

★☆☆☆☆★☆☆☆☆★ **BIOGRAPHIES** ★☆☆☆☆★☆☆☆☆★

Brad Pollert - Howie Newsome After performing in various venues in the Danville area the past 20+years, Brad is delighted to be performing in his first Red Mask production and being back on the Fischer stage since performing in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* in 2002. Brad lives in Danville and along with his wife owns Holey Moley Mole Control. He hopes you enjoy the show!!

Amanda Brown - Rebecca Gibbs Amanda Brown will be a junior at BHRA High School and has been actively involved in community theater for seven years, having performed with Red Mask, DLO Musical Theatre, and others. She was honored when asked to be a part of the *Our Town* fundraiser.

Ron McDaniel - Professor Willard Ron has acted in more than 50 shows for DLO, Red Mask, the Beef House Dinner Theatre, and Gregory Productions. Most recently he was seen as Uncle Henry in DLO's *The Wizard of Oz*. He has directed six shows and appeared in five independent films. In 2014, he was one of three in the nation honored with the Robert E. Gard Superior Volunteer Award from the American Association of Community Theatre.

Jamey Coutant - Louella Soames Jamey is thrilled to be performing as Mrs. Soames on the stage of the Historic Fischer Theater in *Our Town*. Jamey is active in both Red Mask Players and DLO Musical Theatre, and serves on the board of directors of both. Although she loves being onstage her main love is working in Children's theater and introducing the next generation to love theater as much as she does. Jamey was last seen on the Red Mask stage as Lady in *Superior Donuts*, for which she won a Katy Award. Jamey would like to thank Paul for giving her this opportunity, and to all of the cast and crew for bringing this show to life. She would also like to thank her children and grandchildren for their love and support. Also much love to Elmo who got to listen to her continually working on her lines!

Silas Van Camp Silas is excited to be a part of *Our Town*. He has performed in productions for Red Mask Theater and Gregory's Academy of the Arts. Silas is 10 years old and attends Salt Fork North Elementary. He enjoys playing baseball and acting.

Benjamin Van Camp Benjamin is so excited to perform alongside his brother Silas at the Fischer Theater! He has previously performed in Gregory's Academy of the Arts production of *A Christmas Carol*. Benjamin is 7 years old and likes to play baseball.

Clint Andrae - Constable Warren Clint is thrilled to make his stage acting debut in *Our Town*. He has lived in the Champaign area for 32 years and has acted in several short films and one feature film, which has yet to be released.

★☆☆☆☆★☆☆☆☆★ **ENSEMBLE** ★☆☆☆☆★☆☆☆☆★

**Wes Bieritz ★ Dalton Chrzanoski ★ Jennifer Dixon
Anna Beth Gilmore ★ Chris Huffman ★ Sharle Jumps
Dave Schroeder ★ Leslie Van Camp ★ Nick**

★☆☆☆☆★☆☆☆☆★ **SPECIAL THANKS** ★☆☆☆☆★☆☆☆☆★

**Amanda France ★ Nancy Henderson ★ Eleanor Peters
Prairie Farms ★ Jason Rome ★ Donna Sant ★ Larry & Belinda Smith**

The Fischer Theatre presents,
in partnership with the Red Mask Players

OUR TOWN

by Thornton Wilder

Directed by Paul Strain



Friday June 25
7:30 PM

Saturday June 26
2 PM and 7:30 PM

All shows are being performed for
a free-will donation in thanks and
celebration of the re-awakening
of community theatre.

RED MASK PLAYERS



THE FISCHER THEATRE



☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ FROM THE DIRECTOR ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Our Town is arguably the great American play. It has been produced in nearly every country, most languages, and has been live on stage or in rehearsal somewhere, almost continuously, since its inception.

In its time it was considered avant-garde - its use of bare stage and flashback and metaphysical ending were groundbreaking. Today it might seem mundane. But it is not what it seems on the surface. Do not mistake it for a nostalgic glimpse into New England life in the early 1900's. That would be worse than reading the inside covers of a book and thinking you had read the entire thing.

Speaking to its longevity, it has been revived on Broadway four times since its original production, and is slated for a fifth, with Dustin Hoffman in the role of Stage Manager.

I first saw *Our Town* on T.V., starring Ned Beatty and Robbie Benson and others. I didn't quite understand it, since it was 1977 and I was eleven. But I was intrigued enough to seek it out again in my late teens, and early thirties, and often since. It has resonated differently each time, depending on where I was in my life. I have long wanted to bring it to the stage, to this stage, and for The Red Mask Players. I am honored and humbled to be able to do so. Many thanks to the Red Mask Board of Directors, the Vermilion Heritage Foundation, and the Fischer Theatre for making this possible.

