

Act
presents

a comedy by
John Patrick

The Girls of the Garden Club



by special arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service, Inc.



Directed by Francyn Chomic

Ann Arbor Civic Theatre Downtown
May 1—11, 2003

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Owl's Winter

January 23-25 • Grades pre-K-2

Owl's Winter is a delightful collection of stories for young children based on Arnold Lobel's "Owl at Home." Audience participation!

Along the Tracks

Michigan and the Underground Railroad
February 10-16 • Grades 3-12

Along the Tracks is an exciting new play commissioned by Wild Swan in 2001 to celebrate Michigan's participation in the Underground Railroad. The play, written

by Kennedy Center award winner Jeff Chastang, explores the desperate journey of three children as they travel along the Underground Railroad in their quest to be reunited with their parents in Canada.

A Honey Pot of Pooh Stories

March 19-22 • Grades pre-K-2

Dip into our honey pot of stories featuring children's all-time favorite bear, Winnie the Pooh. Little theater-goers will love joining Pooh as he hums his way through the Hundred Aker Woods. This is story theater at its most charming.

Charlotte's Web

April 29-May 4 • Grades K-5

Charlotte's Web is possibly the best loved of all American stories for children. Set in the rural Midwest, it tells the touching story of a rare friendship between a little pig, Wilbur, and Charlotte, a most uncommon spider.

Frog and Toad

June 26-28 • Grades pre-K-2

Two of Arnold Lobel's most beloved characters, Frog and Toad, show how good friends help each other through thick and thin, cheering each other through the hard times and celebrating life's joys.



All performances are at Towsley Auditorium,
Washtenaw Community College

To order tickets, call (734) 424-9591

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Opening Night May 1, 2003
ANN ARBOR CIVIC THEATRE DOWNTOWN

Ann Arbor Civic Theatre

The Girls of the Garden Club

A comedy by **JOHN PATRICK**

Directed by **FRANCYN CHOMIC**

Lighting Designer

THOM JOHNSON

Master Electrician/Lightboard

SAMANTHA PEER

Set Designer and Builder

DON CHOMIC

Publicity

STEVE HORNE

Costume Designer

SUSIE BERNEIS

Sound Designer and Operator

LARRY RUSINSKY

House Management

PATTY BRANAM

MELISSA HENDERSON

Program

RON BAUMANIS

Graphic Design

MELISSA MULDOON

LUKE WARK

Properties

LINDA WARK

Photography

FRANCYN CHOMIC

SAM ZWETCHKENBAUM

Producer

MICHELE LESHAN

Assistant Director

CATHERINE ZUDAK

Stage Management

KARIS KRUZEL

DAVID PICKELL

Music

BRIDGIT RUTZ

Special Sunday brunch arrangements with D'Amatos of Ann Arbor

Produced by special arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York City

Cast

Rhoda	Erica Dutton
Vincent	Fred Kahle
Marigold	Laura Goldman
Dillson	Kent Klausner
Cora	Maggie Hutchens
Evie	Cherie Nichols
Dora	Ann Marie Mann
Birdie	Liz Vinsant
Dede	Jamie Platte
Clara	Mary Quigley
Lillybelle	Kathleen Beardmore

Angelica	Cassie Mann (5/1-4)
Angelica	Wendy Fritz (5/8-11)
Zelda	Nicole Newman
Dorothy	Nitti Sachdeva
Ginger	Linda Lee Austin
Fran	Katina Nichols
Lorraine	Gretchen Baumgardt
Trudy	Marva Phillips
Judi	Linda Rama

May 1-4

Ada	Judy Ray
Bertha.....	Eileen Bargowski
Emily.....	Lyn Powrie Davidge
Madge	Cheryl Anderson
Rita	Michelle Doepker
Sophie	Nancy Nicholson
Suzanne.....	Suzanne Krug

May 8-11

Ada	Malloria Miller
Bertha.....	Adrienne Miller
Emily	Ellen Bernard
Madge	Paddy Ash
Sherry.....	Sherry Weaver
Sophie	Jen Miller

Thank you to:

Manchester Wildflower Seed Co, and Heritage Bulb
for the donation of wildflower seeds and bulbs.

BSA Troop 391, Hamburg, for help with set construction and painting
Cassie & Suzi in the A2CT office for their support and guidance.

