 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!



PLAYtime PROGRAM COMPLETES SUCCESSFUL FIRST YEAR

AT-RISK CHILDREN WORK TOWARD READING READINESS

PLAYtime is our new three-year Early Childhood Program designed to mitigate factors that place children at risk of poor academic outcomes. It engages children in art-related activities to start them on the right path to reading and school success, trains parents in creative literacy-building techniques, and involves families in live theatre.

For children, we incorporated the United Way of Erie County's Imagination Library books into art-related activities designed to build literacy. One hundred two and three year olds participated in 48 classroom sessions, each running 20-25 minutes in length at St. Martin's Center, St. Benedict Day Care Center, Downtown YMCA, and City Center Early Connections. Results included improved children's attentiveness and engagement during PLAYtime activities, stronger emotional and intellectual response to books and activities, increased participation in PLAYtime sessions, and heightened interest in books during free play throughout the day. Next year we will add to PLAYtime a new group of two and three years olds at each center and add two more centers, while continuing to work with the same children from the first year as they move up.

For parents of participants in PLAYtime, we offered three PARENT & ME sessions after performances of *My Lucky Day*. The 300 participants shared in activities that promote excitement about books, literacy skills, and more family-read-together-time at home.

**The Erie Playhouse would like to thank the
following for supporting PLAYtime:**

**The United Way of Erie County
American Tinning and Galvanizing Company
UPMC Health Plan**



A word from PLAYtime Director, Kate Neubert-Lechner:

“While I am so proud of the cumulative impact that PLAYtime has had on everyone who has participated, whether in the classroom, seeing a show or participating in a PARENT & ME session, I measure the success one child at a time. When I began in September at St. Benedict's Day Care Center, a boy in my classroom, who is currently assisted by Early Intervention, was at times quiet and withdrawn, other times overwhelmed and emotional, but at all times, not engaged or interested in participating. Each week I witnessed a slow metamorphosis and can report that he now smiles, laughs, looks me in the eye, and is actively engaged and participating in each session. Last week, he took my hands and danced with me while we did an activity. **THAT is PLAYtime success.**”



The target population served by PLAYtime is at-risk two to five year olds and their parents residing primarily in the City of Erie. The target population for the musicals is all families participating in the Imagination Library program. We also collaborate with the United Way to enrich their Reading Buddies program with art- related activities centered around our Youtheatre shows, especially at county locations identified with a high percentage of at-risk families.

Above and right: Cast members of *Rumpelstiltskin* participate in the United Way's Reading Buddies.



Zack Westfall, Pig, greets young audience members.



Zach Hyman, Wolf, sings of his garden.



Zack Westfall, Pig, outsmarts his friend the Wolf.

FIRST PLAYtime MUSICAL *MY LUCKY DAY*

The Imagination Library book, *My Lucky Day* by Keiko Kaska, tells the story of a piglet who accidentally knocks on a fox's door. The fox can hardly believe his good luck that dinner just shows up on his doorstep. It must be his lucky day! Or is it? Well, it was a lucky day for the children and parents who attended one of the four free performances in April 2016 of *My Lucky Day*, the delightful musical based on this book.

Over 700 attended the show, collaboratively produced by the Erie Playhouse and members of Gannon University's Alpha Psi Omega Theatre Fraternity and supported by the PLAYtime grant from the United Way of Erie County.

In 2017, we will add to *My Lucky Day* a second musical based on another Imagination Library book, *One Cool Friend*.



"My daughter and I attended the 10am show today and we LOVED it!!! The show was the perfect length to hold her attention, which allowed for a personal victory of us: we stayed the whole time. Here's to many more!!!"

"Thank you, Erie Playhouse, for this fantastic opportunity for our family to see a show together! Our little ones LOVED the show and so did we. We can't wait for the next one."



ALL THINGS PRINCESS

TWO PRINCESS BALLS SOLD OUT IN TWO DAYS

Sold out crowds enjoyed the 6th annual Princess Ball on April 3 and 10, 2016, held in the Crystal Ballroom at the Ambassador Hotel. The glittered-up princesses and guests enjoyed tea sandwiches, wraps and cupcakes. Following refreshments, the princesses and their escorts made their Grand Entrance for dancing and royal photo opportunities. A special thank you to the Ambassador Hotel and its staff for their attention to detail and wonderful service.



Princess Ball guests enjoy dancing and singing with the princes and princesses



A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE ERIE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



Almitra Clerkin and Carl Larese are presented with a \$29,800 grant for our Patron Services Program by The Erie Community Foundation staff George Espy, Michael Batchelor and Patrick Herr.

RECORD SHATTERING ERIE GIVES DAY

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

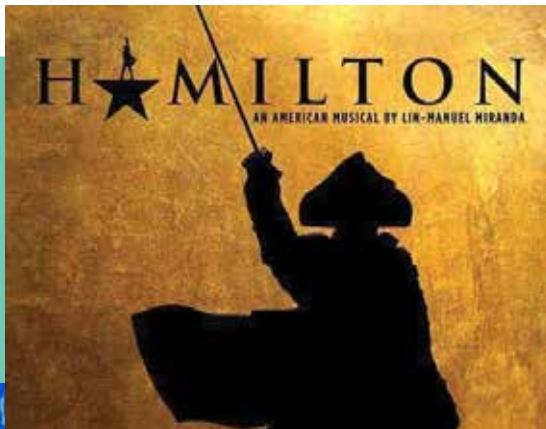
On August 9, 2016, The Erie Community Foundation hosted the 6th Annual Erie Gives. In 12 hours, generous supporters from across the country donated \$3,451,087 to their favorite nonprofits. These gifts were enhanced by a \$220,000 pro-rated match pool.