I think everyone should see this great play at least three times in their life — as a teen, after the birth of their first child, and when the nest is empty. It will tell you something different each time, if only you pay attention.

I sincerely hope you enjoy this one.

Paul Strain, Director

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Craig Krukewitt - Simon Stimson This is Craig's second appearance with Red Mask (he played an orderly in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, 2002) AND his second appearance in a production of *Our Town* (he played Howie for Creative Dramatics Workshop, Sidney, in 2001). His last appearance before a year and a half of slumber was in DLO's *Bright Star*. He hopes he remembers how to do this...

Mackenzie Kizer - Emily Webb Mackenzie is excited to be performing with such a phenomenal cast and crew in a show that highlights such raw emotion! She was welcomed with open arms into the local theatre community in 2016 with DLO Musical Theatre's *Grease*, and she never thought she would be performing on the famous Fischer stage. She wants to thank Paul for being such a dedicated director, her cast mates for being so supportive, helpful, and talented, and Heather for making the coolest sounds ever. She dedicates this performance to her sister, Honesty, who inspires Mackenzie to "live every single moment while we have them."

Thomas Strain - George Gibbs Thomas Strain has been active in Theatre for over 9 years. A few of his favorite roles include George Banks in *Mary Poppins* and Chuck Cranston in DLO Musical Theatre's *Footloose*. He is excited to make his post-quarantine debut on the Fischer stage alongside his BFF Mackenzie Kizer. Thomas would like to thank his director for the opportunity to work with such a talented and dedicated cast and crew. He would also like to thank his BFF Mackenzie for 'honestly always being such a vibe.'

Phil Webber - Frank Gibbs Phil Weber has been seen in recent years in the Danville Light Opera's production of *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, Champaign-Urbana Theater Company's *Annie*, and Twin City Theater Company's productions of *Lost in Yonkers* and *Bus Stop*. When he isn't on stage Phil works as a teacher at Urbana Middle School, where he also helps coach the speech team. In a college acting class he performed scene work from *Our Town* as George and was lucky enough to marry his Emily.

Julia Gibbs - Lisa Strain Lisa caught the theatre bug when she acted in her first play in 6th grade and has been involved ever since. She received a Bachelor's degree in Theater from Illinois State University. She has been active in DLO, Red Mask, and many theaters throughout Illinois and Indiana. She was last seen onstage with Red Mask as Randy in *Superior Donuts*. She is excited to be in her first show directed by her husband, Paul, and is thrilled to once again share the stage with her father, and have her real life step-son, Thomas, play her son.

Matt Hester - Charles Webb *Our Town* marks Matt's return to Red Mask after many years. He was previously seen as Mitch in *A Streetcar Named Desire* back in 2015. Matt is a graduate of the University of Evansville where he received a B.F.A in acting and directing. He would like to thank the cast and crew for the opportunity to work with such amazing talent. Enjoy the show.

Jamie Devore-McDaniels - Myrtle Webb It has been almost six years since Jamie has graced the stage. You last saw her in 2015 as the tortured Blanche DuBois in Red Mask's *A Streetcar Named Desire*. After experiencing some medical issues, Jamie is happy to be once again doing what she loves, and sharing the stage with her "stage soulmate," Matt Hester. Thanks to Paul for the opportunity to do this classic show in this beautiful venue, The Fischer Theater, and to Bryan for holding down the zoo at home.

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Paul Strain - Director Paul has been active in the performing arts for over 35 years as a performer, director, instructor, clinician, technical guy, occasional judge and constant fan. He is thrilled to finally be able to bring this amazing play to the Fischer stage! As always, thanks to the kids for putting up with missed / late / generic dinners while Dad goes to play Director, and to Lisa for acting in this one for me, putting up with my ever-changing blocking, and keeping me on track. And you, reading this: Thank you. Your support keeps local arts alive.

Rodney Woodworth - Stage Manager Rodney is pleased to finally be appearing in a Red Mask production, and thrilled to return to the Fischer Theatre after last year's triumphant run of *Bright Star!* The role of the Stage Manager has been on Rodney's "bucket list" for several years. Rodney was a professional actor, and worked in Chicago prior to returning to his home in Champaign. He's familiar to local audiences, having performed at Krannert, Parkland, Station Theatre, and the former Sunshine Dinner Playhouse. He can also be seen performing Murder Mysteries for CUTC, and during the Holidays as the Season's Jolliest Elf!

At this performance the roles of
Emily Webb will be played by Amanda Brown
&
Rebecca Gibbs will be played by Eva Harper

Crew

Lighting Engineer: Luke Ahring
Sound Engineer: Andrew Krumeich

Special Thanks

Mark Lindvalhl

St. James United Methodist Church