- ⊗ The taking of photographs or the recording of this production in any fashion is strictly prohibited.
- ⊗ Please turn off all digital media including cellular telephones and one-way or two-way paging systems.

Scene Synopsis

Place: The home of Rhoda and Vincent Greenleaf, Middle Suburban America

Act 1—The Present

Act 2—Several weeks later

Intermission

Act 3—Scene 1— The day of the Flower Show

Scene 2— A few hours later

There will be a 15 minute intermission with refreshments available in the lobby.

Also available during intermission and after the show: wildflower seed packets courtesy of Manchester Wildflower Seed Company and bulbs courtesy of Old House Gardens.

Director's Note

"The Girls of the Garden Club" became one of my favorite scripts when I first read it several years ago. I thought it was not only a delightfully funny story, but also a great show for community theatre because of the light storyline, a single set, and a strong (and large) female cast.

Pulitzer Prize winning playwright John Patrick wrote "The Girls of the Garden Club" late in his life. It was first presented in 1979 when Patrick was 74 years old. Patrick wrote many theatre scripts including "The Curious Savage," "The Hasty Heart," and "Everyone Loves Opal." His notable successes as a writer of films include "Three Coins in the Fountain," "Love is a Many Splendored Thing," "High Society," "Les Girls," and "The World of Suzie Wong." In 1953, "Teahouse of the August Moon" brought Patrick his highest honor – the Pulitzer Prize as well as a Tony and a New York Drama Critics Circle award. John Patrick died in 1995 at the age of 90 in Del Ray Beach, Florida.

The numerous small roles in the play, members of the "Upper South Ho-Ho-Cus Little Lake Garden Club" created a unique opportunity for members of the community to get involved in theatre other than as audience. During January and February, I visited 10 garden clubs and several area social organizations to promote the play and recruit women to become actors. The response was tremendous and the research invaluable. We are proud to have over 20 women with little stage experience brave enough to venture into something new. They have been a pleasure to direct and a wonderful addition to our theatre family. What do they say about the theatre bug?

The core cast of actors have been as professional and delightful a group as I have ever worked with. Each worked hard to develop a unique and complete character – loveable and full of eccentricities. Erica Dutton joined the cast as Rhoda two weeks into the production but became part of the Girls with her first smile. I am proud to have guided them in this production and thank them for all their hard work and dedication.

I was also blessed with a phenomenal support staff for my first A2CT directing experience. I could always count on Catherine Zudak as Assistant Director to anticipate my every thought and catch details I might miss. Michele Leshan was always working behind the scenes to ensure a smooth production. Linda Wark and Don Chomic created a beautiful and unique set filled with detailed props. Hamburg Boy Scout Troop 391 helped build and paint the set and assisted with lights and sound as work towards their Theatre Merit Badge for which I am Merit Badge Counselor. Of course, there are so many others who helped make this production a success.

As director of this production, I hope you find this performance as bright and playful as the tulips and daffodils that fill our Spring. I also hope that you set your goals high and strive to achieve them. Remember as Dillson says (not like Dillson says), "Faith is believing the impossible."

Francyn Chomic

WHOS WHO IN THE CAST AND CREW

Production Staff

Susie Berneis (Costumer) likes to be on both sides of the footlights. In the past 12 months she has appeared as Alma in *Pillow Talk* and costumed *Jekyll & Hyde*, as well as appearing in that show. She's grateful to the cast of *The Girls of the Garden Club* for all their help and cooperation in costuming and to Melissa Henderson for her special assistance.

Don Chomic (Set Designer) After being away for several years while building their house, Don returns to life backstage (with a little arm twisting from the director). Don has been a TD for local productions of *Sound of Music* and *Bye, Bye, Birdie* and various music concerts and dance recitals. His most recent role was set designer/builder for *Steel Magnolias*, *Annie*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Oklahoma!*, and recitals for Ginny's Danceworks. He has also covered other technical areas for various groups from lighting design/operator, sound design/operator, stage hand, fly crew, and roadie.

Francyn Chomic (Director) is a veteran director, though "Girls" is her first time directing with A2CT. She has appeared in A2CT shows as Carol in *Smile* and as Aunt Reba in *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*. Her directing experience includes *Steel Magnolias* (Pinckney Players), *Name That Book* (Dexter Junior Theatre), *The Court of King Arithmetical* (Lindbom Elementary, Brighton), *'dentity Crisis* (EMU) and many church productions and workshops. Francyn and her husband (and set designer) Don live with their two equally-talented children and their two Chesapeake Bay Retrievers in Dexter. She has thoroughly enjoyed directing such a wonderful and talent group of actors and non-actors. She is especially proud of the courage and enthusiasm of the cameo actors and thanks them for being a very special part of this production.