The Erie Playhouse is pleased to report that we once again placed in the top 10 for number of donors and amount raised. We ranked third in the number of donors and seventh in the amount raised at \$69,497.94. With the pro-rated match and the incentive prize of \$5,000 for being the nonprofit with the highest increase in number of donors, our grand total was \$77,840.81!

A heartfelt thank you to The Erie Community Foundation for sponsoring this event and to The Erie Community Foundation, GE Transportation, Erie Insurance, Presque Isle Downs & Casino, Erie Bank, Northwest Savings Bank, McInnes Rolled Rings, E.E. Austin & Son and Scott Enterprises for providing the pro-rated matching funds.



The Erie Community Foundation Board of Trustee members Lynn McBrier, Russell Warner, Maryann Yochim Flaherty and President Michael Batchelor celebrate 2016 Erie Gives Day with Almitra Clerkin (center).



Congratulations to Bobbi Pollock who won the dinner to a restaurant of her choice and two tickets to *Hamilton: an American Musical* in New York City that was part of our Erie Gives Day promotion. The tickets, donated by Mike Karns, the 2016 annual fund chair, were the best in the house!

Bobbi is a long-time Playhouse season ticket patron and supporter. How fitting that Bobbi, who frequently underwrites the cost of tickets so needy children can experience the joy of live theatre, won. We couldn't be happier!

YOUTHEATRE

CULTIVATING TALENT AT AN EARLY AGE

For over 70 years, the Erie Playhouse has been home to the Youtheatre, which produces fully-staged productions for and by the youth in Erie and surrounding communities. It is also the region's leading provider of training in the theater arts for children who can be nurtured into future performers, arts patrons, and advocates. In addition to the production schedule, which consists of three musicals and a summer play series, we offer acting classes, summer camps, job shadowing and internships. On average, 11,000 patrons attend Youtheatre productions annually, including 75 school groups who attend school-day matinees. Over 300 students volunteer on stage and behind the scenes, putting in 26,400 volunteer hours, and 300 students attend year-round classes and summer camps.



THE OFTEN HIDDEN COST OF DOING THEATRE

SCENE FROM *DISNEY'S THE LITTLE MERMAID*

One of the most challenging tasks in the business of show business is selecting the shows for the season. It is an ever-shifting combination of gut instinct, statistical analysis, audience surveys, volunteer input, availability and production cost. We have to find the balance between what will sell, what shows are available to a community theatre and what is within our budget.

The budgeted production expenses for *Disney's The Little Mermaid*, this season's most successful Mainstage production seen by 4,400 patrons, were \$52,585. This picture illustrates the often hidden cost of producing live theatre.



30 light fixtures with lamps @ \$12 = \$360

Rented flying system and rigging \$6,900

3 spotlights with lamps @ \$250 = \$750

\$1450 per painted backdrop
5 drops = \$7250

2 seahorse costumes @ \$50 = \$100

40 ostrich feathers @ \$5.75 = \$230

specialty makeup 3 pallets @ \$168.00 = \$504

16 fish wigs @ \$15.00 = \$240

crab hands \$54

16 unitards @ \$30 = \$480

red shoes \$65

fabric dye & paint = \$354.65

16 pair ballet shoes @ \$19.95 = \$319.20



Playhouse talent entertain a large, captive crowd on a beautiful summer night.

PLAYHOUSE TALENT GOES INTO THE WOODS WITH PERFORMANCE AT WQLN

On July 29, 2016, Playhouse performers took to WQLN's woody outdoor performance pavilion to share some of their favorite show tunes for our 100th Season. The concert, free and open to the public, included great brew samples from Erie Beer Co. and Mill Creek Coffee. The concert was also broadcast on WQLN TV and WQLN Radio.



YOUTHEATRE SHOWSTOPPERS

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

ERIE CITY AMUSEMENT TAX

Since the inception of the 3% Amusement Tax in 2006, the Erie Playhouse has paid \$156,420 for the 11-year period. We pay an average of \$14,220 per year.

2015-16 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
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Kate Neubert-Lechner, Youtheatre/Education Director
Angela Pulling, House Manager
Andrew Rainbow, Music Director
Barb Weber, Playbill Ads Manager



Through a grant from Erie Arts & Culture and Gannon's Erie GAINS, the Erie Playhouse cast of *Peter and the Starcatcher* brought the theatre experience to children in Erie schools.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT FOUR AWARDS GARNERED FOR THE ERIE PLAYHOUSE

The PA Theatre Guide announced the Erie Playhouse as the winner of the **Best Community Theater in PA** for the 2015 Readers' Choice Awards. The PA Theatre Guide featured an article on its website about the Playhouse, which included its history, quality of programming, and value as a community asset. They also called the Playhouse "the busiest community theatre in Pennsylvania" and one of the oldest community theatres in the nation.



The Downtown YMCA honored Kate Neubert-Lechner as the **Volunteer of the Year**.



The 2014-2015 Playhouse Annual Report, *Connection*, won the award for the **Best Annual Report** from the Nonprofit Partnership in the Large Organization category.

For the 10th year in a row, the Erie Playhouse won the **Erie Choice Award for Best Theatre**. Thank you to all who voted for us!



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