

E**SUNDAY**

October 16, 2016

LIFE

TEMPLE DAILY TELEGRAM

TEMPLE CIVIC THEATRE

TCT celebrates 50 years of local entertainment

Revue to be
a walk down
memory lane

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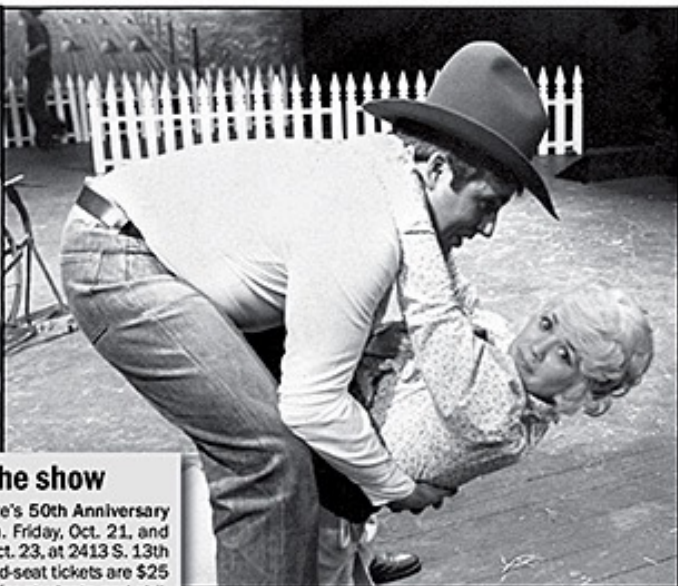
Jo Ann Muchmore (1937-2011) put into words what a hidden gem she found.

The former two-stint managing director of the Temple Civic Theatre in the 1980s and 1990s artfully described what it meant to a community to have real live theatrical performances.

Muchmore's fresh, insightful notes for each play program were literate and literary keepsakes, reflecting on the work at hand, Temple and life's peregrinations. In her notes from the August 1979 production of "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown," she wrote a tender adieu as she closed out her first run as director: "I've never lived in a community where a theatre had a better chance for greatness. Life is made of sweat and trying, with ruffles of joy on the rim. People here in Temple seem to understand that really well."

The community has appreciated that for half a century. The Temple Civic Theatre marks its 50th anniversary with this coming weekend of highlights from past shows, directed by Betsi Chamlee.

Designed as a fundraiser, the show will include musical excerpts from past shows throughout the 50 years featuring many of the area's most talented performers. The show will be 8 p.m. Friday

**Go to the show**

Temple Civic Theatre's 50th Anniversary Revue will be 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 21, and 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 23, at 2413 S. 13th St., Temple. Reserved-seat tickets are \$25 for adults and \$15 for students and children. Tickets are available at www.artstemple.com or phone 254-778-4751.



Telegram file

Top left: Cast members appear in a scene from "The Knights of the White Magnolia" in October 1976.

Top right: Gary Gosney portrays Will Parker and Susan Huddleston plays Ado Annie in a scene from "Oklahoma" in February 1979.

Bottom left: Cast members appear in a scene from "Oliver" in April 1978.

Bottom right: Glynn Gartenbein plays Teyve, the philosophical milkman, in a scene from "Fiddler on the Roof" in February 1986.

Please see THEATRE, 4E

Theatre

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and 2:30 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are now on sale.

Chamlee is a longstanding veteran of Temple's stage, premiering in her first TCT production when she was 8 years old. Now an experienced performer and director, she has assembled a solid cast of performers, some of whom are encoring their roles that they did "up-teen" years ago.

"We've been able to recruit original cast members in some productions, which shows the longevity and the superior talent pool of our area," she said. The show covers 50 years of musical roles representing some of the most noted Broadway composers and lyricists.

She credits the theater's strength to the vast army of volunteers. "We are proud that we have a continuously running non-profit, community-based theater run primarily by volunteers," Chamlee added.

Performers include Sara Harris Baker, Dan Becker, Andi Billeck, Betsi Chamlee, Evan Clawson, Regina Corley, Clyde Ciupck, Sandy Dlugas, Jo Elwood, John Elwood, Una Forgy, Michael J. Fox, Kris Glorioso, Gary Gosney, Betsy Howell, Teri Johnson, Jill B. Main, John Mischian, Michael Morris, Craig Pitrucha, Meg Pitrucha, Paige Rendon, Bob Ritchie, Marilyn Ritchie, Sarah Sanderford, Priscilla Santana, Martha Satterwhite, Janice Wilson, Chris Wohleb and Suzanne Wohleb. David Perez-Guerra will provide piano accompaniment.

The Temple Civic Theatre marks its 50th anniversary throughout its season with encores of the plays presented in its earlier seasons.



Telegram file

Carol Mitchell rolls Shelly Brashear's hair in a scene from "Steel Magnolias" in February 1991 at the Temple Civic Theatre.

"The Fantasticks" closes today with an afternoon matinee.

The mood shifts from the light-hearted musical to the dramatic "All My Sons" by Arthur Miller. Casting is now underway. Leon Perkins will direct this new production, opening Nov. 11. Starring in that first production in 1971 were Lee Madden, Tom Taylor, Liz Popejoy, Susan Goad, Bob Jones, Bill Chamlee, Ann Dingus, Joe Everton Jr., Angela Sholar and Eddie Ryncarson.

Other encore performances included in this year's offerings: "It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play," directed by Michael J. Fox, opening

Dec. 2; "You Can't Take It With You," opening Jan. 29; "Little Shop of Horrors," directed by Perkins, opening March 31; "The 39 Steps," directed by Natasha Tolleson, opening May 19; and "Hairspray," directed by Dr. Sara Harris Baker, opening July 14.

Its history unfolds like a play — at times funny, at times serious, always surprising. A group of live-performance lovers launched the fledgling civic theatre in 1965. An earlier group, the Old Central Players, had become inactive.

The first play produced in 1966 was "You Can't Take It With You," a golden comedy about an unconventional

family that has weathered nicely over the decades. By 1968, the theatre was operating with its own board of governors and incorporated as a non-profit arts organization working as a member organization of the Cultural Activities Center.

By 1974, it had outgrown its present space and became its own independent organization with its own space in 1977, opening with "My Fair Lady." The theatre's productions are in its 11,000-square-foot facility containing a 228-seat thrust stage auditorium with all the necessary accoutrements needed for live performances — all valued at \$500,000 fully paid through community donations. Each production frequently balances the mix of amateur and seasoned performers, depending on the play. Children's productions, drama classes and traveling troupes to schools are provided by the theatre's personnel.

Membership is about 1,000 with a solid cadre of about 250 volunteering throughout the active season. Everything is guided by a working 12-person board and volunteer committee chairmen.

Key to its success was the board's early leadership in maintaining and sustaining the theatre through difficult times. Founder Marjie Ryncarson served four terms as board president from 1965-1969; Dr. Gary Gosney, six terms; and Jody Donaldson, four terms.

"We have a forever thing here, with this theatre, my dears." Muchmore wrote in 1991. "It is a fitting Valentine to Temple and worthy of a lovely old-fashioned verb. Cherish. Will you do that? It would be my best goodbye."

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