Thom Johnson (Lighting Designer) has been active with A2CT for many years as an actor, director and lighting designer. He has designed lights most recently for his own production of *Enter Laughing* and last years *The Lucky Spot*. He will also be designing lights for the upcoming *The Importance of Being Ernest*.

Michele Leshan (Producer) tends to stay behind the scenes, although she has appeared briefly onstage in one third of the shows she's worked on with A2CT. This is her first producing stint, and her ninth show with Civic.

Others include: *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Sound of Music*, *Light Up the Sky* (SM), *The Heidi Chronicles* (ASM), *The Front Page* (AD/SM), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (AD/SM), *The Lucky Spot* (SM), and *Enter Laughing* (SM).

David Pickell (Stage Manager) is working on his 2nd show for A2CT, having helped with props for *The Front Page*. When he is not working behind the scenes for various theatre groups, he can occasionally be found working as an electrical or software engineer. David would like to thank Michele for twisting his arm to participate in this show.

Larry Rusinsky (Sound Design and Operation) recently appeared onstage in the A2CT productions of *The Front Page* and *The Lucky Spot*, and over the years has appeared in many others, from *The Nerd*, *Noises Off*, and Ionesco's *The Lesson to The Glass Menagerie* and *A Lie of the Mind*. He is also a member of MorrisCo Art Theatre, and has appeared in their productions of *Uncle Vanya*, *Arcadia*, *Hedda Gabler*, and *The Odd Couple*.

Bridgit Rutz (Music) recently completed her senior year at EMU and will begin student teaching vocal music in the fall. She is very active in music ministry at both her university and home churches. Bridgit loves all aspects of theater and can be found acting, sewing, choreographing, running crew, or directing. Most recently she has been seen as Glinda in the *Wizard of Oz* and in EMU's productions of *South Pacific* and *Evita*. Her most recent A2CT project was costume designing *The Fantasticks*. Bridgit is a Dexter native, and this summer she can be found directing music for production of *Pippin*.

Linda Wark (Properties) has been doing props for about 2 1/2 years at A2CT. She has designed props for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Lucky Spot*. She feels that everyone has something they can do to contribute to theatre. She says "there is not enough money in the City of Ann Arbor to get me on a stage, but I always feel that I have contributed to the success of any show I have worked on." It has been great fun.

Catherine Zudak (Assistant Director) has worked behind the scenes at A2CT on *Tommy*, *The Lucky Spot*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Previously, she served as assistant director for *Those Sweet Caresses* at the Source Theatre's annual festival of new works in Washington D.C. She has appeared in *Archie* and *Mehitabel*, *Dracula*, *Auntie Mame*, and in a

college production of "Girls" as Dede. She thanks Rob for being the best husband in the world and Paradox for always being glad to see her.

Cast

Kathleen Beardmore (Lillybelle) has performed in a number of musical theater productions with Chelsea Area Players and A2CT. She is pleased to play Lillybelle as her first non-musical role in community theater. She wishes to thank Siobhan for French instruction and Bob for his love and support.

Erica Dutton (Rhoda) is delighted to be back at A2CT where she last appeared in *RUR*. More recently, she appeared in *Lettice and Lovage*, *Beyond Therapy*, *Sex Drugs and Rock & Roll*, and *Buried Child* with other regional theatres. She has enjoyed working with the fun cast of "Girls," especially watching the cameos.

Laura Goldman (Marigold) is a sophomore at Community High. She's excited to be returning to A2CT for the second time. In the past, other than Civic, she has worked with Young People's Theatre, Redbud Productions, and Silver Dawn Company. Laura would like to thank Phil, Brigit, and her Mother for all their love and support.

Maggie Hutchens (Cora) is making her first stage appearance. She will be moving to San Francisco in the fall to attend film school. She would like to send her thanks and love to all her friends and family for, well, everything.

Fred Kahle (Vincent) is making his second appearance with A2CT having appeared as Hassler in *The Pajama Game* for which he received the John Rae Cameo Award. Thanks to Francyn for inviting him to join this wonderful cast and crew.

Kent Klausner (Dillon) is delighted to be performing in his 4th A2CT show. He's been previously seen in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Pajama Game*, and just recently as Tony in *Pillow Talk*. Kent would like to thank the marvelous cast and crew, his family, friends, and Melissa for loaning him out to the devices of a full female cast.

Ann Marie Mann (Dora) has also performed with Chelsea and Saline Area Players-favorite role: Veta Louise Simmons in *Harvey*. Thank you to Francyn, Catherine, and the lovely ladies of the Garden Club for a fun show and to her loved ones for their continued support. When not gardening, collecting trading stamps or seconding the motion, Ann is a psychiatric nurse at UM Hospital.

Jamie Platte (Dede) was last on the A2CT stage as Wanda in *Enter Laughing*. Other favorite roles

she has played include Alice in *You Can't Take it with You*, and Brooke/Vicki in *Noises Off!* Jamie graduated from EMU last month with a degree in vocal music education.

Cherie Nichols (Evie) is new to A2CT, and a new resident of Ann Arbor. She is returning to the stage after a 9 year absence. She performed previously in community theater in Grosse Pointe. She would like to thank her wonderful family for all their support. She has enjoyed performing in this fun comedy.

Mary Quigley (Clara) has performed in *Finian's Rainbow*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Gypsy*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, and many music reviews with Washtenaw Community College; *Joseph & the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and mystery dinner theaters with the Pinckney Players; *Brigadoon* with the Howell Theater Players; and two music reviews for A2CT. She wants to thank her family for all their patience, support, and love while she "does her thing."

Liz Vinsant (Birdie) is a seasoned actress but this is Liz's first appearance at A2CT after her recent move back to Michigan. Born and raised in Iowa, she was a Michigander for 35 years, retired from the corporate business world, and moved back to Iowa for 5 years. Liz was honored as "Best Supporting Actress" for her role as Birdie in 2002 at Hawkeye Theater in Fort Dodge, Iowa. Liz has three sons: Dana of Ft. Dodge, Terry of Ann Arbor, and Mark of Ypsilanti, as well as nine grandchildren. To quote Liz, "Once in a lifetime you find an acting role suited to you and you fall in love with the character, Birdie is mine."

Cameos - May 1-11

Linda Lee Austin (Ginger) is ending a long hiatus from theater. She last performed with a college troupe in *Destry Rides Again*. Sponsored by the USO, the troupe entertained military personnel in 4 countries. She is a member of Alpha Psi Omega, the national theater honor society.

Gretchen Baumgardt (Lorraine) is appearing in her first show with A2CT. She's excited to be returning to the performing arts and thanks the St. Mary's staff and her parents for their support.

Nicole Newman (Zelda) is from Livonia. She is pursuing a career in acting and currently takes classes at Second City and performs on the Michigan Star Clipper.

Katina Nichols (Fran) is happy to return to the stage in a comedy after performing in a number of musicals, including *Fame*, *Joseph and the*

Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, and *Carnival*. She has competed in show choir for the past two years. Katina attends Gabriel Richard High School and would like to congratulate the cast of this show.

Marva Phillips (Trudy) has a long-standing love of acting since first appearing as a dancer in *The King And I* in community theatre in Tennessee. Recently, she performed in a church play where she searched for the meaning of Christmas. She lives in Ypsilanti and has one son, Trevor.

Linda Rama (Judi) has blossomed in this performance. Her enjoyment of all aspects of live theater has allowed her to develop roots in several communities. Having been uprooted from Royal Oak, she has been transplanted into our community. Roles in EMU's Theater for the Young, WCC's *New Voices Rising*, and A2CT have truly fertilized her performing abilities.

Nitti Sachdeva (Dorothy) has appeared on stage in Thailand and India. She holds a master's degree in clinical nutrition and currently works for Washtenaw County in Support Services. She designs gemstone pictures and jewelry for fun and business. She thanks her wonderful husband and two sons, Sahib and Rajit, for their support.

Cameos - May 1-4

Cheryl Anderson (Madge) last appeared on stage in grade school many years ago. She is glad to be acting again alongside other members of the 4 Seasons Garden Club of South Lyon.

Eileen Bargowski (Bertha) is an avid gardener and member of the 4 Seasons Garden Club of South Lyon. She is excited to have a cameo role in *The Girls of the Garden Club*.

Lyn Powrie Davidge (Emily) makes her stage debut and is delighted to fulfill at last her childhood famous-actress fantasy! An Ann Arbor native and novice storyteller, Lyn owns a Creative Memories scrapbooking business and is a part-time librarian at the Ann Arbor District Library.

Michelle Doepker (Rita) is a graphic/web designer living Ann Arbor. "Girls" marks her theatrical debut. She is excited to be a part of such a fun production.

Cassie Mann (Angelica) is happy to return to Civic's stage after nearly 3 years. Her last A2CT performance was as Frances in *Light Up The Sky*. While not onstage, Cassie can be found behind the scenes as a co-managing director of A2CT.

Nancy Nicholson (Sophie) is appearing in her second A2CT show, the first being *Smile* this past winter. She lives in Ann Arbor and enjoys being a part of the community through theatre.

Judy Ray (Ada) in an 8-year member of the 4 Seasons Garden Club of South Lyon. As a teenager, she ushered at the Fisher Theatre where she fell in love with acting. She is thrilled to be making her first stage appearance.

Cameos - May 8-11

Paddy Ash (Madge) is delighted to be in the *The Girls of the Garden Club*. As a member of the Ann Arbor Women's City Club, she feels somewhat experienced in the realm of female leadership and involvement in the community. Paddy's most recent shows have been *Jekyll and Hyde* and *Victor/Victoria*. She would like to thank Francyn for giving her this unique opportunity to be part of this great little show.

Ellen Bernard (Emily) has been a member of the Junior League of Ann Arbor for 6 great years. She would like to thank her husband, Paul; her sons, James and Matthew; and her mother, Cecelia, for their support in making her first stage appearance possible.

Wendy Fritz (Angelica) has performed with several organizations in a variety of roles. She has appeared in *The Music Man*, *Joseph & the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Hello Dolly* and *Oliver* with the Dexter Community Players. She has served as a member of the Traveling Smiles Children's Theater Troupe in Manchester. In the 1970s, she appeared in A2CT's productions of *Summer & Smoke*, and *Blithe Spirit*.

Adrienne Miller (Bertha) is an 8th grader at Forsythe Middle School in Ann Arbor. She plays the violin and sings. She thanks her mother for encouraging her to audition for "Girls."

Jennifer Miller (Sophie) is thrilled to return to the stage after a 12-year absence. She last performed in high school, and "Girls" marks her debut in community theatre. She lives in South Lyon and would like to express loving appreciation to her husband Patrick for supporting her dreams.

Malloria Miller (Ada) is performing for the first time. She has two grandchildren and lives in Ann Arbor. She enjoys drawing, sewing, and listening to music, especially music performed by her granddaughter, Adrienne, on the violin.

Sherry Weaver (Sherry) is a member of the 4 Seasons garden Club of South Lyon. She last appeared as Ophelia in *Hamlet* in high school in 1967. She is excited to be a part of the acting community again!

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Program Additions

Karis Kruzel (Stage Manager) has been involved with four Civic Theater Junior Theatre performances doing many different things from assisting with production, to costume and set design. This is her first experience with stage managing and she looks forward to show time!

Set Construction: Justin Baltz, Kathleen Beardmore, Alex Canfield, Don Chomic, Tally Chomic, Kyle Chomic, Paul Friedlander, Wendy Fritz, Maggie Hutchins, Ann Marie Mann, Adrienne Miller, Malloria Miller, Cherie Nichols, Katina Nichols, Jamie Platt, Linda Wark, Dick Vail & Linda Rama

Stage Crew: Nichole Newman, Cherie Nichols, Linda Rama, Nitti Sachdeva,
Linda Wark

Lighting & Sound Assistants: Justin Baltz, Kyle Chomic, Tally Chomic Paul Friedlander, Alex Canfield.

Special thanks to:

Bordines Nursery for the Lobby plants & Chelsea Flowers for additional flowers on Stage and in Lobby.

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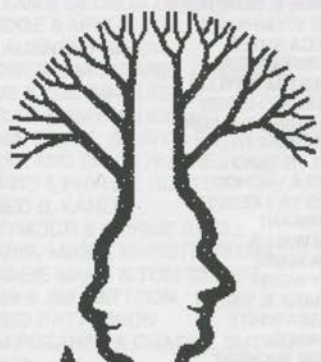
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